



ASSOCIATION OF FOOD JOURNALISTS
Annual Awards Competition
CALL FOR 2018 ENTRIES

**Entries must be submitted electronically by
midnight EST March 1, 2018
OR postmarked on or before March 1, 2018**

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the annual Association of Food Journalists Awards Competition. The competition began in 1986 and recognizes some of the finest work of food journalists.

The contest is open to AFJ members and to food writers and editors who are not members of the association. Reduced contest entry fees apply if you are a member of AFJ at the time of submission. Learn more about AFJ and download a membership application [here](#).

Please read the description of each category you plan to enter carefully, as well as the General Rules and Procedures noted at the end of this document, before you assemble your entries.

AFJ offers an electronic entry process and strongly encourages electronic entries; however, mail-in entries are still permitted in most categories. The online entry form is [here](#).

You also can submit your entry form electronically but mail in your entries; in that case, a printout of your completed entry form must be included with your mailing.

Questions about competition categories or rules for submission can be directed to:

Nancy J. Stohs, Awards Competition 2018 chairwoman
(414) 224-2382, nstohs@journalsentinel.com

OR **Jessica Stugelmayer**: jessica@edibleak.com, (907) 570-7824

OR **Kellie Hynes**: kellie@kelliehynes.com, (314) 409-0954

OR **Micki Maynard**, Awards Manager: vmaynard@umich.edu, (734) 223-9391

Good luck!

COMPETITION CATEGORIES

There are a total of 18 categories in the 2018 AFJ competition. Two are for newspapers only: Best Newspaper Food Coverage and Best Newspaper Food Feature (both with circulation divisions). Most of the other 16 categories welcome entries across all publishing platforms.

All entries must have been published in 2017. If a print version is dated 2018, entrants should provide a link showing the story was published online in 2017.

AFJ reserves the right to suspend any competition category that does not receive a minimum of 10 entries. If a category is discontinued, those entering it will be contacted to determine if they want their entry judged in the next highest circulation category (if applicable), or if they want a refund of the entry fee. No entries will be returned.

BEST FOOD ESSAY (All Platforms)

This category is for a single essay-style piece by a writer about a food subject published by a newspaper, magazine or qualifying* online-only publication. (The essay can be one published as part of a writer's regular column.)

There is no restriction on the number of essays that one person or publication may enter, but each requires an entry fee and separate entry form.

Essays will be judged largely on the quality of the writing.

How to enter: Submit an *active* URL to the story online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send THREE identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

BEST FOOD COLUMN (All Platforms)

This category is open to any regularly published food column in a newspaper, magazine or qualifying* online-only publication. (Note that restaurant criticism should be entered in the Best Restaurant Criticism category, and columns focusing exclusively on beer, wine or spirits should be entered in Best Writing on Beer, Wine or Spirits. General-content columns that only occasionally touch on food do not qualify.)

Each entry will be judged on the quality of the writing and on how well it entertains, informs and reflects the personality of the writer.

Three examples should be submitted. A person may enter this category only once for the same column.

How to enter: Submit *active* URLs to the columns online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send THREE identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

BEST RESTAURANT CRITICISM (All Platforms)

This category is for restaurant reviews regularly published by a newspaper, magazine or qualifying* online-only publication.

Entries will be judged on writing and on knowledge of subject.

Three examples should be submitted. A person may enter this category only once for the same column.

How to enter: Submit *active* URLs to the reviews online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send THREE identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

BEST WRITING ON BEER, WINE OR SPIRITS (All Platforms)

This category is for stories or columns on beer, wine and/or spirits or cocktails published by a newspaper, magazine or qualifying* online-only publication.

Entries will be judged on writing and on knowledge of subject.

One entry can be composed of a single story (with sidebars, if applicable) or two examples of a regularly published column. A person may enter this category only once for the same column.

How to enter: Submit an *active* URL or URLs to the story or columns online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send THREE identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

BEST STORY ON FOOD POLICY OR FOOD ISSUES (All Platforms)

This category can include breaking news, investigative reporting, consumer, nutrition or government policy issues, published by a newspaper, magazine or qualifying* online-only publication.

Entries (story plus sidebars, if any) will be judged on reporting (accuracy, timeliness, multi-sourcing) and on writing (readability and organization).

There is no restriction on the number of stories that one person or publication may enter, but each requires an entry fee and separate entry form.

How to enter: Submit an *active* URL to the story online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send THREE identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

BEST FOOD BUSINESS STORY (All Platforms)

This category is for any story focused on the business of food, including but not limited to profiles, trend stories, exposés or breaking news, published by a newspaper, magazine or qualifying* online-only publication.

