

## Interesting Case Report Contest Guidelines

### I. Objectives

The Interesting Case Report Contest (ICRC) aims to highlight the multitude of interesting ophthalmology cases encountered by residents and fellows during their training, with emphasis on the clinical presentation, approach to diagnosis and comprehensive management. It strives to promote a collegial environment to encourage good case report writing and research integrity among ophthalmologists-in-training.

### II. Guidelines for Eligibility

1. This event is open to current ophthalmology **residents/fellows-in-training ONLY**.
2. Only **unpublished** case reports can be submitted.
3. Each ophthalmology resident/fellow-in-training can submit **three (3) case reports** for the ICRC. There is no limit to the number of case reports submitted per institution.
4. The principal author is the preferred presenting author and should be a registered delegate of the PAO Congress 2026. If the case report is chosen as one of the Top 10 finalists, the first author should be able to present live during the ICRC contest on **October 1, 2026**. A presenting author should be designated in case the principal author will not be able to present. Failure to be physically present without prior notice to the Case Report Committee may influence participation in future competitions.
5. One of the co-authors must be a bonafide consultant of the Department of Ophthalmology of the same institution.
6. All abstract related correspondence will be sent to the registered email address of the submitting author.
7. The principal author is responsible for ensuring case anonymity, securing consent from the patient/case to be presented, and upholding other ethical considerations as deemed necessary.
8. The principal author is also responsible securing consent for submission from the co-authors. There is no limit to the number of co-authors allowed for each abstract. Please provide the full names of each of the co-authors.
9. Upon successful online abstract submission, the presenting author cannot be changed. Request to change the presenting author must be done at least one month before the congress and will be granted permission under the discretion of the Case Reports Contest Committee.
10. Resubmission of previously submitted interesting case reports is discouraged.
11. All case report abstract must be accompanied by an anti-plagiarism/similarity report from iThenticate 2.0 before submission.
  - Similarity and AI detection reports must be signed by at least one adviser.
  - Criteria for iThenticate 2.0 report acceptability is as follows:
    1. The similarity report should yield a score of **less than 30%**.
    2. AI detection report should yield a score of **less than 20%**
  - **All institutions have been given access to the PAO iThenticate 2.0 subscription.** Kindly ask your Training Officer or Chair if access has not been given. A training video will be made available to assist you while you navigate the software.

### III. Abstract Format and Other Abstract-Related Guidelines

1. Submitted abstracts should be in English and should not exceed 300 words (excluding title, authors' information). Recommended abstract format is as follows:
  - Title (maximum of 20 words) – must be concise and explicit. Avoid abbreviations in the title.
  - Case Description
  - Case Discussion
  - Conclusion
2. If the submitting author and presenting author are not the same, please enter the presenting author's name in the primary author/presenter field.
3. Spell out phrases to be abbreviated when used for the first time followed by the acronym in parentheses. The abbreviation should be used alone thereafter.
4. Carefully examine the abstract for spelling or grammatical errors. The Committee reserves the right to edit the abstract for significant spelling and grammatical errors.
5. All submitted abstracts will be acknowledged with an email.
6. We strongly recommend submission of abstracts as early as possible to avoid system congestion during the deadline.
7. A submitted abstract cannot be revised. Please make sure the abstract is the final version.
8. Abstract submission deadline is on August 16, 2026, 5PM Philippine Standard Time unless otherwise extended.
9. Submitted abstracts will be reviewed by an ICRC Screening Committee. The review process will be confidential and the decision to accept or reject the abstract will be final.
10. Notification of abstract screening results shall be on **September 23, 2026**. It is the responsibility of the submitting author to contact the PAO Secretariat if notification is not received by the said date.

### IV. Other ICRC Documents

1. Consent from co-authors for inclusion of the case report in the contest  
Format of file title: Author\_Lastname\_Case Report Title\_Consent  
e.g. Santos\_Case of a Seesaw Nystagmus\_Consent
2. Case Report Abstract without identifiers in the text  
Format of file title: Author\_Lastname\_Case Report title\_abstract  
e.g. Santos\_Case of a Seesaw Nystagmus \_ abstract
3. iThenticate 2.0 Similarity and AI detection reports  
Format of file title: Author\_Lastname\_Case Report title\_iThenticateSimilarity  
e.g. Santos\_Case of a Seesaw Nystagmus \_iThenticateSimilarity  
Format of file title: Author\_Lastname\_Case Report title\_iThenticateAI  
e.g Santos\_Case of a Seesaw Nystagmus \_iThenticateAI
  - If the Case Report title is too long, include only the first 8 words in the file title.
  - Submitted files should be in PDF format.
  - The weblink where all entries must be submitted will be announced once available.
  - Incomplete entries will not be accepted.

