

GTTP TRAVEL PHOTO CONTEST

GUIDELINES

Overview

The GTTP sponsors an annual Student Photography Contest. It is open to all students currently enrolled in GTTP schools in GTTP-member countries: Brazil, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Hungary, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Russia, Tanzania, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

One of the objectives of GTTP's competitions is to encourage students to communicate clearly because it is an essential skill for anyone who wishes to be successful in today's travel and tourism industry — or any industry.

The purpose of the Competition is to provide students with an opportunity to practice using visual tools to communicate with other people.

Your task in this competition is to create one photo that can be used to introduce a visitor to your community. The image should communicate "what is unique or special about my community."

A word of warning: capturing this image will not be easy. A good photo depends on the photographer, not on the camera.

Preparing for the competition

Introduction:

One big challenge facing people creating images is that their audience judges their efforts very, very quickly. According to one study by Google, it takes just 0.05 seconds for an image to make a first impression on a person, and sometimes even less. First impressions, especially bad ones, rarely change. This is important information if you are designing a website, for example – or entering a photo competition.

A second challenge is that now everyone seems to be a photographer, which means everyone is also a photo connoisseur and critic.

By one estimate, 880 thousand million photos will be taken in 2016, mostly by people with camera-phones and digital cameras. Some estimates are higher.

The enormous number of photos available to be viewed online provides you with an opportunity to explore good and bad photography and to learn from that investigation before you submit your own photo.

So how should you prepare for this competition? We suggest you take the following two steps.

Step 1: Make sure you understand your camera.

First of all, it does not matter whether you have a big expensive camera with many lenses or a small, inexpensive point-and-shoot. Skill and a good eye for a picture are more important. Both can be learned. Think of a sport you like: What is more important? Skill? Or Equipment?

Your camera-phone, digital or film camera is just a tool in the same way that a wood chisel is a tool. Anyone can use a chisel, but only after practice can you use a chisel to make it do all that you need. So practice a lot before you choose a photo to submit.

Like any tool, it helps to know what your camera can and cannot do well. You know how to take pictures. However if you are like most people, you may not have invested much time investigating all the controls of your equipment. You can do this by taking many pictures at different camera settings. This will help you learn its strengths and weaknesses, and teach you to work with your camera's strengths and avoid its weaknesses.

Reading books or online articles about photography and how to be a better photographer are always useful, and also fun, no matter how experienced you are. But the most useful thing you can do – as we said before — is take out your camera and practice, practice, practice.

Step 2: Look at other people's photos.

We suggest looking at some of those 880 billion images.

Of course many of the images will be of interest only to the people taking the photos and not to anyone else. For those people, the quality of their photography is less important. You can learn from their efforts.

Billions of images also mean that many people are taking the same kinds of photo. For example, the artist Penelope Umbrico researching camera-phone photography in 2006 for one of her art projects found that the most common image tag or label was not “mother” or “baby” but “sunsets.” We have seen a lot of sunset photos submitted to this competition. None were memorable. Beach photos also are popular, and hard to do well.

So we suggest looking at as many travel photos as possible. You will be looking at pictures of sunsets, beaches, buildings, streets, houses, people, animals, planes, trains, boats. As you do, start thinking about which ones you like, and why. Think of yourself as a judge at a photo competition

We hope that after you review some of those 880 thousand billion images that you will know what travel photos engage you.

There are websites that share travel photos. For example, if you have a camera-phone, start by looking at www.flickr.com/groups/travelphonegraphy/ . There are many other sites. Some online sites have groups that post images from specific brands of camera-phone, digital camera, and film camera.

And here is a quick tip: a carefully planned photograph is by definition is unlikely to be spontaneous. So include in your planning enough time to experiment taking the photograph from just the right position, and if possible experiment with different times of the day in order to get the light just right. Also pay attention to technical competence, which includes images being in focus, correctly exposed and not blurred because you could not hold the camera steady. If there is a horizon in your image it needs to be level.

Then take your photos. Then pick the best one to enter in the competition.

A final word: you may not realize it, but you are an experienced consumer of images. You see images on social media, TV, in advertisements, in newspapers, magazines, brochures, on computers, camera phones, billboards, noticeboards, and emails. Some of those images engage your attention, many do not. Whether you win or not, this competition can help you understand better how one visual medium functions, and this knowledge will help you in your career.

Guidelines and Requirements

Prizes:

Three winners in each country will receive the equivalent in their currency of US\$100 and all three will be entered in the international completion. First prize in the international competition is US\$500. Second prize is US\$200.

All winners will receive an official GTTP certificate acknowledging their achievement.

Equipment:

You may use a camera-phone or a digital camera. If a film camera is used, the image must be digitized before submitting. You may use software to edit your work.

Submitting your work:

1. Students may submit one digital image (photo). The digital image can be up to 4 MB in size.
2. The image should be submitted as a JPEG file with a file name that includes your name and country. For example: "NKim.Kenya.jpeg".
3. The entry form must include a brief caption, not more than 20 words long stating what the image shows, in what country and where it is in that country.
4. Submit your entry by email and make sure your image is added as a separate stand-alone file. Do not embed the image file in the entry form.

How we will judge your images:

Each GTTP country will judge its own photos using its own scoring method. A panel of international judges will judge images submitted by member GTTP countries for the international prizes. The international judges will award up to 100 points to each image, and will use the following formula:

1. Up to 30 points for technical competence (see reference to “technical competence” in Step 2 above)
2. Up 30 points for composition, which means effectively arranging the subject of the photograph within the four sides of the image to create an interesting photo.
3. Up to 40 points for the ability of the image to engage the interest of the person looking at the image. Before you submit your photo ask yourself this question: if someone else had taken the photo instead of you, would you still be interested in the image?

Deadline for entries:

April 30, 2018

GTTP ownership of your photos:

All photos that are submitted become the property of GTTP, and if used in print or electronic media, the student photographer will be credited.