

Chapter 3: Principles and Evaluation Criteria for Philatelic Exhibiting

The following is a brief overview of the principles of exhibiting primarily for the exhibitor. These principles are viewed globally as acceptable by various exhibiting bodies, and they track closely with the international standards of the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP). New or returning exhibitors should review Chapters 1 and 2 before proceeding further.

3.1 Competitive Exhibits

The limit of the frame space allocated at exhibitions does not normally allow you to display your entire collection. Therefore, you should select suitable material, which will ensure continuity and understanding of the exhibit focus.

The evaluation of your exhibit will take into consideration only the material and information displayed in the frames.

Additional information and references can be provided in your Synopsis to aid judges in preparing to evaluate your exhibit. A Synopsis is not intended to be a brief summary of your exhibit. Rather, it comprises additional notes about the exhibit and the efforts to build it plus the key references you want the philatelic judge to use to prepare for the evaluation. See Appendix 1.3 for further information about creating and providing a Synopsis.

3.2 Principles of Exhibit Composition

The best exhibits maintain a clear concept of the subject and develop the concept according to the characteristics of the chosen exhibit type. The concept for your exhibit should be communicated with a clear statement of purpose and scope on the title page, preferably as the first sentence. Competitive exhibits do best when the exhibitor provides a descriptive title that covers the subject and scope of the exhibit.

Your exhibit consists of relevant philatelic material, supporting material and text. It is a philatelic exhibit. “Philatelic” used here also includes the closely associated deltiologic material (picture postcards) found at philatelic exhibitions in the U.S. and other countries.

Your exhibit communicates best if your material displayed is fully consistent with your chosen focus using the widest range of relevant philatelic and/or non-philatelic material of the highest available quality. Relevant philatelic material depends upon the exhibit type as described later in this chapter and in Appendix 2. Non-philatelic material is all other items you use in the exhibit, such as maps and other paper ephemera as well as physical objects that relate to the exhibit subject. Non-philatelic material is also covered for exhibit types in Appendix 2. The careful selection of the items and the order in which they are presented are key success factors.

Brief, clear and succinct accompanying text will enhance your exhibit. It adds information to that provided by your material and shows the level of your understanding of the exhibit focus and your personal study or research.

3.3 A Brief Overview of the Criteria for Evaluation

Criteria and weights for the evaluation of competitive exhibits are as follows:

- Treatment and importance (30%)
- Philatelic and related knowledge, personal study and research (35%)
- Condition and rarity of material exhibited (30%)
- Presentation (5%)

The criterion of “treatment” requires an evaluation of the subject scope and limits, the development of the subject, the clarity and ease of understanding, and the balance and completeness of coverage of the subject to achieve the stated purpose of your exhibit.

The criterion of “importance” requires an evaluation of the importance to the development of the postal system, importance to the region, the philatelic significance of the subject in terms of its scope, and the philatelic interest of the exhibit, which together may be known as “Philatelic Importance.” For non-philatelic subjects, importance is a measure of the challenge of the exhibit and the importance of that exhibit to all others of similar type, which may be known as “Exhibit Importance.”

The criteria of “philatelic and related knowledge, personal study and research” require the following evaluations:

- Knowledge is the degree of knowledge you express by the items you have chosen for display and their related description (knowing what is required to develop the subject);
- Personal study is the proper analysis of the items chosen for display;
- Research is the presentation of material that illustrates new facts and theories that the exhibitor has brought to light.

The criteria of “condition and rarity” require an evaluation of the quality of the displayed material considering the standard of the material that exists for the chosen subject and the period covered by its scope, and an evaluation of the rarity and the relative difficulty of acquisition of the selected material.

The criterion of “presentation” requires an evaluation of the means used by the exhibitor to highlight the exhibit’s philatelic material, as well as the overall aesthetic appearance of the exhibit.

Evaluation criteria and their use are explained in depth in the next two chapters.

3.4 Conventional Exhibit Types

Following are brief definitions for various conventional exhibit types. Appendix 2 has examples of how each exhibit type is generally developed, along with exhibiting conventions specific to each type. Appendix 2 has been provided to give exhibitors additional guidance for developing exhibits by type of material and/or purpose for those who wish to use the guidance. You are not restricted to using only these types, and many exhibits combine aspects of more than one. In the past, there has been resistance to including picture postcards in our list of conventional exhibit types, but this inclusion demonstrates the evolving nature of exhibiting in the U.S. and around the world. Experimental and Topical exhibits have also been added. Exhibiting is always evolving, and creativity should be rewarded with acceptance.

Since there is no specific hierarchy of exhibit types, the following list is provided alphabetically, by exhibit class.

Listing of Conventional Exhibit Types by Class

General Class Exhibits (all multi-frame exhibits)

Advertising, Patriotic and Event Cover Exhibits
 Aerophilately Exhibits
 Astrophilately Exhibits
 Cinderella Exhibits
 Display Exhibits
 Experimental Exhibits
 First Day Cover Exhibits
 Maximaphily Exhibits
 Picture Postcard Exhibits
 Postal History Exhibits
 Postal Stationery Exhibits
 Revenue Exhibits
 Thematic Exhibits
 Topical Exhibits
 Traditional Exhibits

One-Frame Class Exhibits

Youth Class Exhibits

Following are brief descriptions of each type. However, also read Appendix 2 for further understanding of developing and judging these exhibits.

3.5 General Class Exhibits

The General Class represents all multi-frame exhibits (two to ten exhibit frames). A range of types have been developed over the years. Exhibiting styles have changed, and some may be unfamiliar to exhibitors. The General Class has its own Champion of Champions competition at the annual APS StampShow.

