



**MANRRS**

**CONTEST GUIDELINES**  
***REGIONAL CLUSTERS***

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# Contests Overview

Are you ready to develop and showcase your competencies during MANRRS regional clusters? Student competitions offer a welcoming and fun space to showcase your skills and receive constructive feedback. The top three winners of each contest will be recognized.

## General Benefits to Participants

- Show your talent and apply your skills through comprehensive research.
- Connect with top employers and peers with confidence.
- Build your resume in an enjoyable atmosphere.
- Challenge yourself to speak concisely while conveying ideas effectively.
- Engage in critical thinking deliberations.
- Develop core competencies, including fostering teamwork, influencing without authority, building relationships, being analytical and critical thinking, and having flexibility.

## General Eligibility Requirements

- Must be an active MANRRS member.
- If representing a university with an established collegiate MANRRS chapter, must be an approved member of said chapter.
- You must compete at the regional cluster associated with the region of your university affiliation. For example, students at Michigan State University must compete in Region V.
- If you are an independent collegiate MANRRS member, you must compete within the region where your university or school is located.

## How to Participate

- Create a submittable account before entry. Complete the electronic MANRRS submission form for each entry at <http://manrrs.submittable.com/submit>
- Entries for regional clusters must be received by 5:00 PM (Eastern) on the Friday that falls two weeks before the start of the respective cluster.
- Entries submitted to the wrong contest or division will be disqualified.
- Questions regarding the submission process can be directed to [contest@manrrs.org](mailto:contest@manrrs.org)
- Questions regarding the structure, operations, or rules of contests should be submitted to the designated contest superintendent.

## Contest Superintendents

<b>Contest</b>	<b>Eligibility</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Elevator Pitch	UG, GR	National Office	contest@manrrs.org
Interview	UG, GR	National Office	contest@manrrs.org
Impromptu Public Speaking	UG	Zachary Brown	brow1688@purdue.edu

*UG = Undergraduate Students, GR = Graduate Students*

# Contest Registration Timelines

*Contest registration periods vary slightly year-to-year and are subject to change at the discretion of the National Office and Executive Committee.*

## Regional Cluster

Registration for contests hosted by each region of MANRRS opens annually on August 1st. The registration period for each regional cluster closes no earlier than the Friday two weeks before the first day of a regional cluster. The registration dates for Fall 2024 are:

- **Region I:** August 1st - September 20th
- **Region II and Region III:** August 1st - September 13th
- **Region IV and Region V:** August 1st - October 11th
- **Region VI:** August 1st - October 18th

Registration will close at 5:00 PM (Eastern) on the date listed for each region. Contests hosted during regional clusters are open only to collegiate MANRRS members.

## Regional Cluster Contests

Regional Cluster contests occur during the annual regional clusters hosted by the National Society of MANRRS. Only collegiate members of MANRRS are eligible to participate in any of the listed contests. The Elevator Pitch Contest and Interview Contests are open to both undergraduate and graduate student members of MANRRS. The Impromptu Public Speaking Contest is only open to undergraduate student members and is the only contest that selects winners to compete during the annual training conference and career expo. All contests have a maximum capacity, and spots are filled first-come, first-served.

Chapter advisors may contact the National Office and contest superintendent to request that a student from their chapter be replaced or removed from contests before the registration deadline. Changes after the registration deadline may be made at the discretion of the National Office and contest superintendent.

### Elevator Pitch

The purpose of the Elevator Pitch Contest is to sell your 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 collegiate member.

**Eligibility:** Undergraduate and graduate collegiate MANRRS members.

**Contest Results:** The Elevator Pitch Contest has a 1st through 3rd place winner for the undergraduate and graduate student divisions. Each winner will receive an award certificate and be recognized during the Regional Cluster. Additional prizes with a monetary value vary from year to year.

**Contest Rubric:** Please check [Appendix A](#) for the detailed rubric/scoring for the contest.

### General Guidelines

1. The contest has two divisions: 1) undergraduate students and 2) graduate students. For each chapter in good standing, no more than three students are permitted to participate in the contest regardless of division. Independent collegiate MANRRS members are also allowed to participate. A maximum of 30 contestants will be permitted in the contest. The submission portal will be

closed when capacity is reached. All contest submissions received after capacity is reached will be rejected.

2. All contestants will compete in a randomly assigned order assigned in advance by the contest superintendent before the cluster. The undergraduate student division will compete before the graduate student division. All contestants will receive their allocated time slot before the cluster.
3. Contestants who miss their assigned time slot are disqualified from the contests.
4. At the start of their assigned timeslot, each contestant will have 60 seconds to deliver their contest speech.
  - a. The speech should be an introduction of yourself and share your MANRRS Why.
5. Contestants will receive a 1-point deduction from the total score for every second they exceed the time limit.
6. If a contestant reaches 90 seconds, their speech may be cut off at the in-room contest facilitator's discretion and they may be disqualified.
7. Scoring for the contest is based on the following categories:
  - a. Physical Presentation (General Appearance, Posture, Enthusiasm)
  - b. Voice (Projection, Control, Volume, Clarity)
  - c. Language (Articulation, Grammar),
  - d. Organization (Structure, Order)
  - e. Style (Demeanor, Confidence)
  - f. Content (Value, Effectiveness, Appropriateness to MANRRS Mission)
8. The top three (3) scoring contests for each division will be recognized and receive certificates.

