

Fellows' Research Paper Contest Guidelines

I. OBJECTIVES

The **Fellows' Research Paper Contest (FRPC)** aims to serve as a platform that will uphold and nurture the value of research for fellowship trainees in the field of Philippine Ophthalmology. It also strives to develop the culture of research in the expanding field of Philippine Ophthalmology. Lastly, it endeavors to contribute a positive learning environment with its integrity, diversity and value of collaboration in the advancement of the practice of Philippine Ophthalmology.

II. GUIDELINES FOR ELIGIBILITY

1. The contest is open to all bonafide PAO members in-training or PAO members who went into an ophthalmology fellowship training program in the Philippines.
2. The research paper should be original, with the concept originating from the fellow or from a consultant of the institute or department from which the fellow is taking his training program (author or institute initiated).
3. The participant must be the first author. The research must be done during the author's residency in ophthalmology. If there are co-authors, the participant must submit an additional document signifying their consent for the manuscript to be included in the contest.
4. The first (presenting) author can be a fellow at the time of presentation or a recent graduate (not more than 12 months after completion of fellowship).
5. The research paper should have received technical and ethical approval from an institutional review board or its equivalent.
6. The following are prohibited:
 - a. Studies initiated and/or sponsored by pharmaceutical companies, ophthalmic manufacturers or ophthalmic distributors.
 - b. Studies that are part of an international study. Data from an international, multi- arm study cannot be mined and used for this contest.
 - c. Studies previously submitted for publication, whether or not accepted for publication.
7. Multiple research papers may be submitted by one author.
8. All manuscripts must be accompanied by an anti-plagiarism/similarity report from iThenticate 2.0 before submission.
 - a. Similarity and AI detection reports must be signed by at least one adviser.
 - b. Criteria for iThenticate 2.0 report acceptability is as follows:
 - c. The similarity report should yield a score of **less than 30%**.
 - d. AI detection report should yield a score of **less than 20%**.
 - e. **All institutions have been given access to the PAO iThenticate 2.0 subscription.** Kindly ask your Fellows' Training Officer or Chair if access has not been given. A training video will be made available to assist you while you navigate the software.
9. Submitted papers will be reviewed by the research committee to assess worthiness for presentation.

III. TIMELINE

September 22, 2026 (Tuesday), 5:00 PM	Deadline for submission of manuscripts and other requirements Documents required: 1. Consent from co-authors for inclusion of the manuscript in the contest Format of file title: Author_Lastname_Research title_Consent e.g. Santos_Clinical profile of cataract patients_Consent 2. Manuscript without identifiers in the text Format of file title: Author_Lastname_Research title_manuscript e.g. Santos_Clinical profile of cataract patients_manuscript 3. iThenticate 2.0 Similarity and AI detection reports Format of file title: Author_Lastname_Research title_iThenticateSimilarity e.g. Santos_Clinical profile of cataract patients_ iThenticateSimilarity Format of file title: Author_Lastname_Research title_iThenticateAI e.g Santos_Clinical profile of cataract patients_ iThenticateAI **If the research title is too long, include only the first 8 words in the file title. **Files should be in pdf format. The weblink where all entries must be submitted will be announced once available. **Incomplete entries and entries submitted via email will not be accepted. The manuscripts and iThenticate 2.0 reports will then be sent to the corresponding panel of judges for preliminary screening. The judges will use the following criteria to review each manuscript: 1. Literature review (5%) 2. Statement of objectives (5%) 3. Significance (5%) 4. Methodology (15%) 5. Results (10%) 6. Statistical analyses (10%) 7. Discussion (10%) 8. Conclusion (5%) 9. Recommendations (5%) 10. Quality of the written report Technical writing style (5%) Type of study/Level of evidence (5%) Thoroughness of reporting (5%) *These will comprise 85% of the total grade. The remaining 15% will be allotted for the oral presentation should your manuscript qualify. **Similarity Reports greater than 30% will have a 10% deduction in the written manuscript score. ***AI Detection Reports greater than 20% will have a 10% deduction in the written manuscript score.
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October 22, 2026 (Thursday)	Participants will be notified about the screening results. The top six (6) entries for each category will advance to the competition proper.
November 15, 2026 (Sunday)	Deadline for submission of PowerPoint presentations All presentations should be submitted in .pptx format and will be loaded in a single laptop during the oral presentation. <u>Qualified participants will not be allowed to use their own devices during the competition proper.</u> Participants must bring their backup files in case of technical issues.
November 22, 2026 (Sunday)	Contest Proper Each participant will be given eight (8) minutes for an oral presentation, followed by six (6) minutes to answer questions from the judges. Access to the competition venue will be granted beginning at 7:00 am for participants who wish to have a technical check. In case of technical problems with the audiovisual files, the participant shall present without them. The order of presentation will be randomly assigned. Judges will use the following criteria to rate each oral presentation: 1. Delivery (clarity of speech and demeanor) – 5 points 2. Quality of slide presentation – 5 points 3. Answers to judges' questions – 5 points <i>*A 5% deduction will be given for every minute the presentation goes beyond the allotted time.</i> Points from the preliminary screening and the competition proper will tallied to determine the final scores. Participants are not allowed to reveal their names, the names of their co-authors, or their institutions during the presentation. Institutional logos in audiovisual aids or clothing are likewise not allowed. Five points will be deducted for violations. Participants will be given a signal for the time remaining (3 minutes, 1 minute, end of allowed time).