3.5.1 Advertising, Patriotic and Event Cover Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.1)

Exhibits of advertising, patriotic and event covers place their primary focus on the envelope illustration, including

how the illustration was created and/or how the cover was used to commemorate an event or place. Some exhibitors have used these covers to treat a subject in ways similar to a topical or thematic exhibit type.

Advertising cover exhibits feature business envelopes that use the space on the envelope or card for illustrations or corner return addresses that advertise or promote business, products and/or services.

Patriotic cover exhibits focus on covers produced with patriotic slogans, insignias or other political or nationalistic symbols or illustrations.

Event or commemorative cover exhibits display covers marking a specific commemoration or holiday.

3.5.2 Aerophilately Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.2)

An Aerophilately exhibit focuses on the development, operation or other defined aspect of airmail services. The exhibit would include postal items transported by air, preferably bearing evidence that the items actually traveled by air. Depending on your overall story, you might also consider airmail stamps, non-postal items documenting air services, forerunners to regular air postal services, or mail flown by carriers where postal services were not available. These exhibits may also show supporting documents such as schedules, photographs, and other ephemera closely related to the subject.

3.5.3 Astrophilately Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.3)

Astrophilately exhibits include many of the same elements as Aerophilately exhibits, but with a clear focus on the exploration and conquest of space. Your Astrophilately exhibit could include postmarked philatelic material related to space exploration, rocketry, or similar topics. Early Astrophilately events include precursor uses of rocketry and stratospheric balloon flights and the pioneers whose works led to space flight. Astrophilately is a very specialized type, and FIP Special Regulations regarding this exhibit type are very specific and require extra diligence. Among the special characteristics of Astrophilately exhibits are envelopes and cards cancelled at a nearby post office on the exact date of the events. Depending on your story, they might also include command and coordination centers, tracking stations and tracking ships, landing locations and primary recovery ships.

Sample concepts you might exhibit include:

- Any period from pioneers to current activities in space
- Rocket mail
- Space programs, whether governmental, private or commercial, manned or unmanned

3.5.4 Cinderella Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.4)

A Cinderella exhibit shows stamp-like elements not intended to prepay mailing services, but they may be used on covers. Because they are stamp-like, they generally follow the treatment similar to traditional exhibit types, including using supporting documentation when appropriate. There are myriad types of Cinderella stamps, but they fall into two general categories:

Labels that look like a stamp but have no franking value in mail-carrying or revenue services, including bogus or fantasy stamps, toy stamps, stage props, ration stamps, seals, poster stamps, private savings stamps, and advertising stamps.

Labels that do not look like a stamp, but have a mail-carrying connection, such as wafers or seals for sealing letters, registration or express labels, airmail labels (philatelic etiquettes), postal instructional labels.

Cinderellas do not include matchbox labels, hotel baggage labels, airline labels, or other types of commercial labels (e.g. perfume labels, food can labels). These are non-Cinderella ephemera and, as such, may be used as collateral or supporting material often in other types of exhibits. Also excluded are items related to a governmental service or fee paid by a series of imprints or stamps, e.g., revenue and telegraph issues that are covered under revenue exhibits.

Fakes, forgeries and test stamps as the subject of the exhibit are generally treated as a traditional exhibit type.

3.5.5 Display Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.5)

Display exhibits tell a unified, cohesive story by combining philatelic material from any or all of the other exhibit types along with a significant number, range, and diversity of non-philatelic elements. There is no set ratio of philatelic versus non-philatelic items; however, a display exhibit is primarily philatelic, meaning the philatelic items should carry the story.

All exhibit types (except thematic and topical) allow for some use of non-philatelic material in support of the story.

The extensive and varied inclusion of non-philatelic material distinguishes a display exhibit from all the other types. You are allowed the widest freedom of expression in a display exhibit, yet the framework of your exhibit is still philatelic.

Non-philatelic material in your exhibit may include almost anything that is not dangerous, illegal, or might damage a show frame. As in other exhibits, you should strive to display only original or archival material, not copies or reproductions. A show committee may allow you to display something outside the frames, but you should seek permission to do so in advance; however, it is only the material in the frames that will be considered by the judges.

3.5.6 Experimental Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.6)

This type is included both for experimental purposes and to accommodate exhibit types that cannot be categorized elsewhere. These exhibits generally combine elements of several other types. They require a well defined purpose and scope as well as a logical plan of organization.

3.5.7 First-Day Cover Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.7)

A first-day cover (FDC) exhibit focuses on the creation and earliest date of use, usually the official first day according to the postal administration, of a stamp or series of stamps or postal stationery. A FDC exhibit treatment mirrors a traditional exhibit, generally developing the story from initial design and production, to the post office announcement and related supporting documentation, the cancellation and cachet studies associated with the first day of issue and, finally, commercial uses.

These exhibits may also focus on a single first-day cachet-maker and trace his or her story through their cachets.

3.5.8 Maximaphily Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.8)

Maximum cards are illustrated (picture) postcards generally conforming in size to the Universal Postal Union Convention, and have on their picture side an adhesive postage stamp with a related image and a commemorative cancellation with a related image. This exhibit type is little seen in the U.S., but maximum cards are used as philatelic items in other exhibit types, including thematic exhibits. By definition, the three components — illustration (PPC), stamp and cancel that ties the stamp to the card, should result in tight “concordance” in which all are related to the same subject. If you prepare a Maximaphily exhibit, it is in the category where the subject of the exhibit is non-philatelic; however, printing varieties of any of the three elements may be important to the exhibit. Your exhibit can represent a country or countries, a specific event, or any variety of themes.

3.5.9 Picture Postcard Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.9)

A picture postcard (PPC) exhibit develops a focus or theme as defined by the title and plan using primarily the images on picture postcards, in a variety of sizes, shapes and materials, including fold-out cards, accordion-type folders, real photo cards, cards made of card stock, metals, wood, leather, and other materials. The exhibit focuses on the images on the picture side of the card. You may also include printed-to-private-order (PTPO) or stamped-to-order (STO) postal cards if they also have an image printed on them.

