



Dateline Awards BNC Contestant Instructions

Instructions

The SPJ D.C. Dateline Awards contest uses the BetterBNC Media Awards Platform.

Below are directions for preparing and submitting entries. If you have questions, please contact Georgia Handforth at [datelinecoordinator \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:datelinecoordinator@gmail.com).

IMPORTANT: BetterBNC is optimized for the Google Chrome browser; and Firefox for PC and Macintosh/Apple. Please have a recent version downloaded and installed for the best contest experience.

The deadline for all entries is Mar. 2, 2026.

Important Info

The main portal for submissions is <https://betternewspapercontest.com/DCDatelineAwards>.

Please print all confirmation pages for submissions and payment: There is no automated email receipt.

If this is your first time submitting to the SPJ D.C. Dateline Awards:

- You will have to create a profile, which will require approval, but you can still submit your work while you're waiting.
- Visit <https://betternewspapercontest.com/DCDatelineAwards> for a full list of the contest rules and instructions on how to apply and submit.

If you have submitted to this contest in the past seven years:

*Your login information is the email address you used for past years.

* If you've forgotten your password, you can use the "Forgot Password" feature.

Logging On

1. Navigate to <https://betternewspapercontest.com/DCDatelineAwards>
2. Click the "Enter Contest Here" button
3. A radio dialogue pop-up will appear. Click the "Open Call Contestant Login" option at the bottom left of the pop-up dialogue.

Contestant Manager Authorized Entrant Judge

[Help - What type of Contestant am I ?](#)

Media Organization:

Password:

[Forgot Password?](#)

Caption

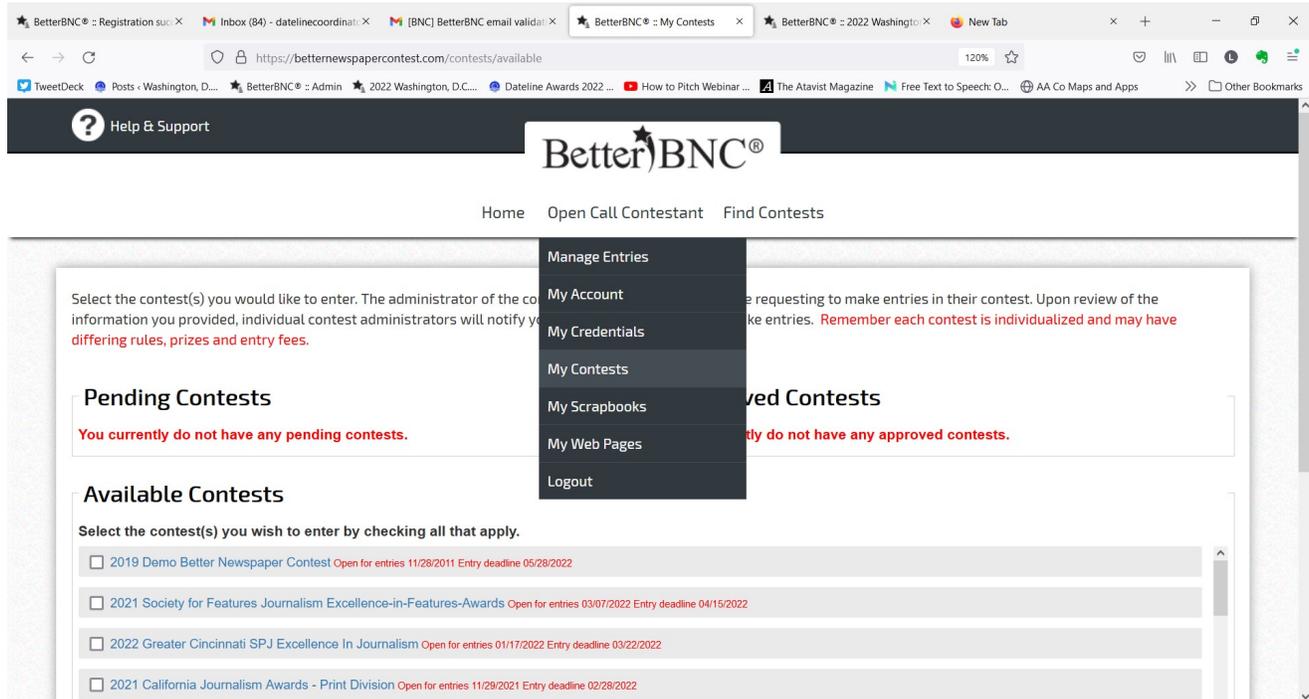
If you've never entered the Dateline Awards before:

First, you'll need to create an **Open Call Contestant profile**.

