

2026 Contest Guidelines – 2026 MRE Journalism Contest



2026 MRE Journalism Contest

What You Need to Enter the Contest

These guidelines provide a short summary of what is needed to enter the contest. A checklist is included to help you identify, gather and prepare necessary materials.

Details are specific to format and [categories](#). You may find it helpful to refer back to the [Official Rules](#), as well.

Guidelines

Audio MEDIA

Summary

Audio Media entries may be a single report, broadcast, episode, or podcast, or series, by either an individual journalist or a team.

- **Radio News** entries are limited to **15 minutes** maximum.
 - **Talk Show/Interview or Documentary** entries are limited to **30 minutes** maximum.
-

Basic entry information and materials:

1. Headline for entry
2. Original publication date – date of broadcast or airing.
3. Original publication place – name of broadcast station, online media, website, or streaming channel.
4. **PDF** cover letter.
5. Original URL where aired if published online.
6. Name of journalist.

7. **PDF** biography brief of journalist.
8. Submission **link**, **MP3** clip upload for upload, or **both** for contest entry review.

Optional but appreciated:

9. **PDF** Transcript
10. **JPG** or **PNG** headshot of journalist.
11. Additional credits for the work.

Gather & Prepare

- **Select Entry Items**
 - **Prepare Cover Letter**
 - A cover letter in **PDF** format is required for file upload.
 - Include content or podcast description with credits for any sponsoring organization or names of individuals.
 - **Identify Original Publication URL***
 - Provide the original URL (web address) if published online.
 - **Prepare Journalist Biography**
 - Biography in **PDF** format is required for file upload.
 - Provide an *edited 100-300* word biography for the entering journalist.
 - Provide an *edited 100-300* word biography for each team member appearing on the byline.
 - Please do not submit extensive biographies. One brief biography per journalist is requested.
 - *Example: If you have three bylined journalists, you will upload three pdf files.*
 - **Prepare Entry Submission Items**
 - Provide a **submission link** or **MP3 file** for upload or **both**.
 - Links may be direct or to third-party platforms such as SoundCloud or YouTube.
 - MP3 file upload must be smaller than 2.5G.
 - If recording is edited for length, edits can include clearly audible edits.
 - Verify total listening time does not exceed entry limites.
 - **Prepare *Optional* Transcript**
 - Provide a transcript in **PDF** format for file upload. Transcript may be helpful to the judges.
 - Limit one transcript file upload.
 - **Prepare *Optional* Journalist Headshot**
 - Image should be either a **JPG** or **PNG** and no smaller than 600 X 600 pixels.
 - Provide a picture for publication of the entering journalist.
 - Provide a picture for each team member named in the byline(s).
 - *Example: If you have three bylined journalists, you will upload three images.*
 - **Gather *Optional* Credits**
 - Include the names and titles of those who additionally contributed to the work, e.g., producer, etc., for acknowledgement if the entry is a winner.
 - Take Note: Appropriate credits may be included in the cover letter.
-

Multiple Audio Programs In One Entry

If your contest entry consists of multiple reports, broadcasts, episodes or podcasts, or is a series, you will need information in addition to the above.

- **Identify Original Publication Dates**
 - For each included in the entry.
- **Identify Original Publication Place**
 - For each included in the entry.
- **Identify Original Publication URL***
 - For each included in the entry.
- **Prepare Entry Submission**
 - Create a **single recording** (compiled and edited). Its total listening time may not exceed entry limits. OR
 - If you submit **multiple links** or **recordings**, verify, the total listening time does not exceed entry limits.

*NOTE: In many cases, the original publication URL and the submission link will be the same.

Text MEDIA

Summary

Text Media entries (exception of Commentary/Opinion) should include **one** to **four** articles. Multiple articles in one entry should be **related**, as in beat or single-topic coverage, or published as a series and authored by the entering journalist.

Commentary/Opinion entries should include **five columns** by the entering columnist.

