

COLLEGE BROADCASTERS, INC.
2026 NATIONAL STUDENT PRODUCTION AWARDS

OFFICIAL ENTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

Entries are to be original work by students (totally student-produced) for a campus media outlet or college credit course. All entries must be submitted via askcbi.org by **Friday, May 15, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. PT**. There is a fee of \$25 per entry for CBI member stations, both college and high school, and BEA Members.

The entry fee for **non-member stations** is \$80 per entry.

Non-Members must be registered in order to submit for the awards. [Register here to create a non-member account.](#)

It is financially beneficial for non-members (college and high school) who are submitting more than two entries to become members (\$175). CBI members also receive a discount on registration for the [National Student Media Convention](#). Non-members wishing to become members will be required to pay for membership online during the last week of the submission window. [Become a CBI Member station by following this link.](#)

OFFICIAL RULES

The CBI board of directors are the final authority on all matters involving the contest. The contest is open to all campus radio stations (over-the-air, Internet and cable/closed circuit), television facilities, and other student media outlets. Finalists and winners entries may be posted on the CBI website or other site of its choosing and at its discretion. Rules may be amended by the CBI board of directors at any time.

- Entries must be submitted electronically.
- All entries must be submitted as originally broadcast or produced for a class between May 16, 2025, and May 15, 2026.
- There is an entry fee of \$25 per entry for CBI member media outlets and BEA Members. The entry fee for non-members is \$80 per entry. These fees can be paid online, by check or purchase order. All checks and purchase orders must be postmarked by May 22, 2026.
- MP3 is the recommended file format for Audio entries.
- MP4 is the recommended file formats for Video entries.

- JPG, JPEG or PNG are the recommended file format for Photo entries.
- The official online entry form must be used. An entry form is to be filled out individually with each entry. Each entry must be placed in the correct subsection (Audio or Video or Combined) and in the correct category or it will not be considered.
- Each entry must be completely identified to show the name and call letters of the station (if applicable); name and mailing address of the school and/or station; competition category; title of the entry; the name of the person(s) involved with production of the entry (limit to 10 students); the air/production date; and the length of the entry.
- Entries are limited to **two** per category per media outlet.
- The same audio/video piece may only be entered in **one** category each contest year.
- Entries submitted in previous years are not eligible, with the exception of the Student Media Website, Social Media Presence, Radio Station of the Year and Video Channel of the Year categories. Entries in these categories are expected to have new content within the eligibility period to remain eligible for the competition.
- Entries are to be original work by students (**totally student-produced**) for a campus media outlet or college credit courses. This work can not be done for professional broadcasting stations or related organizations, including student-produced work for organizations such as NPR/PBS, Fox Sports/ESPN. Such entries will be automatically disqualified.
- Use of professional or commercial announcers, or voice-over talent or elements is not allowed.
- All entrants must affirm copyright permission for any material not covered by a campus or institutional agreement with ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, or other licensing organization.
- Each entry must include a description of the entry that provides context for the judges. This description may include, but is not limited to, a summary of the entry, an explanation of how the topic was selected, the goals achieved, any hurdles that were overcome, and the quantity and quality of audience feedback received.
- The judges for the contest will be professionals in the field and journalism/film/mass communications faculty/staff members. They will have the authority to place an entry in a different category than the one in which it was entered.
- Violation of these rules will result in disqualification of a media outlet's entry from any award consideration by the judges in the category in which the violation occurs.
- CBI is not responsible for reprinting costs associated with submission entry information misspellings.

- A shipping fee will be invoiced to media outlets for shipping of awards not picked up at the awards ceremony.
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Audio Categories

Best DJ

The entry should resemble a DJ aircheck and highlight the on-air announcing skills of exceptional radio talent(s). The entry may feature a show team with single or multiple on-air personalities. An entry, similar to an aircheck, consists of only breaks taken by the announcer(s). The station should be clearly identified throughout the submission. Whole songs, PSAs, sales messages, or promos which do not feature the talents of the announcer(s) are not to be included, but a few seconds of a stopset are allowable to establish the transition between breaks. Original bits including telephone interaction (with the subjects' permission) are allowable. The entry must be a collection of highlights or a résumé tape made by the announcer(s). The entry submitted may be no longer than five (5) minutes in length.

Judges will consider personality, delivery, sound recording, transitions, and use of audio and identification of self and media outlet.

Best Promo

The promotion must incorporate creative use of voice, music, and/or sound effects combined to form an announcement used to promote their campus media outlet. Entries should identify the name of the outlet. The entry must be 90 seconds or less.