Entries (story plus sidebars, if any) will be judged on reporting (accuracy, timeliness, multi-sourcing) and on writing (readability and organization).

There is no restriction on the number of stories that one person or publication may enter, but each requires an entry fee and separate entry form.

How to enter: Submit an *active* URL to the story online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send THREE identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

BEST FOOD/TRAVEL STORY (All Platforms)

This category is for any *narrative* story combining food with travel, with a heavy emphasis on food, published by a newspaper, magazine or qualifying* online-only publication. The story should focus on one geographical destination (a country or a city, for example). Accompanying sidebars or lists are permitted as long as they accompany a full-on story.

Entries will be judged primarily on writing, including how well the writer uses the topic of food to convey a sense of place.

There is no restriction on the number of stories that one person or publication may enter, but each requires an entry fee and separate entry form.

How to enter: Submit an *active* URL to the story online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send THREE identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

BEST NEWSPAPER FOOD COVERAGE (Print Only)
TWO OR THREE CIRCULATION DIVISIONS

This category encompasses all regularly scheduled food pages published in a newspaper over the course of a week. Entries will be judged on writing, creative ideas, story mix, graphics, helpfulness to the reader, headlines and overall appeal.

Circulation divisions will be determined after all entries are received to ensure adequate and comparable numbers in each division.

How to enter: One entry is composed of three different weeks of regularly scheduled food sections or pages published in 2017. Publication dates on the entry form should be the Sunday starting each week of sections/pages.

THREE identical sets of the sections or pages must be submitted with one completed entry form. When food is part of a larger section, the entire section must be included, even if some of the content is unrelated (such as entertainment). Only the food part of the section will be judged. *For consistency in judging we are asking for paper copies only for this category.*

Circulation verification is required for this category. (See Circulation Verification under General Rules and Procedures, below).

BEST FOOD COVERAGE in a MAGAZINE (Print Only)

This category encompasses all food content published in a magazine across three issues.

Entries will be judged on writing, creative ideas, story mix, timeliness, graphics, usefulness to readers and overall appeal.

How to enter: One entry is composed of three different regularly scheduled issues of the magazine from 2017. When food is just one topic covered by the magazine, please mark pages where all the food stories begin.

THREE identical *sets* of print issues must be submitted with one completed entry form.

BEST NEWSPAPER FOOD FEATURE

TWO OR THREE CIRCULATION DIVISIONS

This category is for food feature stories, including interviews, profiles and features on food or cuisine, with or without recipes, published in a newspaper or on a newspaper's online site. Sidebars are permitted.

Entries will be judged on writing, creative approach, knowledge of subject matter, relevance of the topic and any graphics or online elements that enhance the storytelling.

There is no restriction on the number of entries from one person, but each requires a separate entry form and an entry fee.

Circulation divisions will be determined after all entries are received to ensure adequate and comparable numbers in each division.

How to enter: Submit an *active* URL to the story online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send **THREE** identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

Circulation verification is required for this category. (See Circulation Verification under General Rules and Procedures, below).

BEST NON-NEWSPAPER FOOD FEATURE (All Platforms)

This category is for food stories, including interviews, profiles and features on food or cuisine, with or without recipes, published in print or online by any qualifying* publication *other than a newspaper*. Sidebars are permitted.

There is no restriction on the number of food features that one person or publication may enter, but each requires an entry fee and separate entry form.

Entries will be judged on writing, creative approach, knowledge of subject matter, relevance of the topic and any graphics or online elements that enhance the storytelling.

How to enter: Submit an *active* URL to the story online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send **THREE** identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

BEST SPANISH-LANGUAGE FOOD FEATURE (All Platforms)

This category is for food stories, including interviews, profiles and features on food or cuisine, with or without recipes, published in print or online by any qualifying* publication and published originally in Spanish; translations of stories originally published in English are not eligible. Sidebars are permitted.

There is no restriction on the number of food features that one person or publication may enter, but each requires an entry fee and separate entry form.

Entries will be judged on writing, creative approach, knowledge of subject matter, relevance of the topic and any graphics or online elements that enhance the storytelling.

How to enter: Submit an *active* URL to the story online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send THREE identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

BEST SPECIAL FOOD PROJECT (All Platforms)

This category is for in-depth coverage of any specific food issue or topic, published by any print or online publication. The project can take several forms:

- a series, consisting of two or more consecutively published articles on a single subject (excluding regular columns);
- a complete section/issue or dedicated portion of a section/issue on one topic; or
- a coordinated group of stories printed in more than one section of a publication.