Basic entry information and materials:

1. Original date of publication.
2. Original place of publication.
3. **PDF** document for each article submitted.
4. Original URL where each article was published if published online.
5. Name(s) of journalist(s) on each article byline.
6. **PDF** biography brief of journalist(s) named on byline.

Optional but appreciated:

7. Submission **link** for online review by judges.
8. Cover letter in **PDF** format.
9. **JPG** or **PNG** headshot of each journalist on byline.
10. Additional credits for the work.

Gather & Prepare

- **Select Entry Items**
- **Prepare Each Article PDF – Clear, Legible, Aligned**
 - Text with article graphics is acceptable.
 - Text only pdf is acceptable
 - PDF without ads or links to ads is preferred.
 - **Hint:** When viewing your article use the print pdf command, select “simplified” format and include header information for judges’ easy identification/verification of publication url.
- **Identify Each Article Original Publication URL***
 - Provide the original URL (web address) of article if originally published online.
- **Prepare Journalist Biography**
 - Biography in **PDF** format is required for file upload.
 - Provide an *edited* **100-300** word biography for the entering journalist.
 - Provide an *edited* **100-300** word biography for each team member appearing on the byline.
 - Please do not submit extensive biographies. One brief biography per journalist is requested.
 - *Example: If you have three bylined journalists, you will upload three biography pdf files.*
- **Identify *Optional* Submission Link* – Accessible**
 - Provide a link for each article you would like viewed/reviewed by judges online.
 - Include necessary login credentials for unlimited access to the article behind paywalls during the contest period.
- **Prepare *Optional* Cover Letter**
 - A cover letter in **PDF** format may be included with a contest entry.
- **Prepare *Optional* Journalist Headshot**
 - Image should be either a **JPG** or **PNG** and *no smaller* than 600X600 pixels.
 - Provide a picture for publication of the entering journalist.
 - Provide a picture for each team member named in the byline(s).
 - *Example: If you have three bylined journalists, you will upload three images.*
- **Gather *Optional* Credits**
 - Include the names and titles of those who additionally contributed to the work, e.g., editor or photographer, for acknowledgement if the entry is a winner.

***NOTE:** In many cases, the original article URL and the optional submission link will be the same.

Video MEDIA

Summary

Video Media entries may be a single report, broadcast, program, or episode or a series or docuseries by the journalist or a team.

- **TV/Video News** entries are limited to **15 minutes** maximum.
 - **TV/Video Documentary** entries are limited to **30 minutes** maximum.
-

Basic entry information and materials:

1. Headline for entry
2. Original publication date – date of broadcast or airing.
3. Original publication place – name of broadcast station, online media, website, or streaming channel.
4. **PDF** cover letter.
5. Original URL where aired if published online.
6. Name of journalist.
7. **PDF** biography brief of journalist.
8. Submission **link**, **MP4** clip upload for upload, or **both** for contest entry review.

Optional but appreciated:

9. **PDF** Transcript
10. **JPG** or **PNG** headshot of journalist.
11. Additional credits for the work.

Gather & Prepare

- **Select Entry Items**
- **Prepare Cover Letter**
 - A cover letter in **PDF** format is required for file upload.
- **Identify Original Publication URL***
 - Provide the original URL (web address) if published online.
- **Prepare Journalist Biography**
 - Biography in **PDF format** is required for file upload.
 - Provide an *edited 100-300* word biography for the entering journalist.
 - Provide an *edited 100-300* word biography for each team member appearing on the byline.
 - Please do not submit extensive biographies. One brief biography per journalist is requested.
 - *Example: If you have three bylined journalists, you will upload three pdf files.*
- **Prepare Entry Submission Items**
 - Create a **submission link** or **MP4 file** for upload or **both**.
 - Links may be direct or to third-party platforms such as Vimeo or YouTube.
 - MP4 file upload must be smaller than 2.5G. Please compress, optimize videos before uploading.
 - If video is edited for length, edits must be clearly indicated by a tone or silence.
 - Verify all video viewing does not exceed entry limits.
- **Prepare Optional Transcript**
 - Provide a transcript in **PDF** format for file upload. Transcript may be helpful to the judges.
 - Limit one transcript file upload.
- **Prepare Optional Journalist Headshot**
 - Image should be either a **JPG** or **PNG** and no smaller than 600 X 600 pixels.
 - Provide a picture for publication of the entering journalist.
 - Provide a picture for each team member named in the byline(s).
 - *Example: If you have three bylined journalists, you will upload three images.*

