



CATSA BEST STUDENT ORAL AND POSTER PRESENTATION AWARD PROTOCOL

PREAMBLE

The purpose of the CATSA Oral & Poster Presentation Awards is to recognize scientific papers of exceptional quality delivered via the medium of Oral & Poster Presentation at the CATSA Annual Conference. Equally, the Awards aim to promote a proud record in respect of the quality and impact of the presentation itself and, in so doing, serve to encourage students to aim for the highest professional standards. The Awards may be sponsored and in the case of the Oral Award will take the form of a floating trophy and the CATSA Gold Medal, while the Poster Award will take the form of a floating trophy and the CATSA Silver Medal.

CRITERIA FOR AWARD ELIGIBILITY

1. Only students, younger than 35 years of age, registered for MSc and PhD degrees at South African and recognized foreign universities or universities of technology shall be eligible.
2. Where there is more than one author of the paper, the presentation is to be made by the student and must substantially represent the student's own work.
3. In the case of the Oral Award the paper must be presented in oral format at the Annual CATSA Conference.
4. In the case of the Poster Award the paper must be presented in a visual format, as specified by the Conference Organisers, at the Annual CATSA Conference.

AWARD PROCEDURE AND CONDITIONS

1. For both awards an evaluation panel consisting of at least three people will be chosen by the Chairperson of the CATSA Committee and the Annual Conference Organiser. In the case of the Oral and Poster Awards it is compulsory that the CATSA Eminent Visitor be included in the evaluation panel. Should the CATSA Eminent Visitor refuse such a role, or in the absence of a CATSA Eminent Visitor, the Chairperson of the CATSA Committee and the Annual Conference Organiser shall nominate the additional panel member. Wherever possible, the nominees will be chosen to be impartial (i.e. no affiliation to any entrants). With the exception of the Eminent Visitor or nominated member, persons may not serve on both the Oral and Poster Award evaluation panels.
2. The responsibility for recommendation of the recipient resides largely with the Eminent Visitor and / or nominee member of the evaluation panel. For both the Oral and Poster Awards, once the evaluation is complete, the evaluation panel must meet with both the Chairperson of the CATSA Committee and the Annual Conference Organiser and present a short list of candidates and their chosen winner. The role of the Committee Chairperson and the Annual Conference Organiser is to ensure that the selection process remains within the spirit of the award guidelines (see evaluation criteria) and that, as much as is practicable, the selection process is consistent from year to year.
3. The award ceremony shall preferably take place at the Conference Banquet or, in those years when the Conference Programme does not permit scheduling of all eligible presentations prior to the Banquet, during the Conference Closing.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. In keeping with the aim of the Awards, criteria in respect of both Technical Merit and Quality of Presentation / Poster will be equally valued.
2. An agreed minimum acceptable standard will be required in both Technical Merit and Quality of Presentation / Poster in order to qualify for selection (i.e. a poorly presented yet scientifically groundbreaking paper, or vice-versa, shall not qualify).
3. Papers qualifying for selection will still be judged according to the principle that both criteria are equally valued. However, the evaluation panel will be granted considerable scope for subjective instincts in respect of excitement, novel ideas, striking presentation / poster techniques, excellent science, etc.
4. General aspects for evaluation of the oral presentations may include:
 - Concise Introduction to the subject, including context and importance of the current study
 - Scientific Hypothesis, objectives of study and / or key questions
 - Experimental Procedure(s) where non-standard
 - Findings, Interpretation and Impact
 - Conclusions
 - Full and proper use of the presentation tools available (microphone, projectors, pointers, etc.)
 - Projection of a professional self-image and enthusiasm, and engagement of the audience
 - Compliance with Conference guidelines (optimum use of time / space available)
 - Clarity and logical structure of presentation
 - Comprehensive and clear response to questions
5. General aspects for evaluation of the poster presentations may include:
 - Aesthetics of the poster in terms of layout, font, spacing, colouring, figures etc.
 - The ease with which the poster may be interpreted (scientific hypothesis, objectives, results conclusions etc.) in the absence of its author – i.e. can the poster stand alone
 - Clarity and logical structure between sections
 - Availability of the author and comprehensive and clear response to questions
 - Findings, Interpretation and Impact