



Nova Scotian Institute of Science

STUDENT SCIENCE

COMMUNICATION COMPETITION 2022

INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

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In 2022, the Nova Scotian Institute of Science (NSIS) is again sponsoring its annual Science Student Communication Competition. The competition has three categories: Community College, undergraduate and postgraduate students enrolled at a NS university or the NS Community College. Prizes will be awarded to the highest scoring submissions evaluated from our pool of judges.

- A prize of \$ 750 will be awarded to a Community College student submission.
- A prize of \$ 750 will be awarded to an undergraduate student submission.
- A prize of \$ 750 will be awarded to a postgraduate student submission.

Any student registered at a university or community college in Nova Scotia in 2022 is eligible to participate. Submissions may be made by individual students **or by groups of eligible students**, where the group submission and group correspondence, is through a single representative of the group or team.

The winning submissions (Essay, + Media Article + Video clip) will be posted on or linked from the NSIS website, the NSIS Facebook page, and the NSIS You Tube Channel. Those authors will be invited to submit their essay to the *Proceedings of the Nova Scotian Institute of Science*. All articles published in the *Proceedings* are subject to the normal editorial and peer review process.

Guidelines:

The competition is open to any topic of a scientific or technical nature. A few possible topics are: ocean science, geology, forest science, agriculture, mathematics, psychology, medicine, environmental science, etc., but these are only suggestions.

The 3500–4000 word Essay portion of the submission, should be either an *Original Essay* or *Original Research*.

1. Original Essay:

- (a) A substantive, original essay on any aspect of science. It should be more than a mere cataloguing of extant material; rather, it should incorporate a new analysis or perspective. Your own comments and insights on the significance of the topic and its relevance are particularly important.
- (b) Examples of original essay topics might include subjects such as: challenges for pollinators in N.S., sustainable forestry in N.S., new battery technologies, etc.
- (c) Students wishing feedback or suggestions on a possible essay topic are encouraged to contact the Coordinator.

2. Original Research:

- (a) A submission involving original research findings (your own research, or research in which you have substantially participated).
- (b) If your paper has been derived from a previously-prepared report/thesis/scientific paper, it should nonetheless be re-written, such that it can easily be understood by, and appeal to a non-specialist reader. (Note that re-use of previously-prepared material can raise authorship and/or copyright issues.)
- (c) Include insights into the significance and relevance of the research and its application.

The 400 word Media Article, on the same topic as the Essay or Research, should be prepared with an expectation that the intended reading audience would be that of the general public reading a local newspaper.

The 4 minute video, on the same topic as the Essay and Media Article, should be prepared with an expectation that the intended reading audience would be that of the general public reading a Google News feed.

Note! You should assume that your potential readers have a general scientific knowledge but are not acquainted with, or specialists in, your specific subject. We expect that your essay will be directed to a general, albeit educated, audience. Avoid jargon and acronyms. If you must use specific technical terms or acronyms they should be defined or explained, preferably in a Glossary. *Scientific American*, *The Smithsonian*, *The New Scientist*, etc. can serve as models for the level of writing.

Format of Manuscripts Submitted:

Aim for about 3,500-4,000 words, not counting the abstract, figure captions and references. Please number all of the pages. Diagrams and graphs can be included and are usually printed across the width of a page. Black and white photos are fine, and figures in colour can be considered. Use a line spacing of 1.2 to 1.5 with an easy-to-read, 12-point font, and proper formatting.

It can be helpful if the paper is divided into sections such as: Title/Author/Affiliation, Abstract (brief), Introduction, Methodology (if applicable), Results (if applicable), Discussion, Conclusions, Acknowledgements, References. No separate title page is needed. References should be presented in a readily accessible form, such as that used by a prominent, generalist science journal (e.g.: *Nature*).

Judging:

All submissions will be judged according to the following criteria:

- Appeal to a broad audience; i.e.: able to be understood by non-specialists in the area.
- Originality of the subject, treatment, findings, methods and techniques. (See below.)
- Scientific and technical correctness, value, significance, and relevance. (See below.)
- Clarity of presentation: clear, comprehensive, concise, logical, well-explained, readable.
- Free of spelling, grammatical and typographical errors.
- Overall impression of the paper.

Note that while we work to a grading template, we use a panel of Judges with different scientific backgrounds and perspectives. Some may favour an essay with some relevance to N.S., although that tends not to be weighted heavily. In any case, decisions of the applicable Judges are final, and are not subject to appeal.

Submissions:

This being a communications competition, you should be the sole author and creator of the manuscript. You must indicate that the writing is wholly your own and acknowledge the role any others played in preparing your submission (e.g.: minor editorial suggestions from your professor or advisor, provision of photographs, etc.). If the paper includes work done in collaboration with others, their contributions to the text should be kept to a minimum, and explicitly noted in the Acknowledgements. Also, indicate if the paper has been, or is likely to be, used substantially elsewhere,

Note: if you are submitting original data, include the name of your research supervisor and provide a statement that your supervisor (and any co-workers involved in the work) have agreed to the inclusion of the data in your paper. All personal or scientific information that you provide will be held in confidence.

“Notification of Intent” Deadline: The author must indicate intention to enter the contest to the Competition Coordinator at the e-mail address below by: **Monday, 14 February 2022, 23:59.**

This notification should include the following information:

- Name of the submitting individual (or team representative) with e-mail and telephone number.
- The name of your University or NSCC Campus, and home department.
- The name of your degree or diploma program and your current year in that program.
- The field or subject of your proposed entry, and a provisional title.
- Your motivation for selecting your topic.

“Final Entry” Deadline: Final submissions are to be **received** by the Coordinator by: **Monday, 28 February 2022, 23:59.**

Electronic submission of the 3500 - 4000 word Essay and 400 word Media Article are required to be in a PDF format required. The 4 minute video should be in a format that is or equivalent to and is as accessible as a You Tube type video post. Your submissions are to be made to the Coordinator at the e-mail address below.

Winners:

The winners of the Competition will be contacted before the end of April 2022, and the winning entries will be announced on the NSIS website. The presentation of the awards will take place in the spring of 2022 (e.g. and announced at the **Monday, 2 May 2022 NSIS meeting**).

High scoring submissions will be featured on our NSIS website, Facebook page, and You Tube Channel.

Winning author(s) will be invited to submit their paper for publication in the annual Proceedings of the NS Institute of Science.

Competition Coordinator:

Cameron Ells,

Nova Scotian Institute of Science

Coordinator – 2022 Student Science Communications Competition

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