- **Gather *Optional Credits***

- Include the names and titles of those who additionally contributed to the work, e.g., producer, videographer, etc., for acknowledgement if the entry is a winner.
-

Multiple Video Programs In One Entry

If your contest entry consists of multiple reports, broadcasts, or episodes or is a docuseries, you will need information in addition to the above.

- **Identify Original Publication Dates**

- For each included in the entry.

- **Identify Original Publication Place**

- For each included in the entry.

- **Identify Original Publication URL***

- For each included in the entry.

- **Entry Submission**

- If you create a **single video** (compiled and edited), verify its total viewing does not exceed entry limits.
 - If you submit **multiple links** or **files**, the total viewing time of all videos added together may not exceed entry limits.
-

***NOTE:** In many cases, the original publication URL and the submission link will be the same.

Visual MEDIA

Summary

Visual Media entries may include a single image submission or a series submission with up to five images. Multiple images in one entry should be **related** to a single topic by the entering photographer.

Basic entry information and materials:

1. Name of photographer.
2. Original date of publication for each photograph.
3. Original place of publication for each photograph.
4. Title of each photograph.
5. If series submission, headline for series.
6. **PNG** or **JPG** image for each picture.
7. Documentation of photo publication – **PDF**, **JPG** or **PNG**.
8. If published online, original URL where each photo was published.
9. **PDF** cover letter.
10. **PDF** biography brief of photographer.

Optional but appreciated:

11. Submission **link** for online review by judges, if published online.

12. **JPG** or **PNG** headshot of each journalist on byline.
13. Additional credits for the work.

Gather & Prepare

- **Select Entry Items**
- **Identify Image Original Publication URL***
 - Provide the original URL (web address) where image was published, if online.
- **Gather Entry Submission Items**
 - Upload **JPG** or **PNG** image for submission.
- **Prepare Documentation of Publication**
 - Provide a screenshot if published online or a photograph of page of publication to document each photograph's publication.
 - Upload in **PDF** or **JPG** or **PNG** format.
- **Prepare Cover Letter**
 - A cover letter in **PDF** format is required describing the work.
- **Prepare Journalist Biography**
 - Biography in **PDF** format is required for file upload.
 - Provide an *edited* **100-300** word biography for the entering journalist.
- **Identify *Optional* Submission Link* – Accessible**
 - Provide a link for each photograph you would like viewed/reviewed by judges online.
 - Include necessary login credentials for unlimited access to the article behind paywalls during the contest period.
- **Prepare *Optional* Journalist Headshot**
 - Image should be either a **JPG** or **PNG** and *no smaller* than 600X600 pixels.
 - Provide a picture for publication of the entering journalist.
 - *Example: If you have three bylined journalists, you will upload three images.*
- **Gather *Optional* Credits**
 - Include the names and titles of those who additionally contributed to the work, e.g., editor for acknowledgement if the entry is a winner.

***NOTE:** In many cases, the original article URL and the optional submission link will be the same.

Student MEDIA

Project Eligibility & Requirements

To be eligible, the entire project must have been produced only by enrolled students receiving academic credit for the work being entered or must be work created for a student publication.

Work produced for pay is not eligible for a student award (that is, freelance work, etc. Receipt of student aid is not a disqualifier).

Work that was created by a student for credit but then made available to a commercial publication is allowed but should be explained in the entry.

Student Guidelines

Please refer to the guidelines above and apply as they relate to your individual project.