3.5.10 Postal History Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.10)

Postal history is the study of rates, routes and/or markings (marcophily), means of transport to a post office or group of post offices, uses and other aspects of the historical development of postal services. When exhibiting, you would generally illustrate part or all of these elements within the framework of a geographic area or rate period(s), or the focus on one category, e.g., the development of rates.

Postal history includes folded letters, outer letter sheets, envelopes, postal cards and stationery, newspapers, parcel wrappings, parcel tags and any other items that have been handled by a postal system. You might also include examples of paper ephemera such as contemporaneous maps, decrees, or post office forms if they aid in the development and understanding of your exhibit.

As you develop a postal history exhibit you may find that the main thread of your treatment is one or more of three broad categories.

General postal history is the story of mail carried, handled by or related to a post office, whether official or private, local, regional, or national/international. Your emphasis would be on rates, routes or markings (marcophily). It includes the history, evolution or development of specific or general postal services within a political entity or between one or more political entities.

Markings deal with the origin, arrival, transit, delay, service, inspection, or informational markings applied

to all types of postal matter handled by an official or private postal service. Examples of these markings include manuscript, hand stamps, machine cancels, meters, advertising, censorship markings and sealing tapes, and slogan postmarks/markings. Postmarks are often studied by shape, ink colors and period of use. Earliest Documented Use of a series of stamps is another approach to exhibiting postal history.

Historical, social or special studies include mail related to a specific area of commerce or society and its relationship to the postal system. These studies are essentially about how the mail was used in a subset of the postal system or over a specific period of time bounded by external events.

3.5.11 Postal Stationery Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.11)

Generally, the subject of a postal stationery exhibit is the production and use of the stationery items, so your exhibit may follow that of the Traditional exhibit type in all respects. Postal stationery has been characterized as “large stamps” and treated accordingly. The United Postal Stationery Society defines postal stationery narrowly when competing for its awards, so be certain your treatment and material follows their definitions if you seek that recognition.

Postal stationery has an indication of prepayment of a fee for a service to be redeemed at a future date. Usually redemption is indicated by a cancellation. The prepayment indication may be a printed indicium or text, an adhesive stamp applied before sale or an undated, modified meter mark or cancel functioning as a makeshift stamp impression. The item can be carried by a government postal service, express or private company, local post or subcontractor. Finally, services may entail postage, registration, insurance, money order, telegraph, telephone, post office box rental, and postal savings if these items carry evidence of prepayment.

For clarity, these items are **excluded** from the U.P.S.S. definition of postal stationery:

- Stationery with a free frank
- Indicia for bulk mail, whether or not accompanied by an indication of “postage paid” or equivalent.
- Stationery of any type, whether supplied by a post office or private party, without indication of pre-payment of a fee (called “formular” stationery).
- Stationery with an indicium representing a tax, rather than a fee for postal service is almost always revenue stamped paper, rather than postal stationery.

3.5.12 Revenue Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.12)

Revenue exhibits can be one or both of two exhibit types: Traditional revenue exhibits and fiscal history revenue exhibits. Revenue stamps are those issued by the government to evidence payment of a fee for service, or receipt for taxes paid or exempted. Government issued licenses can be considered both a document and a revenue “stamp” if they are imprinted with a value for fees paid.

Postal-fiscals (“postage and revenue” stamps) are hybrids, so your treatment may be based either upon their postal nature, or their fiscal nature. Revenue stamps may be denominated in monetary terms, or in terms of a quantity of product, such as gallons of alcohol, pounds of tobacco or ounces of snuff.

The government may be federal, state, municipal, county, township, or Native American Reservation. There are exceptions to the governmental nature of revenue stamps, such as license and royalty stamps. These are essentially private revenue stamps and comprise the fiscal counterpart of private posts and express companies.

Traditional revenue exhibits: A traditional revenue exhibit is the fiscal counterpart of a traditional postal exhibit with all of the life cycle items available to develop your treatment. In place of the post office announcement, a copy of the published announcement, regulation or law can be substituted. Production varieties and examples of usage on document in the way they were intended are encouraged.

Fiscal history revenue exhibits: The subject of a fiscal history revenue exhibit is in many ways is a corollary to a postal history exhibit. Emphasis is on the types of documents or commodities taxed, cancellation or defacement of the stamps, rates, rate changes, exemptions, if any, as well as any redemption. Your exhibit might be logically limited by a geographical area and/or specific time period. You can also form a marcophily fiscal history exhibit using distinctive markings used to cancel revenue stamps.

3.5.13 Thematic Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.13)

A thematic exhibit develops a subject by illustrating it with a wide variety of appropriate philatelic material, and supporting it with associated thematic and philatelic text, in accordance with the Title, sub title (if any), and the Plan. This concept is carried down to all levels of the exhibit. Chapters and all subdivisions focus only on aspects of the thematic subject. The exhibitor can select any subject or theme as long as it is not about a philatelic element (such as a

particular stamp or series of stamps) or characteristics (such as stamp perforations or postal stationery knives).

A traditional or conventional thematic exhibit uses material from the Traditional, Postal History, Postal Stationery, Revenue, and Maximaphily General Class exhibit types.

An exhibit organized thematically may use material from all General Class exhibit types.

Display exhibits organized thematically may use material from all General Class exhibit types and collateral material.

Exhibitors should carefully define what type of exhibit they are showing.

3.5.14 Topical Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.14)

Topical exhibits are composed of a variety of philatelic items, the design of which illustrates a specific topic or subject. If you choose to present a topical exhibit, it would show as many philatelic items as possible with the image of the particular subject or group of subjects that is the focus of your exhibit.