Judges will consider content, talent/delivery, writing, sound recording, editing, and use of audio.

Best Public Service Announcement

The public service announcement must incorporate use of voice, music, and/or sound effects combined to form an announcement used to provide public service to the campus community and/or the area which the media outlet serves. The public service announcement should be original written content, localized to the community the student media outlet serves and not be entirely national in scope. The entry must be 90 seconds or less. The subject content cannot be the media outlet or college/university itself.

Judges will consider content, talent/delivery, writing, sound recording, editing, and use of audio.

Best Newscast or Sportscast

The entry must be a single, regularly scheduled newscast or sportscast no longer than (10) minutes in length, although the program may have been longer in its entirety. Special segments such as pre-produced features or investigative reports may be included in the newscast/sportscast but will not be considered by the judges for the purpose of this award unless such segments are locally produced by the station or media outlet.

Judging will be based on content and service to the community. Considerations will include writing, editing, news or sports judgment, delivery, and presentation.

Best Hard News Reporting

This category is for hard news packages (no sports) that would air during any regularly scheduled newscast, magazine show segment or be featured on a station's digital platform. An entry is a single news story that features sound to enhance the package. The entry must be no longer than five minutes (5:00) in length.

Judging will be based on content and service to the community. Considerations will include writing, editing, news judgment, delivery and presentation.

Best Feature News Reporting

This category is for hard news packages (no sports) that would air during any regularly scheduled newscast, magazine show segment or be featured on a station's digital platform. An entry is a single news story that features sound to enhance the package. The entry must be no longer than five minutes (5:00) in length.

Judging will be based on content and service to the community. Considerations will include writing, editing, news judgment, delivery, and presentation.

Best Special Broadcast

The entry must be a locally originated stand-alone program or long format filler program of a one-time or annual nature that is NOT a sports event or part of a regularly scheduled program (e.g. "special editions" of programs or regular programs presented at a different time). The entry must be a minimum of ten (10) minutes in length. The segment entered may be of scoped material.

Judging will consider creativity, the development/pace of the show/story,

presentation, delivery, and use of audio.

Best Documentary

The entry must be a program dealing with an issue of public interest explored in-depth with multiple credible sources. Subject matter can include (but is not limited to) investigations, examinations of social issues, and historical retrospectives. Extensive use of sound to enhance the content is required. The documentary must have been produced entirely by students. The entry must be no longer than thirty (30) minutes, although the program may have been longer in its entirety and must be presented as "consecutive minutes," not several samples of scoped material.

Judges will evaluate the quality of production and journalistic skills demonstrated in presentation and editing. Considerations will include writing, creativity, delivery, use of audio, and overall storytelling ability.

Best Podcast

This is a unique audio program intended for an online audience. The entry must be no longer than ten (10) minutes, although the program may have been longer in its entirety. In addition, the segment entered shall be the first ten (10) minutes of the podcast, including a clear intro, not several samples of scoped material.

Judges will consider content, delivery, editing, use of audio, and interest to an online audience.

Best Sports Show

The entry must be a single, regularly scheduled sports-themed show. Special segments, such as syndicated reports, may be included in the sports show, but they will not be considered by the judges for the purpose of this award. The entry must be no longer than thirty (30) minutes, although the program may have been longer in its entirety. In addition, the segment must be from a single episode. The segment may be scoped material. Audio SPORTS PLAY-BY-PLAY (see SPORTS PLAY-BY-PLAY category) segments or full game coverage are NOT permissible in this category.

Judging will be based on content, delivery, presentation, sports news judgment and knowledge.

Best Sports Reporting

This category is for sports packages that would air during any regularly scheduled newscast or sportscast or be featured on the station's digital platform. An entry is a single sports story which features interview(s)/sound to enhance the package. An entry must be no longer than five minutes (5) in length. Audio sports play-by-play

segments are NOT permissible in this category.

Judging will be based on content and service to the community. Considerations will include writing, editing, news judgment, knowledge of sport, delivery, presentation, and use of audio.

Best Sports Play-By-Play

Entry must be play-by-play coverage of a sports event. The entry must be the program as broadcast, except that the segment submitted may be no longer than ten (10) minutes. In addition, the segment entered shall be "consecutive minutes," not several samples of scoped material.

Judges will consider game knowledge and analysis, presentation, delivery and interaction.