Entries will be judged on reporting and writing (use of multiple sources, readability, accuracy, timeliness, organization, cohesiveness of articles) and on relevance or general interest. Online extras, such as photo galleries, videos, etc., will be taken into account by the judges *if active links are provided*.

There is no restriction on the number of food projects that one person or publication may enter, but each requires an entry fee and separate entry form.

How to enter: Entries can be submitted digitally, as hard copies *or both*.

Digital option: Attach all relevant URLs to the electronic entry form.

(Note: Because of the sheer size of special projects, we are not permitting pdfs to be submitted.)

Hard copies can be complete sections/issues OR clippings. In the latter case, staple or clip all pages of the entry together. Then mail in THREE identical sets with one completed entry form. Provide your *active* links (on a separate piece of paper attached to each entry) to online galleries, graphics or other extras if you want them taken into consideration.

BEST VIDEO FOOD JOURNALISM

This category is for a single video about food and/or food issues that originally aired on television or online and published by a broadcast media outlet, qualifying* online-only publication, newspaper or magazine. Videos can be produced in-studio, field-produced pieces, or a combination of the two. Total run time for the video must be at least 3 minutes and may not exceed 20 minutes. While submissions to this category may have been part of a series, please note that only one video may be submitted for each entry.

This category can be entered more than once, but each entry requires a separate entry form and an additional entry fee.

Entries will be judged on entertainment value and/or usefulness (depending on topic), video quality, editing quality, pacing, use of music or sound effects (where applicable), effectiveness of storytelling in this format and overall appeal.

How to enter: In the space provided on the electronic entry form, supply an *active* link to the web page where the video can be accessed.

BEST AUDIO FOOD JOURNALISM

This category is for a single audio story about food and/or food issues that originally aired on radio or online and published by a broadcast media outlet, qualifying* online-only publication, newspaper or magazine. (Note: The text of an audio story cannot also be entered in a writing category.) The story or feature, whether a stand-alone piece or part of a recurring series, must be at least 3 minutes long but no longer than 10 minutes.

Entries will be judged on entertainment value and/or usefulness (depending on topic), audio quality, editing quality, pacing, use of music or sound effects (where applicable), effectiveness of storytelling in this format and overall appeal.

This category can be entered more than once, but each entry requires a separate entry form and an additional entry fee.

How to enter: In the space provided on the electronic entry form, supply an *active* link to the web page where the audio story can be accessed.

BEST SINGLE INTERACTIVE DIGITAL FOOD PROJECT

This category is for a single online food, dining or beverage feature or mobile app designed for reader interaction. It could be an interactive map, a quiz, graphic explainer, interactive guide (or tool) or something else.

Entries will be judged on presentation, ease of use, usefulness or entertainment value for the reader, originality and creative approach.

How to enter: Submit an *active* URL to the feature or app download.

BEST FOOD PHOTO

One entry consists of a single photo (*not* photo illustration) published in a newspaper, magazine or qualifying* online-only publication. Names of the publication(s) and publication dates must be included.

Entries will be judged on composition, lighting, creative approach to the subject, overall quality and how effectively the photos draw attention to the food and/or enhance its appearance.

Submit the photo as a jpeg attached to the electronic entry form; note, there is 50mb file size limit. Please include a short (100 words or less) explanation of the context in which the photo was published and how it served to illustrate the story.

BEST WRITING ON FOOD - STUDENT DIVISION (All platforms)

This category is for a single story or a column on food written by a college or culinary arts student and published by a newspaper, magazine or qualifying* online-only publication.

Entries will be judged on writing, creative approach, knowledge of subject matter and relevance of the topic.

One entry includes a single story (with sidebars, if applicable) or two examples of a regularly published column. A student may enter this category only once for the same column.

The student must have been enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree-granting program or culinary school at the time the story(ies) was (were) written. The student does not have to have been a journalism major.

Note that there is no entry fee for this category.

How to enter: Submit an *active* URL to the story online.

Alternatives (when links are unavailable or behind a firewall): Print copies can be scanned and attached to the online entry form. If necessary, hard copies can be submitted by mail; send THREE identical sets with one completed entry form to the address at the end of this document.

Note: Students also can enter their work in other categories; however, they will have to pay the entry fee, and those entries must be different from those entered in the student category.

GENERAL RULES AND PROCEDURES

Although the same writer and/or publication may enter all relevant competition categories, there are restrictions in some categories. In general, the same story cannot be entered in two different categories. Exception: stories appearing in sections entered under Best Newspaper Food Coverage also can be entered in an individual writing category.

Qualifying online-only publication*

*“Qualifying online-only publication” refers to independent Web publications or blogs that are NOT hosted or sponsored by a food or food-related company; a chef, restaurateur or restaurant group; a public relations firm representing a food company or a food-related organization or movement; a trade association, advocacy group or government agency. Such publications do not qualify for this competition. Publications can be affiliated with a media company. Paid advertising is permitted on qualifying websites.

