



2023 Regional Contest Guidelines

Introduction

Develop and hone your skills in impromptu speaking, selling your personal brand in an elevator pitch, or applying to a job. These student competitions offer a welcoming and fun space to practice and receive constructive feedback, and help you step into any professional setting with confidence!

General Benefits to Participants

- Connect with top employers and peers with confidence.
- Receive constructive feedback in an enjoyable atmosphere.
- Challenge yourself to speak concisely and effectively.

Application Deadline

Contest submissions will open Aug. 1, 2023. All contestants must submit their application for the appropriate contest by 11:59 PM Eastern Time **two weeks before the cluster date.**

- a. Region 2 & 3: Sept. 15, 2023
- b. Region 1: Sept. 22, 2023
- c. Region 4 & 5: Oct. 6, 2023
- d. Region 6: Oct. 27, 2023

Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for participation.

Submission

Submit on Submittable: **Contest Submissions**

Contestants will need to create a submittable account to submit their entry. Please only submit to the region you are participating in. Each region is a separate division.

Faxed or emailed submissions are not accepted.

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Contest Descriptions

1. **Impromptu Contest:** This contest develops the ability of MANRRS members to express themselves on a given subject without having prepared or rehearsed its content in advance. The 1st and 2nd place winners of each respective region qualify for the National competition. Active undergraduate members of MANRRS who attend the regional clusters are eligible to participate.
2. **Elevator Speech Contest:** Practice selling your personal brand and MANRRS Why to a potential employer. Active undergraduate members who attend the regional clusters are eligible to participate.
3. **Interview Contest:** This contest is an opportunity to practice the real-life skills needed to apply for a job. Specifically, this contest serves as a development opportunity for participants to receive feedback and constructive critiques on their cover letter and resume writing, and interview skills. The contest is divided into two divisions: (1) undergraduate students and (2) graduate students. The contest is also divided into two rounds: (1) Preliminary round: Participants will prepare a resumé and cover letter for one position of their choice from the Interview Contest Job Descriptions. (2) Final round: Top 5 finalists per division compete in mock interviews at the regional cluster. Active undergraduate and graduate members who attend the regional clusters are eligible to participate.

Contest Application Procedure

2. **Submission:** Create a submittable account before entry. Complete the electronic submission form for each individual entry at <http://manrrs.submittable.com/submit>
3. Electronic submission is required for all contests
4. All entries must be submitted by 11:59 PM EST **two weeks before the cluster date.**
 - a. Late entries will not be accepted, no exceptions. Participants should receive an automated confirmation upon successful submission of a contest entry.
5. Entries submitted to the wrong contest or division will not be accepted.
6. **Eligibility:** Contestants are required to be active (registered on MANRRS.org) MANRRS undergraduate or graduate student members and must attend the regional cluster. No waiver of cluster registration fee is granted to participants. The student's chapter advisor or faculty advisor must certify all work is the work of the presenter.

7. **Appeal Decision:** All decisions of the Contest Superintendent are final. There is no appeal process or opportunity to resubmit once a submission is rejected. Therefore, students are encouraged to closely follow the instructions and view samples as instructed.
8. Any questions regarding contest submissions should be directed to contest@manrrs.org
9. **Contest Judges:** All judges must sign up to serve as a contest judge in their registration. Registration closes 2 weeks prior to each Regional Cluster.
 - a. Judges for impromptu and Elevator Speech Contests will conduct their judging on site, where score sheets will be provided.
 - b. Judges for the Interview Contest will conduct the preliminary round online in the Submittable platform (with final scores due at least one week prior to each cluster) and the final round on site. Interview Contest judges are expected to attend the training meeting on **Sept. 11, 2023 6PM EST** or watch the recording. Meeting link and recording will be shared via email provided in your cluster registration.
10. The top 3 winners of each contest (per division and per region) will be recognized and receive certificates at each Regional Cluster.