## V. Important Dates

August 16, 2026 (Sun) 5PM	Deadline of submission of abstracts/manuscripts and other requirements (late submissions will not be considered)
August 30, 2026 (Sun)	Notification of Preliminary Screening Results
September 23, 2026 (Wed)	Notification of Finalists for Oral Presentation
September 27, 2026 (Sun) 5 PM	Deadline for Submission of <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PowerPoint Presentations (in .pptx format) of Finalists for Oral Presentation</li><li>• E-posters ( in pdf format and Portrait Layout) for Accepted Case Report Abstracts</li></ul>
October 1, 2026 (Thu) 1:30 pm – 5:00 pm Meeting Rooms 7-9	Interesting Case Report Contest Oral Presentation

## VI. E-Poster Guidelines

1. All case reports abstracts accepted by the screening committee will be displayed as e-poster during the duration of the PAO Annual Congress 2026.
2. The e-poster size is A0, portrait layout and PDF format
3. It should contain the title, primary author and co-authors, institution/s, introduction, case description, case discussion, conclusion and references
4. Photos may be included with proper consent and necessary censorship.
5. Tables and graphs may be utilized but must be kept at a minimum.

## VII. Board of Judges

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

Accepted manuscripts will undergo pre-judging by the preliminary screening committee appointed by the Chair of the Research Committee and the Chair of the Interesting Case Reports Contest . Twenty (20) manuscripts will be chosen for manuscript evaluation by the Board of Judges. The top 10 finalists will undergo oral presentation and Q&A during the Interesting Case Report Contest live event on **October 1, 2026** at SMX Meeting Room 7-9. Authors of these papers will be informed about two weeks before the date of presentation.

Other accepted submissions which did not qualify for oral presentation will be eligible for an e-poster presentation.

## VIII. Criteria for Judging

- The twenty (20) case reports with the highest scores after the preliminary screening will be forwarded to the Board of Judges, who will choose the Top 10 finalists for oral presentation based on the criteria for manuscript evaluation (75% of total grade) provided below.
- Manuscript Evaluation (75%)

CRITERIA	PERCENTAGE
Title	5%
Introduction	10%
Case Presentation and Discussion	40%
Conclusion	20%
Overall Technical Writing and Flow	10%
TOTAL MANUSCRIPT SCORE	75%

- Deductions
  1. A **5% deduction** will be given to papers whose abstract or slides bear any identities of the authors or institutions (including logos and acronyms).
  2. iThenticate 2.0 Similarity Reports greater than 30% will have a **10% deduction** in the written abstract score.
  3. iThenticate 2.0 AI detection Score that is greater than 20% will have a **10% deduction** in the written abstract score.
- Presenting authors of the top 10 case reports will be informed via email on September 13, 2026.

## IX. Oral Presentation

- The presenting authors shall be informed of the exact time and date for their case presentation
- The time limit for all oral presentations (the TOP 10) will be **eight (8) minutes, with an additional four (4) minutes for question-and-answer (Q&A)**. Names of authors and institutions must not appear in the shared screen presentations.
- Oral Presentation Judging Criteria (25%)

CRITERIA	PERCENTAGE
Quality and Flow of Oral Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clarity of speech</li><li>• Confidence and overall demeanor</li><li>• Clarity and appropriateness of slides/visual aids</li></ul>	15%
Mastery of Subject Matter <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As reflected during the oral presentation and Q&amp;A</li></ul>	10%
TOTAL PRESENTATION SCORE	25%

- Deductions
  1. A **5% deduction** will be given to papers whose manuscripts or slides bear any identities of the authors or institutions (including logos and acronyms).
- When a presenter goes beyond the allotted time of eight minutes, a **5% deduction** from the total score will be given for every minute over the allotted time.

- Certificates for the top 20 finalists will be given during the Day 2 event. The Best in Interesting Case Report will be awarded (with 5k cash prize) during the Closing Ceremonies on **October 2, 2026**.
- PAO holds the copyright to all materials presented at the congress and may reproduce the content in any form for distribution.

The decision of the Board of Judges shall be final.