Best Regularly Scheduled Entertainment Program

Entry must be from a regularly scheduled program that airs weekly or on a consistent schedule, such as comedy, soap opera, or talk show. News programs, music performances, sports broadcasts, and sports-related content are not eligible. One or multiple talent(s) is acceptable. The segment submitted can be no longer than thirty (30) minutes, though the original may have been longer. In addition, the segment must be from a single show, not multiple shows. The segment may be of scoped material.

Judges will consider writing, delivery by talent/host(s), editing, originality and use of audio.

Best Station Imaging

This category is open to station IDs, promos, sweepers, liners, jingles, and any other creative use of voice, music and sound effects to promote and enhance a campus station's brand/image/identity. Individual (stand-alone) spots or an entire campaign may be entered, but total time of the audio submission package cannot exceed five (5) minutes. Imaging produced by any outside firm or professional is ineligible. All submissions in the Best Audio Station Imaging category must have been produced in-house by student staff.

Judges will consider content, editing, sound, delivery and branding.

Best Audio Music Production

The entry must be coverage of a music performance captured for radio/audio broadcast. This may include but is not limited to performances by bands, orchestras,

choirs, or solo performers. Entries must demonstrate excellence in audio production elements including: microphone placement and technique, live mixing, creative sound engineering, and overall production quality. Submit a single continuous segment not exceeding ten minutes (10), though the original program may have been longer.

Judging will evaluate technical execution of audio capture, mix balance, sound engineering creativity, and overall production values that enhance the listening experience.

Best Audio Interview

This category recognizes exceptional student-produced interviews that demonstrate outstanding interviewing skills, creative presentation and compelling storytelling. The interview could air during any show or newscast, talk show, music show, sports show or other such program or be featured on a station's website. The entry must be no longer than five minutes (5) in length. A brief description of the subject, interviewer approach and any notable notes regarding the securing of the interview or unique aspect of production is required on the entry form.

Judging will be based on locally generated content, localizing national/regional events with an engaging approach, and service to the community. Considerations will include interview engagement, editing, delivery, presentation, and use of audio.

Radio Station Of The Year

This category recognizes excellence in the overall sound quality, programming, production value and listener experience. The entry should be no longer than fifteen (15) minutes containing a compilation of the station's best work during the eligibility period. A max two (2) pages summary of the station, in PDF format, that provides information about your station that may include whether it is terrestrial/online, format, number of students and non-students involved, student and other management structure, along with significant accomplishments over the last year such as new programming, fundraising, community service, enhanced training, etc. Links to the station website and one social media platform required.

Judging will consider audio quality, technical proficiency, innovative programming, audience interaction, and overall impact on the audience (a summary of the station's outreach, listener stories, and any measurable data even if anecdotal).

Video categories

Best Comedy

Original comedy-based program. The segment submitted can be no longer than thirty (30) minutes although the original program may have been longer. Entries must also disclose the use of profane language.

Judging will be based on acting, writing, and production elements such as lighting, editing, camera and proper and consistent audio levels.

Best Promo

The promotion must incorporate creative use of voice, music, video, graphics, and/or sound effects combined to form an announcement used to promote their campus media outlet. Entries should identify the name of the outlet. The entry must be 90 seconds or less.

Judges will consider content, talent/delivery, writing, sound recording, camera shots, graphics, editing, and use of audio and video.

Best PSA

The public service announcement must incorporate use of voice, music, video, graphics, and/or sound effects combined to form an announcement used to provide public service to the campus community and/or the area which the media outlet serves. The public service announcement should be original written content, localized to the community the student media outlet serves and not be entirely national in scope. The entry must be 90 seconds or less. The subject content cannot be the media outlet or college/university itself.

Judges will consider content, talent/delivery, writing, sound recording, camera shots, graphics, editing, and use of audio and video.

Best Newscast

The entry must be a single, regularly scheduled newscast no longer than thirty (30) minutes in length, although the program may have been longer in its entirety. Special segments such as pre-produced features or investigative reports may be included in the newscast but will not be considered by the judges for the purpose of this award unless such segments are locally produced by the station or media outlet. Sports and Weather segments should not be longer than one-third of the entire broadcast, respectively.

Judging will be based on locally generated content, localizing national/regional events

with an engaging approach, and service to the community. Considerations will include writing, editing, news or sports judgment, delivery, presentation, graphics (chyron), and use of audio and video.

Best Hard News Reporting

This category is for feature or soft news packages (no sports) that would air during any regularly scheduled newscast or be featured on a station's digital platform. An entry is a single news story that features compelling relevant video and sound to enhance the package with at least one interview sound on tape (SOT) as an element of the story. The entry must be no longer than five minutes (5) in length.