Impromptu Contest

General Description

The Impromptu Public Speaking Contest is designed to develop the ability of collegiate undergraduate MANRRS members to express themselves on a given subject without having prepared or rehearsed its content in advance. The contest provides an opportunity to grow public speaking skills and critical thinking as contestants formulate their speeches in a limited amount of time. The competition requires contestants to think quickly, present concisely and persuasively, and provide sufficient responses to questions posed by judges based on their speech.

Contest Rules and Structure

1. The Impromptu Public Speaking Contest is divided into two divisions: 1) Regional Competitions and 2) National Competition. Regional competitions are limited to fifteen (15) total competitors per Region with no more than two (2) competitors per Chapter. Independent collegiate undergraduate members of the society are permitted to participate in Regional Competitions, but must provide proof of university enrollment within a state inside the general boundaries of the Region. Entry into the Regional Competitions requires “active” status as a member of the National Society, and is available on a first-come, first-served basis at the discretion of the Contest Superintendent. The first-place and second-place winners of Regional Competitions, which occur during “Regional Clusters,” advance to the National Competition, which occurs during the “National Conference.”
2. The competition is based on a random selection of fifteen (15) topics that are related to current issues in agriculture, natural resources, and related sciences. The topics are decided by the Contest Superintendent and will only be shared with Contest Judges and Contest Organizers/Host. A different list of speech topics is developed for the Regional and National Competition divisions. Contestants are randomly assigned a speech topic and presentation order by the Contest Superintendent for each Regional and National Competition divisions. The random topic and presentation assignment should be completed using randomization functions/tools on any computer software tool on any website. Contestants are given ten (10) minutes to prepare a speech based on their assigned topic. The table below provides an example depicting the structure of the contest.

Contestant Name	Contestant Topic	Start of Preparation Period	Start of Competition Period
Henry Arthur Callis	Does the protection of farm worker rights benefit agriculture production?	1:00 PM	1:20 PM

	Please create a response in the affirmative or negative.		
Charles Henry Chapman	Traditional or culturally relevant foods have a place in all communities. Should their cultural importance be valued over the production of foods that feed large numbers of people regardless of cultural identity? Please create a response in the affirmative or negative.	1:10 PM	1:30 PM

3. Contestants are given ten (10) minutes to prepare a two-to-four minute speech using any electronically available resources. Contestants are only permitted to craft their speech during their identified “preparation period.” They are not given their speech topic until the start of the “preparation period.” All contestants are required to prepare their speeches in an isolated space. They are not permitted to ask for assistance in any form. Contestants are responsible for ensuring their access to an electronic device capable of allowing them to prepare for the competition. Cell phones, tablets, laptops, and other electronic devices are permissible. Contestants are permitted to leave the preparation room to address physiological needs, but preparation time will not be extended. Contestants are permitted to write notes and/or draft their speech on provided note cards provided by the contest organizers. During the preparation time, each contestant will be given a 10-minute warning.
 - a. In the event a contestant does not have access to an electronic device capable of searching the web due to socioeconomic issues, the contest superintendent should be contacted in advance to help identify a solution.
4. Each contestant will participate in a ten (10) minute “competition period.” During the “competition period,” contestants will deliver their two-to-four minute speech. At the one (1), two (2), and three (3) minute mark, the contestant will be given a warning card by the timekeeper. Any speech that exceeds four (4) minutes and forty-five (45) seconds will be immediately concluded by the timekeeper. One (1) point will be docked from contestants for every second over or under the speech time limit. At the conclusion of the speech, the judges will be given three (3) minutes to ask questions of the contestant related to the speech topic. The question period will end at the conclusion of three (3) minutes regardless of whether the contestant or judge has finished their response. The remaining time in the “competition period” is reserved for judges to complete the scoring of contestants. Judges should not discuss scoring with one another at this time.
5. Contestants who do not appear at the start of the designated “preparation period” are permitted to participate in the contest, but will not be given an additional “preparation period.” For example, if a contestant begins preparing at 1:10 PM, but does not appear until 1:20 PM, they will only have ten (10) minutes to complete the preparation for their contest.