## Interview

The Interview Contest allows members to practice essential job application skills. This contest is a development platform where participants can receive feedback and constructive critiques on their cover letter, resume writing, and interview skills.

**Eligibility:** Undergraduate and graduate collegiate MANRRS members.

**Contest Results:** The Interview Contest has a 1st through 3rd place winner for both the undergraduate and graduate student divisions. Each winner will receive an award certificate and be recognized during the Regional Cluster.

**Contest Rubric:** Please check [Appendix B](#) for the detailed rubric/scoring for the contest.

## General Guidelines

1. The contest has two divisions: 1) undergraduate students and 2) graduate students. Each chapter in good standing is permitted to have up to two (2) students submit to participate in each division. Independent collegiate MANRRS members are also allowed to participate. There will be a maximum of 30 contestants permitted in the contests. The submission portal will be closed when capacity is reached. All contest submissions received after capacity is reached will be rejected.
2. Stages:
  - a. Preliminary Round: Contestants prepare and submit a resumé and cover letter for one position from a list of job descriptions provided.
  - b. Final Round: Five (5) finalists from each division, selected based on preliminary round scores, will compete in a mock interview at the regional cluster.

### Important Notes

- This contest simulates the job application process, so it's acceptable for contestants to have limited or no experience, at which contestants are encouraged to highlight transferable skills from classes or extracurricular activities.
- Ensure any projected skills and experiences included in the resume, cover letter, and interview portions are realistic and align with the job description.
- Remove any embellishments when applying for real jobs
- Contestants can choose from one of three job types for their entry into the contest. They should base their submitted resume and cover letter on the type of job they select. The below references may be helpful, but contestants should research up-to-date resources.

<b>Job Type</b>	<b>Resume Type</b>	<b>Resource</b>
Academic Role	Curriculum Vitae (CV)	<a href="https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/resumes_and_vitas/index.html">https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/resumes_and_vitas/index.html</a>
Corporate Role	Resume	<a href="https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/resumes_and_vitas/index.html">https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/resumes_and_vitas/index.html</a>
Government Role	Federal Resume	<a href="https://help.usajobs.gov/faq/application/documents/resume/what-to-include">https://help.usajobs.gov/faq/application/documents/resume/what-to-include</a>



## Judging and Final Round Details

1. Preliminary Round:
  - a. Before the onsite regional cluster, judges will review cover letters and resume submissions on the Submittable platform.
  - b. Judges are expected to provide comments and constructive feedback.
  - c. Each division's top five (5) scoring submissions will advance to the final round.
  - d. Finalists will be notified by the Monday before the start of their cluster.
2. Final Round:
  - a. Each interview is scheduled on a 15-minute increment
  - b. Contest Set-Up: 10 minutes
  - c. Interview Time: 100 minutes for each division
    - i. 20 minutes/contestant (15-minute interview; 3-minute feedback, 2 minutes to complete scoresheet)
    - ii. Recommend having an interview protocol/script with Opening, Behavioral Interview Questions, and Closing
  - d. Final Deliberation: 10 minutes
  - e. Total Contest Time (on-site): 120 Minutes (2 hours)
  - f. The top three (3) scoring finalists per division will be recognized as winners and receive certificates.

## Impromptu Public Speaking

The Impromptu 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 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.

**Eligibility:** Undergraduate collegiate MANRRS members.

**Contest Results:** The Impromptu Public Speaking Contest has winners from 1st through 3rd place. Each winner will receive an award certificate and be recognized during the Regional Cluster. Additionally, the 1st and 2nd place winners of each Region will be invited to compete during the annual training conference and career expo.

**Contest Rubric:** Please check [Appendix C](#) for the detailed rubric/scoring for the contest.

### General Guidelines

1. Regional competitions are limited to ten (10) total competitors per Region with no more than two (2) competitors from any Chapter. Independent collegiate undergraduate members of the society are permitted to participate in Regional Competitions. The submission portal will be closed when capacity is reached. All contest submissions received after capacity is reached will be rejected. Entry into the Regional Competitions requires “active” status as a member of the National Society and undergraduate student status. Entry is available on a first-come, first-served basis at the discretion of the contest superintendent.
2. The competition is based on a random selection of ten (10) topics related to current issues in agriculture, natural resources, and related sciences. The contest superintendent decides the topics and randomly assigns the contestant a speech topic and presentation order.
3. Contestants are given five (5) minutes to prepare a speech based on their assigned topic. The table below provides an example depicting the structure of the contest. Contestants will receive the list of all topics at least ten days before the competition date. Students will receive their randomly selected topic at the beginning of preparation time. Contestants are given five (5) minutes to prepare a speech based on their assigned topic. The table below provides an example depicting the structure of their assigned topic.