The key success factor with a topical exhibit is to have a well-defined purpose, scope and organization of the subject matter as illustrated by your material. As the exhibitor, you have the flexibility of using whatever subject you wish, as well as any logical organizational structure.

3.5.15 Traditional Exhibits (see also Appendix 2.1.15)

In traditional exhibits the subject is the production of a stamp or series of stamps. Therefore, a basic traditional exhibit shows the evolutionary stages from conception to design to production to use. Examples include:

- Special studies relating to stamp production, such as pre-production essays, proofs, papers, gums, perforations, color variations, errors in design, precancels, and perfins (stamps with perforated initials).
- Research studies such as plate reconstruction and the study of plate flaws.
- Those displaying several countries' so-called "omnibus" issues, or first issues of a region, stamps issued for special events such as fairs, and annual or special commemorative events such as national holidays.

Some supporting documents can also be included depending on how the treatment of the subject is developed in the exhibit.

3.6 One-Frame Exhibit Class (see also Appendix 2.2)

One-frame exhibits tell a complete philatelic story within the physical dimensions of a single 16-page frame (or equivalent in oversized pages). The subject of a one-frame exhibit can be from any conventional exhibit type as described above for multi-frame exhibits. Success in this Class is properly defining a subject and creating an exhibit that does just that – a complete story in one frame, neither more nor less.

You may use any of the material that is normally found in multi-frame exhibits. However, given the 16-page format, you must pay special attention to using the space on exhibit pages to your advantage. Among other things, this means successful exhibitors create a balanced approach to the elements of the story. It is recommended that each page, including the title page, have elements supporting the purpose of your exhibit.

Judges evaluate one-frame exhibits using the same UEEF criteria as for other exhibit types. The one-frame class has its own Champion of Champions competition each year at the APS AmeriStamp Expo.

3.7 Youth Exhibit Class (see also Appendix 2.3)

The Youth Class encompasses all exhibits by exhibitors up through age 21 regardless of the subject of the exhibit or exhibit type or the number of frames (1 to 10). Age is defined as the exhibitor's age on January 1 of the year in which the exhibit is shown. Actual age on the date of the exhibition is not relevant.

There is a separate Youth Champion of Champions competition sponsored by the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors (AAPE, Inc.) and held in conjunction with APS StampShow. For more information on this event, see the AAPE web site at www.aaape.org

Chapter 4: Evaluating Philatelic Exhibits

Judges evaluate philatelic exhibits of every type, size, and class using the same criteria of Treatment and Importance, Knowledge and Research, Condition and Rarity, and Presentation. These are the “Big 4” standards for philatelic exhibit evaluation.

The evaluation criteria briefly cited in the preceding chapter are treated in depth in this chapter. In addition, this chapter will address assigning points to each of the criteria in the process of evaluation. The criteria and their relative weights are those that have been used since the 6th edition of this *Manual* (2009). With very minor exceptions, these criteria can be readily applied to all philatelic exhibits, including experimental exhibits. Literature Class exhibits has a similar set of criteria that are covered in a separate manual.

4.1 Points and Medal Levels

Effective 1 January 2017, CANEJ requires that WSP shows offer 8 medal levels and philatelic judges will use points to judge exhibits, both of which are described below in the next two sections. CANEJ will be conducting appropriate training with philatelic judges and communication with exhibitors and show committees before and during this period. This is a worldwide standard, and as more and more exhibitors and judges travel to other countries (and other countries' judges and exhibitors participate in our shows) it makes sense to standardize our medal levels. In order to convert to eight medals, point scoring must be implemented.

The new set of medals and their point range used by APS appear in the table below:

Medal	APS Point Range
Large Gold	90–100
Gold	85–89
Large Vermeil	80–84
Vermeil	75–79
Large Silver	70–74
Silver	65–69
Silver-Bronze	60–64
Bronze	55–59
Certificate	0–54

These medal levels and point ranges are consistent with other countries' national level shows. They have stood the test of time, and in every survey of U.S. exhibitors since 2009, large numbers of exhibitors have requested at least the Large Gold so that competitive exhibitors could better gauge their chances for winning top prizes. The APS point ranges are different from those used in international FIP competition.

Show committees need not invest in additional medallions — a Silver medal is also a Large Silver medal; only the wording of award certificates and palmares (awards list) will need to change. Adding additional ribbons is not required, either, and for the same reason. Because Large Gold is a very special achievement, some shows may want a special ribbon for that medal level, but it is not required.

4.2 Point Scoring

The Uniform Exhibit Evaluation Form (UEEF) was originally set up with the weights, as percentages, given for the various criteria. Those criteria were discussed briefly in Chapter 3, and we will continue that discussion in more depth in this chapter. When using points, these percentages convert to the maximum score in points for each criterion.

In this process, we are translating subjective judgment to a numeric value; something that is done all of the time in competitions, satisfaction surveys, and other activities. For the same reason that figure skating competitions use multiple judges to arrive at a numeric score, we have multiple judges looking at each exhibit and placing a number on their judgment of how well each exhibit meets the various exhibiting criteria.

Each criterion should be viewed as a numerical range, much like a satisfaction survey. If the criterion was fulfilled exceptionally well, then near-full or full marks can be awarded for that criterion. If the criterion was poorly handled or missing, then a failing or near-failing grade would be awarded for that criterion; and, for accomplishment in-between for those that did the expected work with a bit less or a bit more. The final score is the total of each of these individual judgments.

The primary advantage of the use of points is that it gives additional feedback in the weak areas, helping both the judge and exhibitor pinpoint corrective action.

We will cover each criterion in depth in the next few pages.

Some Reality Checks:

Numerical scores are not absolute. They represent a summary of a multitude of subjective judgments combined with the skill and experience of the judges making those judgments. Numerical scores will vary from jury to jury, just as medal levels in the subjective process can vary from jury to jury. Numerical scores are not an end in themselves; they indicate more precisely where improvements can be made when used with the written and oral comments of the jury.