Contestants that miss fifteen (15) minutes or more of their "preparation period" are fully disqualified. No contestant should have their "preparation period" or "competition period" adjusted due to a missing competitor.

6. A National Officer, designated profession member, or the Contest Superintendent are responsible for the monitoring of the preparation room and contest room.
7. Contestants are required to dress in business casual clothing for the contest

Method of Selection a Winner

1. The winner(s) of the Regional and National Competition divisions are decided by the highest total score based on the calculation of the Judge's score sheets. The timekeeper is responsible for informing judges of any appropriate point deductions. A National Officer, designated professional member, or the Contest Superintendent will be responsible for calculating the final totals for the competition.
2. There must be an odd number of judges and a minimum of three total judges. The judges must have direct professional experience tied to agriculture, natural resources, and related sciences.
3. The first-place and second-place winners of the Regional Competitions and National Competition are identified as the two contestants with the highest total scores. In the event of a mathematical tie based on the score sheets, the contest Judges will be asked to vote on a final placement of the individual(s) that have tied. Judges are not permitted to abstain from the vote.
4. The contest is based on the scoring of the following seven areas:
 - a. Knowledge of Subject - Knowledge of the Subject refers to the ability of the contestant to appear to fully comprehend their assigned speech topic regardless of actual background.
 - b. Organization of Material - Organization of material refers to the structure of the speech from beginning to end; i.e. Is the speech in a logical order?
 - c. Power of Expression - Power of expression refers to the ability of the contestant to impart a sense of feeling in their speech; i.e. Does the contestant sound impassioned about the topic?
 - d. Voice - Voice refers to the speaking quality of the contestants voice; i.e. Was the contestant monotone, quiet, loud, etc.
 - e. Stage Presence - Stage presence refers to the certain charisma and charm that a competitor possesses that draws in an audience and commands their full attention. Attire should also be considered part of stage presence.
 - f. General Effect - General effect refers to whether the contestant's speech imparts any emotional or intellectual response on the judges.
 - g. Response to Questions - Response to questions refers to the contestant's ability to create quick, critical, and appropriate responses to questions raised by judges.
 - h. Time Deductions - Time deductions refers to any points lost by the contestant for going under or over the required speech length.

IMPROMPTU PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

Judge's Score Sheet

Judge First and Last Name:

Judge Phone Number:

Judge Email:

Date:

Areas of Scoring	Point Totals	Contestant Number														
		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15
Knowledge of Subject	15															
Organization of Material	20															
Power of Expression	15															
Voice	10															
Stage Presence	15															
General Effect	10															
Response to Questions	15															
Time Deductions	Varies															
Total Points	100															
Ranking	1st - 15th															

Elevator Speech Contest

General Description

The Elevator Speech contest is to sell your personal brand and your MANRRS Why. Imagine you are in an elevator with a professional and they ask you to introduce yourself and MANRRS. You have 60 seconds to share who you are and how MANRRS has helped elevate your success. Additional aids, materials, or props are not permitted. This contest is open to any MANRRS undergraduate student member.

Format

- The order of presentation will be randomly assigned in advance by the Superintendent prior to the cluster.
- Each contestant will be granted a total of 60 seconds to prepare a speech about their personal brand and MANRRS Why.
- Every 1 second the speech goes over the time limit will result in a 1 point deduction.
- Judging will be conducted on site and score sheets will be provided. Judges are expected to provide comments and constructive feedback on score sheets.
- Judges criteria is based on presentation (General Appearance, Posture, Enthusiasm), voice (Projection, Control, Volume, Clarity), language (Articulation, Grammar), organization (Structure, Order), style (Demeanor, Confidence), and content (Value, Effectiveness, Appropriateness to MANRRS mission).
- The top 3 scoring contestants will be recognized and receive certificates.