Contestant Name	Contestant Topic	Preparation Period	Start of Competition
Henry Arthur Callis	Does the protection of farm worker rights benefit agriculture production? Please create a response in the affirmative or negative.	1:05 PM	1:10 PM
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.	1:15	1:20

4. Contestants are given five (5) minutes to prepare a two-to-four-minute speech using any electronically available resources. They are not given their speech

topic until 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. Wifi will not be provided. Cell phones, tablets, laptops, and other electronic devices are permissible during the “preparation period” but not during the “competition period.” Contestants can leave the preparation room to address physiological needs, but preparation time will not be extended. Contestants can write notes and draft their speeches on note cards provided by the contest organizers. During the preparation time, each contestant will be given a 2-minute warning.

- a. Suppose a contestant does not have access to an electronic device capable of searching the web due to socioeconomic issues. In that case, the contest superintendent should be contacted in advance to help identify a solution.
5. Each contestant will participate in a ten (10) minute “competition period.” During the “competition period,” contestants will deliver their two-to-four-minute speech.
  - a. 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.
  - b. After the speech, the judges will be given three (3) minutes to ask the contestant questions related to the speech topic. The question period will end after three (3) minutes, regardless of whether the contestant or judge has finished their response.
  - c. 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.
6. Contestants who do not appear at the start of the designated “preparation period” are NOT permitted to participate in the contest.
7. A national officer, designated professional member, or the contest superintendent monitors the preparation room and contest room.
8. Contestants are required to dress in business casual clothing for the contest.

### **Method of Winner Selection**

The winner(s) are decided by the highest total score calculated using the Judge’s score sheets. The timekeeper is responsible for informing judges of any appropriate point deductions.

A national officer, designated professional member, or contest superintendent will be responsible for calculating the final totals for the competition. There must be an odd number of judges and a minimum of three total judges. The judges must have direct professional experience in agriculture, natural resources, and related sciences.

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.

### Scoring Criteria

1. **Knowledge of the Subject:** This evaluates the contestant's ability to demonstrate a strong understanding of their assigned speech topic, regardless of their background knowledge.
2. **Organization of Material:** This assesses the structure and flow of the speech from beginning to end. Is the content presented in a logical and coherent order?
3. **Power of Expression:** This measures the contestant's ability to convey emotion and passion in their speech. Do they effectively engage the audience and express enthusiasm for their topic?
4. **Voice:** This evaluates the quality and clarity of the contestant's voice. Were they too monotone, quiet, or loud, or did they maintain an effective vocal presence?
5. **Stage Presence:** This considers the contestant's ability to captivate and command the audience's attention. Charisma, confidence, and attire contribute to their overall presence on stage.
6. **General Effect:** This refers to the overall impact of the speech. Does it leave the judges with a lasting intellectual or emotional response?
7. **Response to Questions:** This measures the contestant's ability to respond to questions posed by the judges with quick, critical, and thoughtful answers.
8. **Time Deductions:** Points will be deducted if the contestant exceeds or falls short of the required speech length.

# Appendix



## B. Interview Contest Rubrics

### Interview Rubric - Applicant Materials

Participant:										
Areas of Scoring	Points									
<b>Grammar and Spelling</b> The language of the cover letter models that of the job description, and various action verbs are used on the resume.	1	2	3	4	5					
<b>Document Length</b> Documents are of appropriate length and type for posting. - Cover Letter: 1 page - Resume document: 1-2 pages	1	2	3	4	5					
<b>Contact Information</b> Contact information is present across all materials (cover letter and resume document)	1	2	3	4	5					
<b>Education and Achievements</b> Education and achievements are listed and/or referenced appropriately in the cover letter and resume document.	1	2	3	4	5					
<b>Appearance and Formatting</b> Appropriate formats are used for each document, and materials are organized and concise.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Statement of Interest</b> The cover letter presents interest in the role and the contestant's goals and shares insight on preferable skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Experience</b> Relevant work and co-curricular experiences are shared on the resume document.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Total Possible Points	50									

## Interview Rubric - Interview

Areas of Scoring	Point Totals	Contestant Number				
		1	2	3	4	5
<b>Introduction</b> Proper greeting and introduction of self.	<b>5</b>					
<b>Content Quality</b> The candidate uses a variety of examples to showcase how skills and experiences meet the role's duties.	<b>5</b>					
<b>Presentation</b> Candidate appropriately presents themselves for the interview (attire, timely, posture, eye contact, etc.).	<b>10</b>					
<b>Interview Engagement</b> The student candidate asked thoughtful and relevant questions and actively engaged through verbal and nonverbal interactions.	<b>10</b>					
<b>STAR Question Responses</b> Speech is clear and organized. All parts of the questions are answered.	<b>20</b>					
Total Possible Points	<b>50</b>					
<b>Ranking 1st - 5th</b>						



