

## **SICB Best Student Presentations - Society-Wide Guidelines**

*Updated Spring 2023*

SICB supports two standard Best Student Presentation awards (one poster, one talk) in each of our 12 divisions, for a current total of 24 student competitions in a standard year. This substantial undertaking includes hundreds of student participants being evaluated by hundreds of judges, and the competitions are organized by dozens of divisional and society officers.

SICB aims to ensure that these competitions are equitable and inclusive, with efficient and transparent policies and practices. This guide describes the policies that govern all competitions, the elements that may vary among divisional competitions, and the roles of society and divisional officers in the process.

### **1. Policies that govern SICB Best Student Presentation competitions**

#### **a. Best Student Presentation awards are described in the SICB Bylaws, Article XVI, Section 1:**

Best Student Presentations. Each division may elect to have awards for best student presentations at the annual meeting. Separate awards may be given for best oral presentation and best poster presentation. Each division is responsible for securing a panel of judges and following society-wide procedures for selecting award recipients. Divisions may have additional restrictions or requirements than those set forth here. Competitors must be members of SICB and are responsible for checking divisional rules.

Graduate Student, Undergraduate, and High School Student Members and those who have received a Ph.D. within 12 months of the competition are eligible to compete for awards. A presentation (oral or poster) may be entered in only one divisional contest per year. A student who wins best oral presentation in a given division may not compete in best oral presentation contests in that same division in the future. A student who wins best poster presentation may not compete in best poster presentation contests in that same division in the future. Student award winners in one division are not excluded from competing for awards in other divisions in other years.

#### **b. All BSP competitions receive administrative support from SICB for poster and talk competitions**

- SICB will provide the names of potential judges to divisional officers, compiled from those who indicate an interest in judging for each division on the Annual Meeting registration form
- SICB will provide common, electronic judging forms (e.g., Google Forms) for use by the judges in each division. Judging forms will be created and controlled by SICB, and not the contracted company that manages the meeting website or app.
- SICB will provide access to all divisional judging submissions to divisional officers
- After the winners of each competition have been determined by the divisions, SICB will administer cash rewards and journal subscriptions awarded to each winner. Wiley provides SICB with \$150 per competition, and a subscription to a relevant Wiley journal. If divisions wish to augment these awards with divisional funds, SICB will administer those as well.
- After divisions report the BSP winners to SICB (no later than two weeks after the

conference), SICB will announce the winners of each competition to the society membership, and celebrate their achievements in SICB communications (such as in email blasts, on the SICB website, and through social media).

**c. All BSP competitions use a common rubric for poster and talk competitions:**

Judging criteria for presentations are based on a five-point scale

<b>1</b>	<b>Poor:</b> The presentation fails to include concepts or features that should have been included; presentation of ideas is difficult to follow
<b>2</b>	<b>Average:</b> The presentation meets the basic requirements in this category. No major flaws or critical errors
<b>3</b>	<b>Good:</b> The presentation of items in this category demonstrate strong potential, but more detail or improved delivery is needed to further elevate the presentation
<b>4</b>	<b>Very Good:</b> The presentation demonstrates a sound grasp of the concepts in this category. The presentation style is memorable in a positive way
<b>5</b>	<b>Excellent:</b> The presentation is exceptional in this category. The presentation stands out among student presentations

**Questions on the rubric:**

1. **Introduction.** How effectively did the presenter describe the relevant scientific background and justification for the research question?
2. **Methods.** How effectively did the methods and analyses address the hypothesis or research question?
3. **Results.** What is the quality of the data and the appropriateness of the analyses presented? How effectively were the data and analyses presented?
4. **Interpretation.** How scientifically-sound were the interpretations and/or alternative interpretations of the data?
5. **Significance.** How effectively did the presenter discuss the significance of their findings?
6. **Visual communication.** How effective and organized were the visual aspects of the presentation (e.g., slide/poster layout, data visualization)?
7. **Impact.** What is the potential of the study to advance the field/discipline?
8. **Q&A.** How effectively did the presenter answer questions from the audience?

*The following questions do not use the 1-5 scale, but offer space for more detailed assessment.*

9. Please provide constructive feedback *for the students* on the content and style of their presentation.
10. Should this presentation be considered for the Best Student Presentation Award? (Y/N)
11. If yes, please briefly explain why.
12. [Optional] If desired, please provide confidential comments to the selection committee.

**d. All BSP competitions are conducted with the following Conflict of Interest policy:**

Reasonable efforts will be made by each division to avoid actual (and when possible, potential) conflicts of interest in selecting participants for and judging Best Student Competitions. Because of the size and number of BSP competitions across SICB, it would not be reasonable to require that all judges in a competition have no potential conflicts of interest with all students in the competition. Yet, direct conflicts must be avoided. *No student should be judged by a postdoc or faculty member from their own department, or by a coauthor on the project presented in the competition.* Judges may judge other presentations in a competition, even if they are in conflict with some presentations in the competition.