There are, in practice, both “floors” and “ceilings” to point ranges; a fact of life. The floor is usually 50 percent of the available points. If you treated each of the criteria sub-sections independently, a score of less than half the available points basically gives a failing grade (Certificate level) valuation on that criterion. On the other hand, there is sometimes a ceiling: some judges reserve full marks (100 points) of the available points only for the most exceptional exhibits. Carried through to the seven sub-sections, those judges start at a maximum “93” and go down from there. The ceiling phenomena might frustrate you on your way to top medals, but we find that a “ceiling” is much less prevalent than an implied “floor.”

Juries using points work best when all philatelic judges work as a single team together. When more than one team is necessary, it is important that the team leaders of each team meet before the judging begins and resolve issues of “floors” and “ceilings.” The most subjective areas in judging, based on the experience observed during field trials, are the criteria “Importance” and “Presentation,” and it is best if the teams have a common understanding on how the points will be applied in these areas.

Some Poor Practices:

There is genuine concern by exhibitors that the point scoring is a sham. Three practices have been noted in the past as the source of that mistrust:

1. The judge decides first on the medal level and then “backs into” the appropriate score for the predetermined medal, or
2. The judge applies the same percentage of accomplishment across the board without examining the criteria in detail.
3. Judges with differing opinions about exhibits reach an artificial compromise (“splitting the difference”) or exchange support for one favored exhibit vs. another (“horse-trading”) rather than a genuine consensus.

None of these practices is condoned. If the judge feels uncomfortable about using points to evaluate each criterion fairly, then the judge must ask the Chief Judge for training so that they can contribute fairly and consistently to the process. This issue should be raised as early as possible, preferably prior to the exhibition.

Point Scoring Job Aid

What follows is a matrix illustrating point scoring across eight medal levels. This matrix is a modification to the recommended reference: Drews, Richard, “What’s the Point of Judging?” *The Philatelic Exhibitor*, Vol. 28 No. 1 (Winter 2014), pp. 29-32.

This is meant only as a guide, to illustrate that accomplishment in each criteria adds up to the overall medal level. Some criteria have fewer possible points than others, and to distribute them in strict proportion to the total available results in fractions of a point given. Because fractional points are not given, it is not recommended that you engage in that level of detail. It is quite common to see exhibits with uneven scores, e.g., Gold Medal Rarity and Condition with Silver Medal Treatment, and many other combinations of mixed accomplishment.

The Effect of Criteria Points on Overall Score

Medal	Certificate	Bronze	Silver Bronze	Silver	Large Silver	Vermeil	Large Vermeil	Gold	Large Gold
Point Range	0-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85-89	90-100
Treatment 20	0-10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18-20
Importance 10	0-5	6	6	7	7	8	8	8	9-10
Knowledge 25	0-12	13-14	15	16	17-18	18-19	20	21-22	23-25
Research 10	0-5	6	6	7	7	8	8	8	9-10
Rarity 20	0-10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18-20
Condition 10	0-5	6	6	7	7	8	8	8	9-10
Presentation 5	0-2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	5

4.3 Evaluation Criteria in Depth

What follows are details of the thinking process the judge may use to arrive at a score for particular criteria. The extreme end-points "Poor" and "Excellent" are used so that the judge can measure how close to one end or the other based on the descriptions of what "Poor" accomplishment looks like and what "Excellent" accomplishment looks like. **There are many grades of accomplishment in between.**

Treatment and Importance (30 points)

Treatment (20 points) includes Title and Content of the Exhibit

Treatment is defined as the organization and development of the exhibit subject. Sometimes treatment is described as the "golden thread," or principal story line that links the parts of the exhibit into a coherent whole that achieves its stated purpose within its stated scope. The table below describes the aspects usually appearing on a title page and the extremes of poor and excellent treatment. This will be followed by another chart for the content of the exhibit.

Title Page

Aspects	Poor Treatment	Excellent Treatment
Title (including optional subtitle).	The title is not related or poorly related to the content of the exhibit.	The title concisely and accurately describes the content and scope of the exhibit subject.
Purpose (why you created your exhibit).	The exhibit lacks a statement of purpose	The statement of purpose clearly defines the subject and goal of the exhibit.
Scope (what you have included in the exhibit and/or what are the limits of the exhibit's subject).	The exhibit lacks a statement of scope, the scope is inappropriate for the subject, or it is defined to avoid an important part of the subject.	The statement of scope clearly states what portion of the subject and/or time period the exhibit will show, and its chosen boundaries are logical.

The exhibitor may choose to include other optional information on your title page:

- Brief introduction to the subject and/or brief historical context (usually following Purpose and Scope)
- Diagram, map, or item relating to the exhibit as a whole or a precursor to the scope of the exhibit. Keep in mind that placing something special or rare on the title page, but out of sequence, is poor treatment.
- Methods the exhibitor will use to draw attention to special or expertized items and personal research.

If the exhibit subject is complex, the exhibit might benefit from brief introductory remarks at the beginning of each section or chapter. Note: That Topical exhibits do not have a “story line,” rather their treatment is judged on the organizational structure used and adherence of the exhibit content to the title and stated purpose and scope.

One Frame exhibits have the challenge of a narrowly defined space, so it is usually more effective to start developing the exhibit on the title page, which will limit the space available for optional information.

