



Call for Entrants in the Developing Scientist Awards Competition

Supported by the International Association for Food Protection Foundation

The International Association for Food Protection is pleased to announce the continuation of its program to encourage and recognize the work of students and recent graduates in the field of food safety research. Qualified individuals may enter either the technical or poster competition.

Purpose

1. To encourage graduate students and recent graduates of M.S. or Ph.D. programs to present their original research at the Annual Meeting.
2. To foster professionalism in students and recent graduates through contact with peers and professional Members of the Association.
3. To encourage participation by students and recent graduates in the Association and the Annual Meeting.

Presentation Format

Technical Competition - The Developing Scientist Technical Awards Competition is open to graduate students (enrolled or recent graduates) from M.S. or Ph.D. programs at accredited universities or colleges. Presentations are limited to 15 minutes, which includes two to four minutes for questions & answers.

Poster Competition - The Developing Scientist Poster Awards Competition is open to students (enrolled or recent graduates) from graduate programs at accredited universities or colleges. The presenter must be present to answer questions for a specified time (approximately 2.5 hours) during the assigned time period(s). Specific requirements for presentations will be provided at a later date.

General Information

1. Competition entrants must hold an active IAFP membership at the time of the Annual Meeting.
2. Competition entrants cannot have graduated more than a year prior to the deadline for submitting abstracts. Entrants must provide their graduation date within the abstract submission (online).
Graduation date must be January 14, 2025 or later.
3. Accredited universities or colleges must deal with environmental, food or dairy sanitation, protection or safety research.
4. The work must represent original research completed and presented by the entrant.
5. Entrants may enter only one paper in either the technical or poster competition.

6. All entrants must register for the Annual Meeting and assume responsibility for their own transportation, lodging, and registration fees.
7. Acceptance of your abstract for presentation is independent of acceptance as a competition finalist. Competition entrants who are chosen as finalists will be notified of their status by the chairperson by May 18, 2026.
8. In addition to adhering to the instructions in the "Call for Abstracts," competition entrants must check the box to indicate if the paper is to be presented by a student in this competition.

Judging Criteria

A panel of judges will evaluate abstracts and presentations. Selection of up to twelve finalists for each competition will be based on evaluations of the abstracts and the scientific quality of the work. Only competition finalists will be judged at the Annual Meeting and will be eligible for the awards.

Judging criteria will be based on the following:

1. Abstract - Clarity, comprehensiveness and conciseness.
2. Scientific Quality - Adequacy of experimental design (methodology, replication, controls), extent to which objectives were met, difficulty and thoroughness of research, validity of conclusions based upon data, technical merit and contribution to science.
3. Presentation - Organization (clarity of introduction, objectives, methods, results and conclusions), quality of visuals, quality and poise of presentation, answering questions and knowledge of subject.

Finalists

Awards will be presented at the International Association for Food Protection Annual Meeting Awards Banquet on Wednesday, July 29, 2026 to the top three presenters (first, second and third places) in both the technical and poster competitions. **All finalists must be present at the banquet where the award winners will be announced and recognized. If award winner is not present at the banquet, the monetary award must be forfeited.**

Awards

First Place - \$1,500 and an engraved plaque
Second Place - \$1,000 and a framed certificate
Third Place - \$750 and a framed certificate

Application Instructions

Qualified individuals may enter the contest when they enter their IAFP 2026 abstract using the online abstract submission system at www.foodprotection.org.