Judging will be based on locally generated content, localizing national/regional events with an engaging approach, and service to the community. Considerations will include creative and effective writing, editing, news judgment, delivery, presentation, graphics (chyron), and use of audio and video.

Best Feature News Reporting

This category is for feature or soft news packages (no sports) that would air during any regularly scheduled newscast or be featured on a station's digital platform. An entry is a single news story that features video and sound to enhance the package with at least one interview sound on tape (SOT) as an element of the story. The entry must be no longer than five minutes (5) in length.

Judging will be based on locally generated content, localizing national/regional events with an engaging approach, and service to the community. Considerations will include creative and effective writing, editing, news judgment, delivery, presentation, graphics (chyron), and use of audio and video.

Best Special Broadcast

The entry must be a locally originated stand-alone program or long format filler program of a one-time or annual nature that is NOT a sports event or part of a regularly scheduled program (e.g. "special editions" of programs or regular programs presented at a different time), films or documentaries. The segment entered may be of scoped material. The entry must be a minimum of ten (10) minutes in length.

Judges will consider creativity, show/story development/pace to engage the audience of the presentation. Considerations will include creativity, concept & execution, effective writing (if applicable), editing, delivery, presentation, and use of audio and video. Context must be provided in the submission document.

Best Documentary Long Form

The category is for long form documentaries that deal with an issue of public interest explored in-depth with multiple credible sources. Subject matter can include (but is not limited to) investigations, examinations of social issues, and historical retrospectives. The documentary must have been produced entirely by students. The entry must be between ten (10) and thirty (30) minutes, although the program may have been longer in its entirety and must be presented as "consecutive minutes," not several samples of scoped material.

Judges will evaluate the quality of production and journalistic skills demonstrated in presentation and editing. Considerations will include content, editing, lighting, graphics, writing, use of audio and video.

Best Documentary Short Form

This category is for short form documentaries that deal with an issue of public interest. Subject matter can include (but is not limited to) investigations, examinations of social issues, and historical retrospectives. The documentary must have been produced entirely by students. The entry must be between three (3) and ten (10) minutes in length.

Judges will evaluate the quality of production and journalistic skills demonstrated in presentation and editing. Considerations will include content, editing, lighting, writing, use of audio and video

Best Sportscast

The entry must be a single, regularly scheduled sportscast or sports themed show. Special segments, syndicated reports, may be included in the sportscast, but they will not be considered by the judges for the purpose of this award unless they are localizing a national story over a VO bed. Video sports play-by-play segments or full game coverage are NOT permissible in this category. The entry must be no longer than thirty (30) minutes, although the program may have been longer in its entirety. In addition, the segment must be from a single episode. The segment may be scoped material.

Judging will be based on content, delivery, sports news judgment and knowledge, technical elements such as directing, graphics and lighting, and use of audio and video.

Best Sports Reporting

This category is for sports packages that would air during any regularly scheduled newscast, sportscast or be featured on a station's website. An entry is a single sports

story which features video and sound to enhance the package with at least one interview sound on tape (SOT) as an element of the story. An entry must be no longer than five minutes (5) in length.

Judging will be based on content and service to the community. Considerations will include writing, editing, news judgment, preparation, knowledge of sport, delivery, presentation, graphics (chyron) and use of audio and video.

Best Live Sports Broadcast

The entry must be a locally broadcast program of a live or live-to-tape coverage of a live sporting event. The live shot may use single or multiple cameras. The entry must have been produced entirely by students in live or live-to-tape production. The entry should be a continual block and should not exceed twenty minutes (20), although the program may have been longer in its entirety. Video SPORTSCAST (see SPORTSCAST category) are NOT permissible in this category.

Judging considerations will include technical proficiency with single or multiple cameras, directing, content, creative sound engineering, and demonstrated production values, as well as game knowledge and analysis, presentation, delivery and interaction.

Best Live Production

The entry must be a locally broadcast program of a live or live-to-tape performance, variety show, event, or studio production that includes music, talk, or other non-news or non-sports content. This may include but is not limited to performances of a band or entertainer, game show, talk show or other public interest programming. The entry must have been produced entirely by students in live or live-to-tape production with multiple cameras and NO editing. The entry should be a continual block and should not exceed ten minutes (10), although the program may have been longer in its entirety.

Judging considerations will include technical proficiency with single or multiple cameras, directing, content, creative sound engineering, and demonstrated production values.