Cover letters or other explanatory notes

Cover letters, explanatory notes or other markings on entries are not permitted unless specified.

Circulation verification (two categories only)

Circulation must be verified for entries in Best Newspaper Food Coverage and Best Newspaper Food Feature. Only one of the following forms of circulation verification should accompany entries in those two categories:

- (a) A report for 2017 from the Audit Bureau of Circulation (available from the publication’s advertising department); or
- (b) A statement of verified circulation for 2017 signed by the publication’s publisher, circulation manager, advertising manager, editor or managing editor; or a printed email from one of these individuals. *Please do not submit* paid circulation numbers.

Note: Average daily (*not Sunday*) circulation will be used to determine the circulation category of a newspaper. If all entries in one mailing appear in the same publication, only one copy of circulation verification is required.

Mistakes in entries

Entrants are responsible for submitting correct, complete entries. AFJ is not responsible for catching mistakes in entries, but if a mistake is brought to light, it may result in the entry being disqualified.

If submitting entries as URLs, be sure the links remain active. Entries with links that are found to be inactive will be disqualified and the entry fee will not be returned.

Entry fees

FEES

The fee **per entry** is \$45 (USD) for AFJ members who have paid their 2018 dues prior to entering.

Food journalists employed at a publication where there is an AFJ member in good standing also may enter at the member rate of \$45 (USD) per entry.

AFJ members submitting multiple entries pay \$45 (USD) each for their first three entries; a fourth entry can be submitted free of charge.

The fee per entry for non-AFJ members is \$55 (USD).

There is no entry fee for students entering Best Writing on Food - Student Division.

Note that entry fees are calculated per submission, not per person. When more than one entry is submitted under one entry fee, that entry will be disqualified.

PROCESS

Entry fee(s) must accompany the entry. Entry fees are non-refundable except when a category is eliminated by AFJ, in which case a full refund of the fee will be made. If an entry is disqualified for not following the rules, written notice will be given, but the entry fee will not be returned.

PAYMENT

Entry fees may be paid:

(1) online for a single entry, with a credit card or PayPal, at the time the online entry form is completed; if at all possible, we strongly encourage the use of PayPal. Signing up for a PayPal account is not required to make a purchase, so please use this option to help our small nonprofit avoid costly fees.

(2) online, for a group of entries, with a credit card or PayPal; choose the first option on the payment page of the online entry form and then click "continue" to submit the entry, listing in your email all of the entries it covers;

(3) attaching a check drawn on a U.S. bank and payable to AFJ to the entry form and mailing it to AFJ in the same packet as your contest entries.

Should an accounting department request this information, AFJ is a tax-exempt non-profit 501 (c) (6) corporation, tax identification number 23-7324877.

Judging

AFJ secures the best-qualified judges. Two judges will work independently of each other in each category. They will confer only if there is a tie.

If mailing in your entry, copies of each entry – one for each judge – plus another for AFJ files are required. That is a total of three (3) copies of each entry. If only one copy of the entry is sent, the entry will be disqualified and the entry fee will not be refunded. Note: This rule does not apply if submitting complete entries as attachments or links with the electronic entry form.

Prizes

First-, second- and third-place winners will receive certificates. First-place winners in each category also will receive a cash prize of \$300 (USD).

If more than one writer produced the first-place winning work, the total prize money will be divided between or among all of the names listed on the entry form.

Winners will be notified that they are finalists early in May so that they can make arrangements to attend AFJ's Annual Awards Competition banquet and presentation Sept. 27 at the association's annual conference Sept. 26-28, 2018 in Phoenix.

Mailing entries

If mailing your entry, it may be sent by FedEx, UPS or United States mail. If sending by FedEx, UPS or United States Express mail, please make the proper notation on the delivery form so that the packet does not require a signature upon delivery. If the delivery form requires a phone number, please use (734) 223-9391.

Entries must be postmarked on or before March 1, 2018, and sent to the following address:

Association of Food Journalists
3588 Plymouth Road, No. 386
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Note: You *do not* have to overnight your entries for arrival by March 1. The postmark date is all that matters.

QUESTIONS

Questions about competition categories or rules for submission can be directed to:

Nancy J. Stohs, Awards Competition 2018 chairwoman
(414) 224-2382, nstohs@journalsentinel.com

OR **Jessica Stugelmayer**: jessica@edibleak.com, (907) 570-7824

OR **Kellie Hynes**: kellie@kelliehynes.com, (314) 409-0954

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