Treatment in the Content of the Exhibit

Aspects	Poor Treatment	Excellent Treatment
Plan development (following the stated purpose, scope and plan).	The exhibit doesn't follow its plan; or if it lacks a plan, the subject is not developed logically.	Exhibit sections follow a plan (the “golden thread”) and develop the subject within the stated scope. The exhibit has a beginning, middle and a conclusion. Topical exhibit generally follow the stated organizational plan.
Balance (proportional contribution to the exhibit subject- not numerical).	Sections of the exhibit are undeveloped or over developed without a logical basis.	The exhibitor develops each section of the exhibit in proportion to its contribution to the overall exhibit subject.
Completeness (sufficient to present the exhibit subject – not necessarily 100 percent).	You skip over portions of your story that are important to the development of your subject.	The exhibitor includes everything necessary to develop the exhibit subject.

Fit: A Part of Treatment for One Frame Exhibit Class Only

Fit is the measure of suitability for a subject that can be covered adequately in one frame. For one-frame exhibits, fit is evaluated as part of Treatment. It is really very difficult to build a top award-winning one-frame exhibit in the same way that writing a short story is more difficult than a longer work. Most subjects that may be suitable are actually 14-page or 18-page exhibit that needs to be stretched or compressed to achieve the proper fit. In spite of these obstacles, there are many excellent one-frame exhibits.

One-frame exhibits use the same conventional exhibit types used to develop multi-frame exhibits plus one special type. A *synoptic* exhibit attempts to provide a complete story by presenting important highlights or important milestones of the subject. Synoptics exhibits can be mistaken for a single frame part of a multi-frame exhibit. The degree of shallowness (poor) or depth (excellent) of treatment for synoptic exhibits can be assessed in place of fit for conventional one-frame exhibit types shown in the following table..

Aspects	Poor Fit	Excellent Fit
Fit (the exhibit adequately covers the chosen focus in one frame).	The exhibit lacks enough material to fill a single frame without padding.	The exhibit focus is definitively covered in a single frame.
	The exhibit subject cannot be adequately covered in only one frame, the exhibit is obviously a single frame part of a multi-frame subject, or the exhibitor chose an artificial limit to fit the story in one frame.	

Other

The most effective exhibits use running headers; information blocks at the top left/center/ right of each page throughout the body of the exhibit which serve as consistent signposts for progress in the exhibit's plan. These are not required, but if missing, the judge may suggest their use if treatment development issues appear to be a problem. Running headers can incorporate some or all of the following:

- Section titles that match your plan
- Sub-section identification
- Page content identification

Importance (10points)

Importance is a measure of the challenge in creating the exhibit. It has two parts:

1. Philatelic: how much philatelic depth and diversity is shown in the development of the exhibit;
2. Exhibit: the significance of the exhibit within its subject area. The exhibit can be important because it is the definitive showing of the subject, because it shows creativity in treatment, or because the exhibitor provided unusual or special insights in the exhibit.

Importance: All Exhibits

Aspects	Poor Importance	Excellent Importance
Philatelic importance.	The exhibit covers a minor aspect of philately.	The exhibit covers a major aspect of philately in a postal system or geographical area.
Exhibit importance.	The exhibit covers a minor part of a wider scope or the simplest part of a complex subject. All or most of the exhibit is easily duplicated.	The exhibit represents a significant challenge in scope or complexity. The exhibit is the best example of this subject, and it cannot be easily duplicated

Knowledge and Research (35 points)

Philatelic and Subject Knowledge (25 points)

The items the exhibitor selects to display on the pages and how they are described reflect the extent of the exhibitor's philatelic and subject matter knowledge, regardless of the exhibit type.

Philatelic Knowledge

Philatelic knowledge is knowledge to select the best philatelic items to develop the exhibit's subject, as well as knowledge about the individual philatelic items in the exhibit.

The philatelic knowledge the exhibitor displays depends on the exhibit's purpose or intent and the item being described. For example, the same cover can be explained in numerous ways to show appropriate philatelic knowledge, depending on exhibit purpose:

- A postal history item: described by one or more postal history aspects (rates, routes, markings).
- An example of stamp usage: described by both the stamp and the rate
- An illustrated mail item: described by the cachet, corner card (return address) or printed advertising (commercial or patriotic) on the cover
- A Cinderella item: described by the labels affixed to the cover
- A display/social history item: described by the sender and/or addressee
- A thematic item: described by the stamp image and/or cancellation as it relates to the theme

Some exhibits benefit from additional or supplemental information that is not strictly required to support the purpose of the exhibit but assist in its understanding, e.g., brief historical context. Such additional information is usually brief and not distracting.

To demonstrate philatelic knowledge, postage rates are part of the analysis. Best practice means that incorrectly franked covers (over/under) are explained. Some over-franked covers are done for convenience, such as the correct values to make the rate were not in hand. Other over-franked covers are contrived as the only way to show postal use of high value stamps.

In exhibits that make use of picture postcards, the judge substitutes deltiological knowledge for philatelic knowledge in the evaluation. Deltiological knowledge includes information about the image, printing method, printer/ publisher, date printed, whether the image is part of a series, and whether the description printed on the card is incorrect (there is no need to document correct images).

If the exhibitor includes non-philatelic items (ephemera, physical objects and other collateral items) to support the purpose of the exhibit, it is best practice to provide information about the source, content, use, date created, and the like (as appropriate). These technical aspects of ephemera are evaluated as a substitute for philatelic knowledge.

Subject Knowledge

Subject knowledge is knowledge about the exhibit subject as a whole rather than about each item. Depending on the exhibit's intent, subject knowledge may be in a supporting role (exhibits based on philatelic subjects) or the principal role (exhibits based on non-philatelic subjects).

For all exhibits the judges evaluate philatelic (and related) knowledge of the exhibit's items and subject matter knowledge within the exhibit's defined scope limits to ensure that the exhibit has a beginning, middle, and end with a narrative thread tying the exhibit together. Topical exhibits have an organizational structure or hierarchy, but not necessarily a narrative in the sense of a beginning, middle and end as in all other exhibit types.

Both philatelic knowledge and subject knowledge are assessed using the same three principles.