Best General Entertainment Program

Entry must be from a regularly scheduled program that airs weekly or on a consistent schedule, such as dramas, soap-operas, reality shows, game shows or talk shows. News programs, music performances, sports broadcasts and sports-related content are not eligible. One or multiple talent is acceptable. The segment submitted can be no longer than thirty (30) minutes, although the original may have been longer.

Judges will consider writing, delivery of talent/host(s), editing, originality and use of audio and video.

Short Film Fiction

This category is designed for fiction films or videos that are between three (3) and ten (10) minutes in length. Submissions must disclose use of profane language.

Judging will be based on directing, acting, writing, and production elements such as editing, camera and proper and consistent use of audio levels.

Digital Shorts

This category is designed for shorts that are no longer than one (3) minute in length and fast-paced. Can include videos posted on a social media platform in 1920x1080 format as well as other dimensions.

Judging will be based on content purposes such as promotion or entertainment, and include judging of editing, lighting, and the use of audio and video.

Long Film Fiction

This category is designed for fiction films or videos that are between ten (10) and thirty (30) minutes in length.

Judging will be based on acting, writing, and production elements such as editing, camera and audio.

Best Station Imaging

This category is open to station IDs, promos, and any other creative use of voice, music, video, graphics, and/or sound effects to promote and enhance a campus video outlet's brand/image/identity. Individual spots or an entire campaign may be entered, but total time of the video submission package cannot exceed five (5) minutes. Imaging produced by any outside firm or professional is not eligible. All submissions in the category must have been produced in-house by student staff.

Judges will consider overall content, editing, and branding from the incorporation of talent/delivery, writing, sound recording, camera shots, graphics, editing, and audio and video.

Best Video Music Production

The entry must be coverage of a music performance. This may include but is not limited to performances of a band, orchestra, choir, or a single performer. Entries

must demonstrate excellence in multi-faceted production elements including: multi-camera operation and switching, live audio mixing, creative sound engineering, professional directing, and overall production quality. Submit a single continuous segment not exceeding ten minutes (10), though the original program may have been longer.

Judging will evaluate technical execution of camera work, audio engineering creativity, directing choices, and overall production values that enhance the viewing experience.

Best Video Interview

This category recognizes exceptional student-produced interviews that demonstrate outstanding interviewing skills, creative presentation and compelling storytelling. The interview could air during any show or newscast, talk show, music show, sports show or other such program or be featured on a station's website. The entry must be no longer than five minutes (5) in length. A brief description of the subject, interviewer approach and any notable notes regarding the securing of the interview or unique aspect of production is required on the entry form.

Judging will be based on locally generated content, localizing national/regional events with an engaging approach, and service to the community. Considerations will include interview engagement, editing, delivery, presentation, graphics (chyron), and use of audio and video.

Video Channel Of The Year

This category recognizes excellence in the overall video quality, programming, production value and viewer experience. The entry should be no longer than fifteen (15) minutes containing a compilation of the station's best work during the eligibility period. A max two (2) pages summary of the station, in PDF format, that provides information about your station that may include whether it is terrestrial/online, format, number of students and non-students involved, student and other management structure, along with significant accomplishments over the last year such as new programming, fundraising, community service, enhanced training, etc. Links to the channel's website and one social media platform required.

Judging will consider video and audio quality, technical proficiency, innovative programming, audience interaction, and overall impact on the audience (a summary of the station's outreach, audience stories, and any measurable data even if anecdotal).

Combined categories

Best Student Media Website

Students who are making the best effort to provide a solid Internet strategy for their campus media outlet should submit their URL to enter.

Entries will be judged on content, presentation, ease of navigation, interaction, usability and resources provided to the site's visitors.

Best Social Media Presence

Students who are using Social Media as a way to engage their station's audience and the community at large should enter their Social Media platform(s) (Facebook, X, Instagram, etc.) page URL.

Judges will look at a station's overall Social Media presence based on their platform(s) and will consider as pluses the following: Quality of posts – grammar, use of hyperlinks, quality of media used in posts (videos, graphics, photos, etc.); Creativity of posts and media; Incorporation of station imaging and media; as well as overall engagement with audience.

Outstanding Event Photography

This category recognizes photographers who document events — including but not limited to festivals and concerts — published on a media outlet's digital platform(s). Submissions must demonstrate the ability to convey emotion, atmosphere, and storytelling through a single image or series. The award highlights artistic vision and the unique perspectives of working event photographers. Entries can be a single photo or a package of 3-5 photos that help tell a story.

Judges will look for creativity, technical proficiency, and the ability to capture candid moments that resonate with viewers.