

Science Communication Awards

What are the National Academies Eric and Wendy Schmidt Awards for Excellence in Science Communications?

The [Eric and Wendy Schmidt Awards for Excellence in Science Communications](#) are awards given by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine in partnership with Schmidt Sciences. The Awards recognize individuals who are working on the frontlines of science communication and journalism, and who can demonstrate the potential or ability to develop high-quality, engaging communications or reporting.

What's involved?

Individuals may self-submit for consideration for an award in one of three categories/eight subcategories: Science Communicator Independent, Science Communicator Organizational, Science Journalist Local/Regional, Science Journalist Early Career, Science Journalist Freelancer, Research Scientist Graduate Student, Research Scientist Early Career, Research Scientist Later Career.

- Individuals must complete an online Submission form and include at least one but no more than three examples of their own creative, original work that addresses issues and advances in science, engineering, and/or medicine for the general public.
- A broad range of science communications and journalism are encouraged – from magazine/newspaper articles, film/video, TV and radio segments to podcasts, newsletters, social media content, mixed media works and installations, and public talks.
- Science fiction, reference books, textbooks, peer-reviewed articles, testimony, advertorials, and corporate-branded content are not eligible for consideration.

How will Submissions be judged?

A rigorous review process will be implemented to identify this year's winners. [Committee and jury members will review submissions in each category](#), and the 12-member committee will conduct the final phase of review for each category and select the final cohort of winners:

- Submissions will be judged holistically through narrative responses and work examples. Both the narrative components of the submission and the work example(s) provided will be included in the evaluation. Reviewers will be looking at what an applicant has done, as well as their commitment to continuing work in the field of science communication and/or journalism. In particular, reviewers will be considering Submissions that:
 - Articulate what motivated the Submitter to create work(s) that improve the public's interest, appreciation, or understanding of science, engineering or medicine, and their impact on society.
 - Demonstrate the Submitter's passion for science communication or journalism and can tell us how they got here and where they are headed.
 - Sets forth a compelling case for what this award would mean to them.
- Include at least one outstanding example of science communication or journalism that demonstrates their potential or ability to communicate the issues, beauty, societal benefits, complexities, shortcomings, or controversies of science, engineering, and/or medicine. Examples should:
 - communicate scientific, engineering, and medical concepts to non-technical audience

- demonstrate clarity, creativity, originality, and accuracy
- address issues and/or advances in science, engineering, and/or medicine
- cover topics that have an impact on society
- are accessible to a broad public audience
- have been published or released anytime in 2025

Decisions of the judges are final.

What are the Awards?

It is anticipated that there will be a total of 24 Awards, with 8 top prizes (one in each subcategory) in the amount of \$40,000 each and 16 additional prizes (two in each subcategory) in the amount of \$20,000 each.

Who is Eligible to Submit?

- Open to entrants 13 years of age* or older who are working at the front lines of science communication or journalism except for previous winners of this award, individuals who are members of the household or immediate family of any of the National Academies of Schmidt Futures. (*Minors must submit a signed parental consent form with their application in order to be considered.)
- Awards will not be given posthumously.

What is the deadline for Submission?

The deadline for submission is Friday, April 3, 2026, 11:59 p.m. ET. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Are there additional terms and conditions?

Yes, the following terms and conditions apply.

- By entering this Competition, each individual Submitter grants the NAS a world-wide nonexclusive, royalty-free, transferable license to use and distribute their Submission to reviewers for the purposes of review and judging.
- Award winners, as a condition of award, will have to provide additional licenses and personal releases relating to the use of the Submission and their likeness in connection with publicizing the Awards Program and their participation for NAS-tax-exempt purposes.
- Award winners, as a condition of award, will have to provide NAS with a completed W-9 or W-8BEN (as appropriate per tax law) and EFT (electronic funds transfer) information as well as a Representations and Certifications form.
- Entering a Submission to this Competition does not guarantee that the Submission will be displayed or used by NAS. Use by NAS of a Submission does not necessarily reflect the views of the NAS, and in no event shall NAS assume or have any responsibility or liability for any Submission, in whole or in part, or for any claims, damages, or losses resulting from the use and/or appearance of any Submission or the contents thereof. NAS reserves the right to refuse any Submission in its sole discretion. NAS also reserves the right at any time during the competition to remove or disqualify any Submission when it believes in its sole discretion that the entrant has: (i) infringed any third party's copyright; (ii) failed to comply with these Terms and Conditions; or (iii) failed to obtain the necessary consents as set out in these terms and conditions. NAS shall not be liable for any claims, costs, liabilities, damages, expenses, and losses arising out of (i) NAS's use of the Submission; (ii) the Submitter's participation in the competition; (iii) technical failures of any kind including but not limited to problems or delays arising from software or equipment malfunctions or computer viruses; and (iv) any events outside NAS's reasonable control.

- By entering this competition, each individual Submitter represents and warrants that: (i) the individual Entrant is the sole author, creator, and owner of the Submission; (ii) except for material used by permission, none of the intellectual property rights in the Submission, or any portion thereof, has been assigned or transferred to anyone other than the entrant; (iii) the Submission, through its creation and its Submission as an entry, does not violate any applicable laws; and (iv) the Submission, through its creation and its Submission as an entry, does not infringe upon or violate intellectual property rights held by any third person or party. Any Submitter who supplies false information, enters the Competition by fraudulent means, or is otherwise determined to be in violation of the eligibility criteria or terms of this competition shall be ineligible for any prize and shall be required to forfeit any prize obtained based on such information or means. By entering a Submission, each individual Entrant agrees to comply with and be bound by the official rules and decisions of NAS. All references to NAS contained herein refer to the National Academy of Sciences.
- Taxes, if any, are the sole responsibility of the winner.
- This Contest is void where prohibited.
- The Contest shall be governed by, construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the District of Columbia.
- A list of Award Winners will be posted on the [program website](#) and can be obtained by contacting lkist@nas.edu.