Knowledge: All Exhibits

Aspects	Poor Philatelic Knowledge	Excellent Philatelic Knowledge
Selection	The exhibitor has selected items that are not relevant to the subject and/or they are in the wrong order to develop the subject logically	Items selected are the best available to develop the subject according to the plan and the items are in the order necessary to fulfill the plan
Completeness (of philatelic knowledge).	The exhibitor fails to document items in the exhibit that are important to the exhibit's subject.	The exhibitor has explained everything necessary to develop the exhibit subject in a continuous narrative according to the exhibit plan.
Correctness (of philatelic knowledge).	The exhibitor misidentified items and/or there are multiple errors of fact.	All factual statements are correct.
Quality (of philatelic knowledge).	The text wanders or lacks focus on the exhibit subject, the meaning of the text is unclear and/or the text is extremely verbose.	The text remains focused on the exhibit subject, and it clearly and concisely explains the items used.

Non-philatelic Subject Exhibits — An Exception. If the exhibit subject has a non-philatelic focus as its theme and the exhibitor uses philatelic and (optional) non-philatelic items, judges will equally weigh philatelic and subject knowledge in the exhibit.

Thematic exhibits rely on the non-philatelic subject narrative to be the focus of the exhibit, supported as appropriate with philatelic (and related) knowledge of the items. An exhibit can be thematic in its subject development and still not be following the restrictions found in the thematic exhibits type. Display exhibits, topical exhibits, many styles of picture postcard exhibits, some illustrated mail types, and others can be organized and flow thematically. The deciding factor is the non-philatelic subject of the exhibit.

Personal Study and Research (10 points)

Personal Study

Personal study is defined as the activities the exhibitor has conducted to understand the exhibit subject and the items used in the exhibit. The evidence of the exhibitor's study is the analysis of items provided, or aspects of the subject beyond

mere description: by using census figures, reaching new conclusions or relaying new findings. Early/late dates of use, plate flaws; plating, and print sequences are all examples of philatelic knowledge gained by personal study. The exhibitor can also demonstrate subject matter personal study by the depth of the information provided in their narrative.

Research

Research is defined as the activities the exhibitor has used to present new facts related to the items in the exhibit. In areas where there has been considerable research by others, it is better for the exhibitor to show evidence of extensive personal study in place of original research. In practice, judges evaluate these two criteria together, but they should reward significant original research when the exhibitor plainly states it. It helps to delineate the exhibitor's research or discoveries by tasteful indicators in the exhibit, such as the obvious "Personal Research" or "Discovery Copy" in very small type next to the item.

Personal Study and Research: All Exhibits

Aspects	Poor Study and Research	Excellent Study and Research
Analysis	The exhibitor describes items in the exhibit without any analysis of their significance to the exhibit.	The exhibitor's analysis of items demonstrates knowledge of their significance to the exhibit.
Conclusions	The exhibitor provides few or no conclusions about the information in the exhibit.	Where appropriate, the exhibitor presents logical deductions and inferences about the information in the exhibit
Research	The exhibitor shows no evidence of any research, either personal study or original discoveries.	In the exhibit the exhibitor clearly indicates where they have done personal research or they made new discoveries.

Rarity and Condition (30 points)

Rarity and Condition are attributes of the items used in an exhibit. This applies to both philatelic items and non-philatelic items that support the development of the exhibit's treatment.

Rarity (20 points)

Rarity is defined for purposes of evaluating exhibits as related to the *number existing*. Rarity is an expression of the difficulty of acquisition. It is unrelated to cost, although rare items that are in demand will be costly, but it is the demand for the item and not necessarily the supply.

Rarity and scarcity are not synonymous in philately, although common usage often equates these terms. For our philatelic purposes, rarity is an expression of the relative quantity of supply (how many exist) vs. scarcity, which is the demand (market value) for that item.

Rarity: All Exhibits

Aspects	Poor Rarity Content	Excellent Rarity Content
Elusive items	The exhibitor does not include rare items.	The exhibitor includes all necessary rare items to achieve the intent of the exhibit.
Documentation	The exhibitor includes rare items but does not describe their rarity.	The exhibitor properly identifies rare items in the exhibit.

The best form of rarity expression is based on a census, such as "one of three recorded" (illustrated in journals/books/

auction catalogs) or alternatively “reported” (reports/descriptions published without illustration). Poor forms of rarity expression include:

- *Possibly unique* (you should know for certain or omit this statement)
- *Rare* (but you make no reference to how many exist)
- Special or colored mats, frames, dots, or symbols implying rarity without text quantifying the extent of the rarity
- *Scarce* (not a rarity term).

The exhibitor does not need to mount rare items with special or colored mats, frames, dots, or symbols, but it is best to make it easy for viewers (especially judges) to locate rare items in the exhibit. Using different colors to show different levels of rarity usually increases confusion. Best practice is for the exhibitor to adopt a single level of rarity and use it only for truly rare items. The exhibitor may not need to include all known rarities in their exhibit to gain full credit, but a balanced representative presentation of key items may be necessary to achieve the exhibit’s stated purpose.

Condition (10 points)

Condition is the appearance of the items used in an exhibit. Condition varies by the type of item:

- Stamps or labels: color, centering, physically intact, free from soil and stains
- Postal markings and used stamps: clarity of markings, stamp centering
- Covers and stationery: physically intact, free from soil and stains, clarity of markings, unaltered
- Postcards: corners undamaged, image not marred by writing or postal markings
- Non-philatelic ephemera and other physical Items: intact, free from damage and stains, original item

Condition depends also on the use of the item and when it was used. Rare items may exist only in poor condition. Common sense should prevail:

- Modern items should be in pristine condition, unless they have been subjected to extreme conditions such as fire or wrecks.
- Wartime covers and postcards may show the effects of wartime environment, paper quality and handling
- Fiscal and telegraph stamps on documents may be canceled by punched holes
- Documents and ephemera from the late 19th century to World War II might be printed on high acid paper which turns brown with age

If the exhibitor includes repaired, restored and reconditioned items, those items should be identified as such. The exhibitor should also identify scans and photocopies, and where they are used, they should be significantly larger or smaller than the original. These are rules and not guidelines (see Chapter 1).

