

COPS Competition

and the Future of Judging

Board of Trustees Report • 5/4/2026

1. Our Dilemma with the Current Judge Process

A. Difficult to Procure

Sourcing judges from other clubs has been consistently challenging and time consuming.

B. Inconsistency of Evaluation

Image evaluation has been spotty and inconsistent.

In some cases this has resulted in:

- Loss of competing members
- Reduced confidence in the judging process

2. Committee on Judges

A. Meetings

- Two meetings held
- April 22, 2026
- April 29, 2026

B. Findings

- Need resolution to ongoing judging issues
- Investigation of AI tools to do the work
- Comparison spreadsheet of apps/platforms was prepared

C. Resolutions

- Claude.ai identified as best AI tool for our needs
- Consensus to move forward with suggested plan
- COPS judges still available to other clubs but will be individually contacted

3. Using AI Tool for Image Evaluation & Scoring

A. Benefits

- 1 Recruitment of judges no longer needed
- 2 Judge chair position no longer needed
- 3 Consistency of results for each category
- 4 Analysis/suggested improvements for each image

Key Impact

Recruiting judges is one of the most time-consuming tasks for competition organizers.

AI-powered judging delivers:

- Objective, rubric-based scoring
- Actionable critique for every image
- Freed-up volunteer time

3. Using AI Tool – Continued

B. Cons / Manual Steps Required

1 Manual upload of rubrics and images

Required before each competition run.

2 Manual posting of scores to VP (Visual Pursuits)

Results (scores) for each image must be manually posted to VP by a volunteer.

3 Distribution of critique reports

Critique/suggestions for improvement for each image will be attached to VP reports.

4 COPS volunteer needed to run scripts

- The volunteer will not be the competition chair
- The volunteer will work with the competition chair
- Testing will determine the time requirement

4. Cost, Next Steps & Safeguards

A. Cost

\$20.00 / month

\$213 / year • Reimbursed from treasury or member donation(s)

B. Potential Future Development

Develop an API or script to automate parts of the process if qualified volunteer is available. *Determined as not needed.*

C. Accuracy Safeguards

- 1) Rubrics (instructions) will follow COPS rules regarding image evaluation and scoring for each competition type or category
- 2) Scoring range will remain the same
- 3) Suggest panel of COPS members from the masters class of competitors be available for review of image scoring for each competition on rotating basis - Establishes quality control
- 4) Discrepancy documentation procedures necessary — steps TBD
- 5) Creates a hybrid model for use of AI Tools - keeps humans involved in final decision-making process
- 6) Fine tuning/testing over summer months with test competition to be scheduled

5. Live Demo

Live demonstration for the Board of Trustees

6. Additional Findings

- For testing we used previous competition images with human judge critiques
- Hard to compare critiques quantitatively, *but AI critiques and recommendations for improvement are consistent and are as detailed as you request them to be*
- Early testing produced *too many tie scores*
- We tried running scripts 3 times to compensate for variations in scores for the same image - *too much labor involved*

6. Additional Findings - Cont.

- We tried making the scores more granular-7.0, 7.1, 7.2, etc. - *greatly reduced tie score instances.*
- We tried weighted scoring - score values are based on importance of various criteria to image category. For example, in the monochrome competition type, use of light and shadow has a higher score, whereas in the creative competition type, creativity and originality will score higher than say composition. *This approach seems to yield the best overall results.*
- A criterion for tie breaking is also being added as a last step
- More testing over the summer months

7. Questions & Discussion

Thank you — we welcome your questions, comments, and feedback