IV. OTHER GUIDELINES

1. The Chair of the Fellows' Research Paper Contest and the Chair of the PAO Committee on Research will appoint a panel of three judges, including at least one ophthalmologist. All decisions made by the panel of judges will be final.
2. After the contest, the manuscripts may be submitted to the Philippine Journal of Ophthalmology for possible publication. The author/s may opt out of publication should they wish to submit elsewhere.
3. Should a participant be unable to join the face-to-face competition, he or she must inform the PAO Research Committee no later than 72 hours prior to the event. The PAO Research Committee will prepare contingency measures.

V. MANUSCRIPT REQUIREMENTS

1. Preparation of the manuscript shall be based on the “*Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Preparing a Manuscript for Submission to a Medical Journal*” established by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (<https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/manuscript-preparation/>)
2. The manuscripts must be typewritten, in **Times New Roman, font size 12, double-spaced, in 8.5 X 13 inches legal paper with 1.5-inch margins** on each side. Page numbers must be located at the right lower corner of each page (page x of y).
3. References are to be properly appended. You may refer to *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Preparing a Manuscript for Submission to a Medical Journal* – Section G.
4. Disclosures of funding sources or any conflicts of interest must be mentioned in the manuscript and at the start of the oral presentation. Please be guided using the ICJME uniform disclosure form (<https://www.icmje.org/disclosure-of-interest/>)
5. Authorship and contributorship must be mentioned using guidelines from “*Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Ethical Considerations in the Conduct and Reporting of Research: Authorship and Contributorship*” (<https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>)
6. Manuscripts must include the following sections – Title Page, Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusion, References, Tables, Illustrations (Figures), Units of Measurement, Abbreviations and Symbols
7. Participants must submit their manuscripts **WITHOUT** identifying information of authors and institutions.

VI. BOARD OF JUDGES

The Chair of the Research Committee and the Chair of the Fellows’ Research Paper Contest will appoint three Board of Judges. The Board of Judges will be composed of one head judge and two other members. The Head Judge will be an ophthalmologist with a background in research, academics or evidence-based medicine. Other members may or may not be ophthalmologists, but should be “scientists” with a background in research or academics.

Accepted manuscripts will undergo pre-judging by the respective set of judges. Six manuscripts will be chosen for oral presentation. Authors of these papers will be informed about two weeks before the day of presentation.

Other submissions which did not qualify for oral presentation will be categorized as an e-poster presentation

VII. CRITERIA FOR GRADING

1. Written Report (85%)

CRITERIA	POINTS	BASIS
Literature review	5%	- Do the rationale, literature review, research framework, and objectives establish the importance and originality of the study?
Statement of Objectives	5%	
Significance of the Study	5%	
Methodology	15%	- Is the study designed appropriately to answer the stated objective(s) (i.e., appropriate procedures and outcome assessments, sample size, appropriate statistical measures, and tools that have been tested for reliability and validity)? - Are sources of possible bias being handled appropriately?
Results	10%	- Are the results valid? Are the results presented clearly and appropriately? (Interpretation and analysis; validity of results based on the critical appraisal guidelines and CONSORT checklist)
Statistical Analyses	10%	
Discussion	10%	- Are the results and study limitations discussed in sufficient detail? - Are the implications of the findings discussed?
Conclusion	5%	- Do the conclusion statements answer the study objectives; are they firmly based on the results?
Recommendations	5%	- Are there sound recommendations for the users of this information and for future research?
QUALITY OF WRITTEN REPORT		
Technical Writing Style	5%	- Organized manuscript, conforms to standards for reporting evidence
Type of Study/Level of Evidence	5%	- Does the type of study provide higher evidence of information?
Thoroughness Of Reporting	5%	- Based on compliance with CONSORT or other applicable guidelines
TOTAL WRITTEN SCORE	85%	

2. Oral Presentation (15%)

CRITERIA	POINTS	BASIS
QUALITY OF ORAL PRESENTATION		
Delivery	5%	- Clarity of speech and demeanor
Clarity and appropriateness of visual aids	5%	
Mastery of the subject	5%	- As reflected in the presentation and Q&A portion
TOTAL PRESENTATION SCORE	15%	

****The Board of Judges shall grade the written report prior to the actual presentation (85%). Oral presentations shall be judged, including questions and answers (15%) during the annual convention.**

3. Timing

The time limit for all oral presentations (the TOP SIX) will be **eight (8) minutes, with an additional six (6) minutes for question-and-answer (Q&A)**. Names of authors and institutions must not appear in the shared screen presentations.

4. Deductions

- a. A **5% deduction** will be given to papers whose manuscripts or slides bear any identities of the authors or institutions (including logos and acronyms).
- b. iThenticate 2.0 Similarity Reports greater than 30% will have a **10% deduction** in the written manuscript score.
- c. iThenticate 2.0 AI detection Score that is greater than 20% will have a **10% deduction** in the written manuscript score.
- b. When a presenter goes beyond the allotted time of eight minutes, a **5% deduction** from the total score will be given for every minute over the allotted time.

5. Awarding

The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners will be based on the mean ranking of the judges for each category. The first placers will have their names & institutions engraved on the PAO Research Cup. The PAO Research Cup will be kept by the winning institution for one year. The PAO Research Cup will be passed on to the winners of the succeeding year/s.

The decision of the Board of Judges shall be final.