ELEVATOR SPEECH CONTEST

Judge's Score Sheet

Judge First and Last Name:

Judge Phone Number:

Judge Email:

Date:

Areas of Scoring	Point Totals	Contestant Number														
		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15
Presentation	10															
Voice	5															
Language	10															
Organization	10															
Stage Presence	5															
Content	10															
Time Deductions	1pt/sec over															
Total Points	50															
Ranking	1st - 15th															

Interview Contest

General Description

The Interview Contest is an opportunity to practice the real-life skills needed to apply for a job. Specifically, this contest serves as a development opportunity for students to receive feedback and constructive critiques on their cover letter and resume writing, and interview skills. The contest is divided into two divisions: (1) undergraduate students and (2) graduate students. The contest is also divided into two rounds:

(1) Preliminary round: Participants will prepare a resumé and cover letter for one position of their choice from the Interview Contest Job Descriptions.

(2) Final round: Top 5 finalists per division compete in mock interviews at the regional cluster.

Format

1. This contest has two divisions: (1) undergraduate and (2) graduate and includes two rounds of review.
2. In the preliminary round, contestants choose one position to “apply” to based on the provided job description in the application form. Contestants should submit a resume and cover letter specific to the position they are “applying” to by tailoring their own personal skills and experiences, in addition to skills and experiences they may add in the future, that align with the skills and experiences the job description is asking for.
 - a. *Remember that this contest is a simulation of the job application process and contestants may have limited or no experience. In these cases, consider highlighting transferable skills from classes or co-curriculars. It is acceptable to describe skills and experiences that you have not yet had (but would fit the requirements of the job description) in your resume, cover letter, and/or the interview portions of this contest. Just make sure to remove embellishments for future real applications!*
3. At least three judges will review cover letters and resume submissions prior to the onsite regional cluster within the Submittable platform. Judges are expected to provide comments and constructive feedback within Submittable.
 - a. Judging deadline by cluster:
 - i. **Region 2 & 3:** Sept. 22, 2023
 - ii. **Region 1:** Sept. 29, 2023
 - iii. **Region 4 & 5:** Oct. 13, 2023
 - iv. **Region 6:** Nov. 3, 2023

4. The top 5 scoring submissions per graduate and undergraduate division will advance to compete in the onsite interview contest. Finalists will be notified at the latest, by the Monday of each cluster week.
5. In the final round, each finalist will spend 20 min in front of a panel of judges (3-5).
 - a. Finalists will conduct a mock interview for a total of 10-13 minutes. Mock interview questions and a score sheet will be provided on site for judges.
 - b. Following the mock interview, judges and finalists have 7 minutes to go through the rubric and discuss what went well during the interview and any areas of improvement.
6. The top 3 scoring finalists per division will be recognized as winners and receive certificates.

INTERVIEW CONTEST

Judge First and Last Name:

Judge Phone Number:

Judge Email:

Date:

COVER LETTER SCORE SHEET

Areas of Scoring	Point Totals
Appropriate length (1 page) and includes appropriate greeting, signature, and contact information	5
Grammar, spelling is correct and uses language used by job description	5
General appearance and format is organized and standardized cover letter format	10
Specified career/academic goal and why interested in position	10
Addresses position needs and clearly connects relevant qualifications, skills, and experiences to fit those needs	10
Specifically tailored to job description, position, and organization	10
Total Points	50

RESUME SCORE SHEET

Areas of Scoring	Point Totals
Grammar, spelling is correct and uses variety of action verbs and language used by job description	5
General appearance and format is consistent, organized, easy to read, and less than 2 pages	5
Contact information	5
Education and pertinent achievements	5
Relevant work experiences	10
Relevant co-curricular experiences	10
Value-added skills and experiences tailored to job description	10
Total Points	50

INTERVIEW CONTEST

Judge First and Last Name:

Judge Phone Number:

Judge Email:

Date:

INTERVIEW SCORE SHEET

Areas of Scoring	Point Totals	Contestant Number				
		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Proper greeting and introduction of self	5					
Speech was clear and organized	5					
Appropriate presentation of self (timely, attire, posture, etc.)	10					
Knowledge and presentation of skills and experiences to meet role	10					
Specific examples and quality responses to interview questions	10					
Asked thoughtful and relevant questions	10					
Total Points	50					
Ranking	1st - 5th					