



ASC REGION 1
Annual Competition and Conference
Judging Firm Guidelines and Expectations
 19 June 2023

The following is a set of guidelines and expectations for judging firms as a part of the Associated Schools of Construction (ASC) Region 1 Annual Competition and Conference. This document is referred to and subservient to the ASC Region 1 Annual Competition and Conference Competition Rules & Guidelines, current edition), especially Section G “Industry Judging”.

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Competition Guidance

The following are some notes that may help you as a judging firm in the preparation for the competition. Please ensure you also refer to, and have working knowledge of, the competition rules & guidelines.

Before Competition

- **Problem Statements:** Pursuant to the competition rules & guidelines, you are asked to provide an abstract/synopsis of the RFP/IFB that you will be giving the teams during the competition. Typically these statements are one to two pages in length. It helps to give a general idea of the nature of the problem and primary concerns/issues that the students will need to address during the competition itself. Examples of past problem statements can be obtained from the ASC Region 1 website for past year competitions.
- **Rubric:** In addition to the problem statements you are developing, we will be asking for you to provide a scoring rubric (aka scoresheet) for how you plan to assess the teams in your category. Some find making it out of 100 points as an easy way to facilitate an even scoring result, but this is not required. The rubric,

however, should provide enough detail to make it clear the intended weight and consideration of the various portions of the proposal/bid document as well as how the presentations will be scored. On the rubric itself, not only provide what is being scored and the scoring approach, but also the rationale/why it is being scored that way. Please note the need to include, in your rubric, the penalty indicated on the required pre-qualification form.

- Proposal Submission: Make it clear the mechanism/method in which you desire electronic submissions. Is it by thumb drive (aka memory stick, etc.) or by upload? WARNING: the Hotel Wifi can easily be overwhelmed, so you may want to consider both primary and secondary methods. If by thumb drive, how many and are there any particular file organization and/or file naming requirements. If upload, make sure you have a plan for how this is done, and if using a project management software (e.g. Procore) make sure you have figured out prior to competition login and access credentialing. Make this clear so that the teams can come resourced accordingly.
- Dress: If you have an anticipated dress/appearance assessment, be clear what helps and hurts. Will wearing business formal attire (e.g. suit and tie/female equivalent) help or hurt? Do you expect them to dress appropriate to their role (e.g. Superintendents in jeans and polo, Project Exec. in suit and tie/female equivalent, etc.)? Make this clear ahead of time.
- Make expectations clear overall. For instance, if you have a particular form you are asking them to use, make it clear if that form can be altered or not, whether empty slots are seen as deductions or acceptable, and so forth. Key to all this is that these students are learning by doing; you are getting a chance to guide them and teach them the best practices. Don't feel the need to "hand-hold" them, but make your expectations clear (much as you would hope that project owners would do for you).
- Preliminary work: The main activity period for the competition is during the on-site portion of the event. Judging firms may elect (but have no obligation) to have some limited "pre-work" before the on-site event. As indicated in the timeline portion of this document, any requirement for such preliminary efforts, is limited to being due in close proximity to the on-site event. Judging firms should be fully conscious that the students in question often are taking four to six classes and are full-time students in addition to taking part in the competition. Thus, any pre-work should be very limited in scope, not be overly time or other resource consuming, and be understood to potentially require/have coach or other assistance in the completion of those tasks.

During Competition

The formal competition effort, officially starts at the kick-off meeting on Friday morning of the onsite event. That said, and as indicated in the timeline provided in this document, there are things that may occur slightly ahead of the competition event itself. The following is some guidance that may be helpful to you during and just prior to the competition.

- On-site Schedule: The schedule of the actual competition event is finalized based on information obtained from the judging firms as late as 2 weeks prior to competition. A typical schedule, however, is attached as Annex A.
- Deliverables: It is advisable to stagger certain parts of submission to allow judges to start evaluating in the late afternoon, early evening, and evening. Make clear the deadlines and composition of each part, and make it clear the final deadline for submission (this will be put on the final on-site schedule, as long as firms abide by the milestone to provide it to the Regional Director and the Competition Coordinator as indicated above).
- Requests for Information (RFI): Define clearly the procedures, mechanisms, and formats for the RFI process during the competition. This needs to be a part of the opening briefing, if not done previously. Also, have a clear cut-off time that is sequenced/appropriate relative to your deliverables submission timeline. It is bad, for instance, to have an RFI cut-off after a key submission that could be effected by an RFI submitted ex post facto.

- Scoring of Deliverables: The particulars of how the judges actually review and score submissions is left to your discretion, however, there are some key points to keep in mind:
 - Given how presentations go, especially for Commercial Construction that often has many teams, there is scant time on Saturday to do scoring of the written products. Thus, getting that done prior to the start of presentations is a very advantageous thing to do. This should be considered in regards to when you have your final deliverable.
 - Many judging teams have dedicated judges for each part of the deliverable package (i.e. one judge for the estimate, one for the schedule, one for the qualification info, one for constructability/logistics, etc.). There ends up a need to have a conference among all judges at the end, regardless, but this does make it more attainable to get it done before the earliest hours of Saturday morning.
 - Have a plan to collect feedback/comments on the submissions, as you do the scoring process. As stated below, providing feedback is a required part of your effort. Having a way to collect and organize that feedback as you go makes the effort easier in the end.
- Presentations: It is up to you how you want to be presented to. Some judges have done this as a working owners meeting. Others have done it as a one-on-one interview with certain members of the team on certain topics. Most of the time it's a stand up presentation/briefing by the team to the judging panel with Q&A. Make clear the timeframe allowance for their presentation (normally shorter than the total allotted time to have time for Q&A) and the anticipated contents. If you have particular requirements for visuals/slides or for handouts, make that clear. It's also helpful to make clear your expectations of who is to speak and any time breakdowns or portions of the brief that you expect members to make (e.g. the Superintendent talks through site logistics, or each member needs to speak about the same amount of time each, etc.).
- Final decisions: Each category awards a first, a second and a third place winner. The ultimate decision on those awards is, again, up to the judging firms. That said, your ability to articulate how you arrived to that conclusion will be the focus of what you present at the final banquet on Saturday night.

