

**ARCE ANNUAL MEETING
BEST STUDENT PAPER & POSTER COMPETITIONS
GUIDELINES & JUDGING PROCESS**

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

Best Student Paper and Best Student Poster Competitions will take place only in-person during the 2026 Annual Meeting

Awards & Recognition:

- **1st Place:** \$500 prize + complimentary Annual Meeting registration
- **2nd Place:** \$300 prize + complimentary Annual Meeting registration
- **3rd Place:** \$200 prize + complimentary Annual Meeting registration

In addition, all student submitters who advance to the **second round of review** (up to 10 finalists in each category) will also receive **complimentary registration** to the Annual Meeting.

Submissions for Best Student Paper (BSP):

- Students must be current members of ARCE.
- Students must be enrolled in a Master's or PhD program.
- Undergraduate students are eligible to participate in the competition if they are advanced students engaged in original research. A letter from their advisor is required, confirming the student's advanced status and their preparedness to present a poster or paper as part of the regular academic conference schedule.
- Only one student per paper may apply for the BSP Competition.
- Students need not be American citizens or attending American schools.
- Any student who will have defended their dissertation, graduated, or otherwise passed their final institutional requirements for conferral of the doctoral degree prior to the annual conference date, shall be ineligible for consideration in the Best Student Paper or Poster Competition.
- Submissions need not be part of doctoral research.
- In conjunction with abstract submission, students who wish to be considered for BSP must submit an annotated outline, including a bibliography, to BSP@arce.org. Templates are available on the website. The deadline for submitting all additional materials, including the undergraduate student's advisor letter, is January 9, 2026.
- If there are 3 or less applicants, only a first prize winner will be selected.
- Competition is open for any student to apply, although only 10 finalists will be selected to participate in the competition during the Annual Meeting. Following the acceptance of the abstract

according to ARCE standards, the selection of the 10 finalists is done by a blind, peer-review process of both the abstract and annotated outline. Determination of the winner(s) is done by a panel of judges after delivery of paper at the Annual Meeting.

- If a student received a prize in the Best Student Paper competition the previous year, then they will not be eligible in the immediately following (1) year.

Submissions for Best Student Poster (BSPo):

- Students must be current members of ARCE.
- Students must be enrolled in a Master's or PhD program.
- Undergraduate students are eligible to participate in the competition if they are advanced students engaged in original research. A letter from their advisor is required, confirming the student's advanced status and their preparedness to present a poster or paper as part of the regular academic conference schedule.
- Only one student per poster may apply for the BSPo Competition.
- Students need not be American citizens or attending American schools.
- Any student who will have defended their dissertation, graduated, or otherwise passed their final institutional requirements for conferral of the doctoral degree prior to the annual conference date, shall be ineligible for consideration in the Best Student Paper or Poster Competition.
- Submissions need not be part of doctoral research.
- In conjunction with abstract submission, students who wish to be considered for BSP must submit an annotated outline, including a bibliography, to BSP@arce.org. Templates are available on the website. The deadline for submitting all additional materials, including the undergraduate student's advisor letter, is January 9, 2026.
- If there are 3 or less applicants, only a first prize winner will be selected.
- Competition is open for any student to apply, although only 10 finalists will be selected to participate in the competition during the Annual Meeting. Following the acceptance of the abstract according to ARCE standards, the selection of the 10 finalists is done by a blind, peer-review process of both the abstract and annotated outline. Determination of the winner(s) is done by a panel of judges after presentation of the poster at the Annual Meeting.
- If a student received a prize in the Best Student Poster competition the previous year, then they will not be eligible in the immediately following (1) year.

These Eligibility Guidelines have been reviewed and approved by:

Julia Troche (Annual Meeting Committee Chair)

Fatma Ismail (ARCE US Director for
Outreach and Programs)

September 12th, 2025

SUMMARY OF JUDGING, REVIEW CRITERIA, AND SCORING

JUDGING:

Submissions for the ARCE Annual Meeting Best Student Paper and Poster Competitions must first be accepted for the Annual Meeting by the standard submission and review process. A second round of review determines up to ten finalists for each presentation format.

Judging of finalist papers and posters at the Annual Meeting is tasked to a pool of academic professionals in attendance and assigned by subject and/or methodological areas of expertise, experience, and interest. Each paper/poster is attended and scored by a number of judges. Judges may review papers, posters, or both. Judges may not review papers or posters by students from their home academic programs.

REVIEW CRITERIA:

Judges are tasked with scoring the following review criteria on a 1-5 scale:

Review Criteria for Papers:

1. ORIGINALITY & SIGNIFICANCE:

Does the paper/poster break new ground and introduce new ideas?
Will it have an impact on future scholarship?

2. METHODOLOGY:

Does the paper/poster demonstrate serious research methods?
Does it draw logical conclusions based on these methods?

3. DELIVERY

Is presentation of the paper clear, interesting, and convincing.
Does the speaker present in a comfortable and confident manner.

4. VISUALS:

Are slides legible and understandable?
Are they appropriate to the subject matter?
Do they support the paper's arguments?
Are there too many or too few?

A final criterion for TIMING considers if the speaker adhered to the time limit. This criterion may be considered in the rare cases of ties.

Review Criteria for Posters:

1. ORIGINALITY & SIGNIFICANCE:

Does the poster introduce new ideas?
Will it have an impact on future scholarship?

2. METHODOLOGY:

Does the poster demonstrate serious research methods?

Does it draw logical conclusions based on these methods?

3. DELIVERY & DISCUSSION

Is the in-person presentation of the poster clear, interesting, and convincing?

Does the presenter discuss the poster content in a comfortable, confident, and knowledgeable manner?

4. EFFECTIVENESS OF DISPLAY & LAYOUT:

Is the poster well-organized and easy to follow?

Is the use of images and text appropriate to the subject matter?

Is there too much/little text? Are there too many/few images?

TABULATION OF FINAL SCORES & RESULTS:

To minimize the impact of outlier scores and general variance across individual judging styles, final scores are tabulated on a double-averaged basis. For each judge on a paper/poster, scores for the four review criteria are averaged as that judge's Composite Score. The judges' Composite Scores for each paper/poster then are averaged to determine a Final Score. The Final Scores determine the outcomes of the Best Student Paper and Best Student Poster Prizes, with awards for the three top-placing finalists for each presentation format.