FIP rules evaluate the correctness of postal rates as an aspect of Condition. CANEJ has elected to consider this important aspect of exhibit evaluation as part of Knowledge.

Presentation (5 points)

Presentation (5 points)

Presentation is the overall visual appeal of an exhibit, taking into consideration each page, each frame and the exhibit as a whole.

Although Presentation carries the least weighting in exhibit evaluation, it can carry a profound effect if the poor presentation hinders a fair assessment of the exhibit’s material in other criteria such as Treatment and Knowledge.

Some styles and conventions change from decade to decade, but some do not. For example, convention now discourages use of black pages and silver ink in an exhibit (popular in the 1950s). On the other hand, hand lettering remains an effective way to prepare exhibits. Of course, the text should be neat and legible if handwritten, and a comfortable viewing size font used if prepared by computer. Hard to read text could affect a criterion score if it affects the ability of the judge to rate the criterion appropriately.

Presentation: All Exhibits

Aspects	Poor Presentation	Excellent Presentation
General layout.	The page layout is identical page after page with little or no variation.	The page and frame layout is balanced with eye appeal for the viewers.
Attractiveness (free from distractions).	The exhibitor mounted items haphazardly and/ or crowded them, or they used several colors of paper in the exhibit.	The exhibitor mounted items neatly on pages of uniform color with sufficient space so that the items and the descriptive text do not seem crowded.
Legibility (appropriate font sizes.	The exhibitor chose font sizes and colors that are difficult to read, or used too many different fonts.	The chosen font sizes and colors are appropriately legible for your exhibit.

4.4 Evaluating Youth Class Exhibits

Youth exhibits have been judged using point scoring for years. The evaluation criteria are modified from the adult Uniform Exhibit Evaluation Form and the scores are on a sliding scale based on the youth's age as of January 1 of the year of the exhibition. For judging and scoring purposes, we use five age groups. Youth exhibitors whose exhibiting age falls in the 18-to-21 age range have the option of moving into the adult classes. However, once a youth exhibits as an adult, she or he can never again exhibit in the Youth Class.

Many youth exhibits, especially in the youngest age groups, originate as a one-frame exhibit. However, judges should not apply the special criteria for One Frame Class adult exhibits when judging youth up through age 18. Only in the oldest age group (ages 19 to 21) should judges consider whether the selected topic is suitable for one frame. If it is not suitable, the judge should deduct "development" points and clearly state the reason on the *Uniform Exhibit Evaluation Form for Youth* (see Chapter 5) to facilitate the transition into adult single-frame exhibiting.

What follows is a recap of the youth evaluation criteria:

Title and Treatment: How well the youth develops the exhibit's subject or theme, organization, plan and structure, and a balanced story. These criteria echo the criteria used in evaluating adult exhibits, scored according to a sliding scale maximum 22 points (younger than 12) to 35 points (ages 19-21).

Knowledge and Research: What the youth demonstrates knowledge of their subject and material. The youth should show basic knowledge of subject or theme, basic philatelic knowledge including correct identification of material, personal study of subject or theme, and the selection of appropriate material to support the exhibit's subject. These criteria are somewhat different than the adult version. The youth exhibit is evaluated more heavily on the youth's knowledge of the selection and identification of material, on a sliding scale maximum 23 points (younger than 12) to 35 points (ages 19 to 21).

Condition and Material: How carefully the youth has chosen the material for the exhibit, including the condition of stamps and covers and the presence of difficult to find material (not necessarily having commercial value). These criteria differ from adult evaluation primarily in the area of rarity. Young people are less likely to have spent the time and resources to acquire rare pieces. These criteria are evaluated at a maximum 20 points, regardless of age.

General Impression of Exhibit and Presentation: How well the youth has made an attractive exhibit with neat and brief write-ups, balanced arrangement on pages, emphasis on stamps and covers, and the exhibit's overall impression. This criterion is on a sliding scale from a maximum 35 points (younger than 12) to 10 points (ages 19 to 21), showing the expectation of growing sophistication of the youth exhibitor.

Chapter 5: Using the Uniform Exhibit Evaluation Form

The purpose of the Uniform Exhibit Evaluation Form (UEEF) is to provide written comments and scores from the jury to the exhibitors. “Uniform” refers to using the same form to evaluate all exhibits in the General Class and One Frame Class. Youth Class exhibits and Literature Class exhibits use separate forms. This chapter provides general guidelines to you as a judge for effectively using the UEEF and the Youth UEEF.

Many judges use the UEEF to:

- Organize their notes at the frames during the evaluation, and
- Prepare commentary for the formal Judges Feedback Forum with exhibitors.

The UEEF is useful because it comes preprinted with the “Big 4” evaluation criteria and key words to remind the judge of important elements of the given criterion. However, judges are free to take notes in any form of their choosing (even plain paper). The only requirement is that the jury’s final comments and scores are provided to the exhibitor on a UEEF. The UEEF is incomplete unless it identifies both the chief judge and primary contact/first responder. The UEEF is a summary of comments from the entire jury, so the first responder signs the form “For the Jury.”

The points printed on the UEEF are the maximum for each criterion. Enter the consensus points awarded for each criterion and enter the total points at the bottom of the form. The exception for detailed reporting is in Knowledge, Study and Research for thematically-organized exhibits. Note that thematically-organized exhibits split the total knowledge points between philatelic knowledge and subject matter knowledge (see the notes on the UEEF).