The end of/After Competition

Once presentations are done, it's a quick turnaround to do several things, here are some key notes that you may want to consider.

- Debriefing: Prior to the awards banquet, but after the presentations are concluded, each judging panel is asked to do a debrief. Most times this is the "big reveal" of how your firm actually bid/proposed on the project and how it all went. It is a fantastic way to teach all of the students in your category what "right looks like". It is also often a time to give some "global feedback". This ought to be generalized impressions, but can involve, for instance, a slide that lists the bid/proposal values submitted by the teams, in comparison with the real answer. Having this prepped ahead of the presentations, excepting some last minute changes made as a result of the Saturday events, is a good thing. It is also a great best practice for the actual project manager/team to be the ones giving it so that the inevitable Q&A can really be helpful for learning (and showcasing your firm's capabilities).
- Awards/Banquet: The Regional Director will kick off events during the Banquet, but the presentation of the awards is done by the judging firms. A short (no more than 5 min) "who you are" and "why we are judging" discussion is fine, but please do not go too long in this. Similarly, please do talk about how you selected the first through third place winners and feel free to tell the collective group why each team was selected but in fairness to all the other categories, keep this succinct (~2-3 min per team). Reminder, each team will come forward to be congratulated and get a photo with the judges for that category. In all, any given award category presentation should be in the 15-20 min timeframe in total. Award plaques and checks are given out after the event itself, but firms are free to give out swag and other prizes to the winning teams as they see appropriate. A foam board "big check" is often a good thing for the first place team, especially for the photos that are taken after each team is announced.

- Feedback: Given the effort the students put in, we ask that all firms provide constructive and scoring feedback to the teams. At a minimum, a copy of the final scoring rubric with that team's attainment needs to be provided. If you choose to print out hard-copy binders of the team's electronic submissions, it is helpful if they are given a binder with any hand-written comments therein. What is a best practice is creating a one to two page summary of feedback within a week of competition, for each team (per the completion rules & guidelines, written feedback is required no later than 30 days after competition). This really is critical for the students to learn from what they did, as some will go on to the region 6/7 competition (the defacto national competition) or will be graded for efforts later (if they have a course associated with the completion). Ideally, the judging firms will provide the Regional Director and the Competition Coordinator the 1 to N listing of how schools placed with their applicable scores, as well as Ccing them in on the written debrief/summary sent to each team. This helps teams understand how far they have to go to improve and also gives us a sense of the spread among the regional schools so we can work to help rise all boats for the benefit of the industry. To that end, make sure to include coaches in any and all feedback given to the teams.

Timeline Dates/Milestones

Date	Activity
NLT the first Thursday in September	Judging Firm Problem Statements are Submitted to Region Director and Competition Coordinator
Approx. 2 months prior to competition	Problem Statements uploaded to webpage and issued to all ASC Region 1 Schools
Approx. 2 months prior to competition	Formal Competition Registration Opens
NLT 5 weeks prior to competition	Team and Judging Firm Lodging Room Reservations complete (coordinated with Hotel Coordinator)
Approx. 4 weeks prior to competition	Formal Competition Registration closes; all teams submit Pre-Qualification Forms
NLT 4 weeks prior to competition	Judging firm fee due to ASC Region 1
NLT 3 weeks prior to competition	Pre-Qualification Forms sent to Judging firms
NLT 2 weeks prior to competition	Scoring Rubric/Scoresheet sent to all category teams, Region Director, and Competition Coordinator
NLT 2 weeks prior to competition	Anticipated final deliverable time during the competition itself, to the Region Director, and Competition Coordinator
NET 2 weeks prior to competition	Early deliverable(s) to the category judges (if applicable)
NLT 2 weeks prior to competition	Judging firms confirm judging room set-up needs with Hotel Coordinator and Region Director
Day prior to competition	Arrive to the hotel, plan to take part in the Welcome Reception, and prepare your workspace once the hotel indicates (some judging rooms may not be available until early Friday morning).

NLT = No later than; NET = No earlier than

Logistical Items

Hotel Rooms

While the space you work out of are taken care of by ASC, you are responsible for covering the rooms that your employees/the judges will be staying in. Please make sure you do NOT book them without touching base with the Region 1 Hotel Coordinator Wayne Sheppard at (570) 326-3761 or wsheppard@pct.edu.

As for the rooms used for the judging and competition, a few things you should be aware of. There will be chairs and tables available for the spaces. The default set up is a set of tables at the front with chairs set up in a lecture/audience style for the rest of the room. If you have a particular set-up you are looking for, please let us know ASAP. See the plan for competition room assignments in the map package.

As far as A/V, we have limited support. As indicated in the competition rules & guidelines it is suggested that you plan to bring your own projector, with a dedicated laptop to be used with it, for presentations (even if it is just as a back-up).

Team Registration

Teams will register for the competition through three steps. One for their hotel rooms, one through a registration fee, and the last through a form that collects their registration information. That last part is by a “pre-qualification” form that they submit. An example of this form is provided with this document. As part of that package, the teams submit their actual resumes. This package, for the teams in your category, will be provided ahead of the competition. Please note, to make sure this is completed in a timely manner, there is a need to make sure you include the requisite impact in your scoring rubric, see below.