Situations will likely arise where an elected divisional officer has a direct conflict of interest (as described above) with respect to a participant in a BSP. If that officer is assigned a decision-making role regarding the BSP, that officer should be replaced by another officer or member of the division (as determined by the officers of the division) in that role. For example, a divisional Program Officer should not oversee the selection of finalists, if they have a direct conflict of interest when assessing a potential finalist, and a divisional Secretary should not tally judging results to determine the BSP winner, if they have a direct conflict of interest in ranking the students who have been judged. It is the responsibility of the Division Chair to notify the SICB Secretary of any direct conflicts of interest, to oversee the implementation of this policy in their division, and to record the resolution of any conflicts of interest within their division.

**e. Competition elements that vary (or can vary) among divisions:**

- Names of awards
- Whether finalists are determined before the annual meeting, or if all who indicate an interest on the abstract submission form for the SICB annual meeting can participate
- Whether extended abstracts are used to determine finalists, and what form those extended abstracts take
- Whether there are special talk/poster sessions for awards, or if presentations competing for an award may occur throughout the conference
- Number of judges per presentations
- Amount of funding for each award (Wiley provides \$150/award and journal subscription; divisions can supplement these funds or split them among multiple students)
- Whether (unfunded) honorable mentions are awarded
- Other awards (For example, DAB, DEE, and DIZ can offer an Adrian Wenner Award for strong inference. This award is also supported by SICB with the same administrative support as BSPs, but may use different criteria for evaluation.)

**2. Processes of SICB Best Student Presentation competitions, and roles of divisional officers in the process**

- a. Indication of student interest in BSP competition, selection of finalists (if applicable), and scheduling BSP presentations.**
- i. Students indicate their interest in participating in a BSP at abstract submission.

- ii. BAI will provide each division with the list of students who have registered their interest in participating in that division's BSP.
- iii. If a division selects finalists to participate in their competition from among those who indicated interest, the divisional Program Officer will manage the selection process. This process, along with a rubric clearly describing the criteria upon which divisional finalists are selected, will be posted on the SICB website and linked on the abstract submission site.
- iv. The divisional Program Officer will manage the scheduling of BSP talks and posters in the program of the Annual Meeting.
- v. The divisional Program Officer will communicate with students that they have been confirmed (or where applicable, selected or not selected) to participate in the division's BSP competition.

**b. Assigning judges for BSP competitions.**

- i. When individuals register to attend the Annual Meeting, they have the opportunity to indicate their interest in judging in specific divisional BSPs.
- ii. BAI will provide each divisional Chair with the list of attendees who have indicated an interest in serving as a judge in their division.
- iii. Each divisional Chair is responsible for recruiting a slate of judges for the talk and poster competitions in their division, according to the guidelines posted for the division on the SICB website. Judges may be recruited from the list of those who indicated an interest on the meeting registration form, but divisions are not limited to those lists.
- iv. The divisional Chair will confirm that the Conflict of Interest policy (described above) is followed in the assignment of judges.
- v. For larger competitions that require multiple judges to sign up to judge individual presentations, SICB recommends using a website such as SignUpGenius (<https://www.signupgenius.com/>) to allow judges to select the presentations they wish to evaluate.

**c. Managing judges' scores, selecting winners, and announcing results.**

- i. The society Secretary will set up a Google form for each division, giving all divisional officers access to the form. On this form, judges can enter their evaluations of each presentation.
- ii. In the week prior to the conference, the divisional Secretary will remind divisional judges of their BSP responsibilities, and share the divisional judges' scoring sheet with each judge.
- iii. During the Annual Meeting, the judges will enter their scores in the scoring sheet. Divisional Secretaries will remind judges of this responsibility.
- iv. If a student participant withdraws their presentation from the Annual Meeting, they will be withdrawn from the BSP competition. (Awards for SICB+ presentations may be considered separately, but SICB+ presentations will not be considered for the divisional BSP awards.)
- v. Within two weeks of the Annual Meeting, divisional Secretaries will manage the determination of the winners for each competition.
- vi. The divisional Secretary will manage the communication of results of the competition to all competitors. (In some divisions, the divisional Chair announces the decision; the divisional Secretary is responsible for confirming that all competitors are informed.)

- vii. Within two weeks of the Annual Meeting, the divisional Secretary communicates the results of each competition to the SICB Secretary, including contact information for all awardees.
- viii. BAI will facilitate providing each winner with cash prizes and journal subscriptions, as supported by Wiley (and potentially as supplemented by divisional funds).
- ix. The SICB Secretary and Communications Editor will announce BSP winners, for example via email blasts, highlighting winners on the SICB website, and through SICB social media.

**d. Providing feedback to students.**

- i. Divisional Secretaries are strongly requested to provide student competitors with judges' feedback. Before sharing feedback, the divisional Secretary is responsible for reading all feedback and deleting any comments that are unprofessional or inappropriate.