1. Click "Create your Open Call account"
2. Fill out the form
3. Click "Submit" at the bottom of the page

Once you fill out the form to create your Open Call Contestant account, the system will send you a validation email with a link that must be clicked before you can log into your account.

4. Once you've filled out the additional verification form, you will navigate to the "My Contests page, either through the link provided on the landing page, or using the menu at the top.



Request to make entries in a contest:

1. Hover over the red "Open Call Contestant" text in the blue bar at the top of the page
2. Select "My Contests" in the menu that appears
3. In the "Available Contests" section, check the box next to the contest, "2026 SPJ D.C. Dateline Awards."
4. Hover over the red "Open Call Contestant" text again
5. Select "Manage Entries"

You can make your submissions immediately, even while awaiting approval to the contest.

If you've submitted to the D.C. Dateline Awards in the past:

If you've submitted to the D.C. Chapter's annual awards in the past 7 years, you have an existing profile and can use this as long as you still have access to the same email.

1. Navigate to <https://betternewspapercontest.com/DCDatelineAwards>
 2. Click the "Enter Contest Here" button
 3. A radio dialogue pop-up will appear. Click the "Open Call Contestant Login" option at the bottom left of the pop-up dialogue.
 4. Login using your email and password combo.
 5. You will be taken to a main landing page. In the "You are managing entries for" drop-down box, choose "2026 SPJ D.C. Dateline Awards." Click the orange "Change" radio button to be taken to that contest page for entries.
 6. Click the "Submit Entry" button.
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Submitting Entries: All Contestants

1. From the Manage Entries page Click "Submit Entry"
2. Select a Division (group of Categories)
3. Select a Category
4. Select the Media Organization where the entry was published or performed
5. Enter the entry headline or title
6. Add entry content (may vary by category)
 - a. To upload digital file attachments (other than audio/video), click "Browse", navigate to the desired file, and then click "Open". Allowed file types are PDF, DOC/DOCX, TXT, JPG, GIF, and PNG. To upload additional attachments to a single entry, click the "Browse and Attach More Files" button. BetterBNC will allow up to about a 20MB file, however, we suggest keeping your files around 5MB in case the judges have a slow connection. For files larger than 20MB, you can click the "RealView" icon on the Submit Entry page to create a free account, upload your files, and then copy and paste the URL into the URL field on the Submit Entry page. You may also use a similar 3rd- party website that provides hosting services ([scribd.com](https://www.scribd.com), [issuu.com](https://www.issuu.com), etc.)
 - b. To add web/audio/video content, copy and paste the content's URL address into the provided Website URL field. To host your content online, either upload it to a free streaming content website (e.g.YouTube) or talk to your IT person about adding it to your stations/publications website. Make sure the content will be accessible online throughout the duration of the contest and awards process. Here are some examples of free streaming content websites where you can upload audio and video content:
 - * Audio: www.kiwi6.com, www.soundcloud.com
 - * Video: www.youtube.com, www.vimeo.com

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IMPORTANT: Please be sure that content, be it URL links or files, are not behind a paywall or a password-protected area. If they are, **you must provide a username/ password in the Comments section of your entry.** Judges may disqualify your entry if work samples are inaccessible.

7. Add any Comments

8. Enter Credits (bylines, producers, art directors, etc. For the purposes of the certificate, only three credits are allowed)

9. Click "Submit Entry"

IMPORTANT: Print the summary screen that appears after your submission: this counts as your official confirmation of submission (there is no automated email confirmation).

Paying for Entries

All entries require payment by the time of the contest's closing. Payment accepted by PayPal or credit card only.

You can pay directly after submission from the confirmation page:

1. From the confirmation page for a submitted entry, click the "Manage Entries" choice at the bottom.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://betternewspapercontest.com/entries/label/1599640>. The page content includes:

- A notification: "The Entry has been saved."
- A heading: "This Page is Your Official Entry Form."
- Entry Details:
 - Media Organization: (Baltimore Sun)
 - Title or Headline: **TEST Entry - Advances help musicians with repetitive stress injuries continue to play**
 - Division: **Daily Newspaper**
 - Category: **103 Features**
 - Entry Code: **01**
 - Credits: **Laura Willoughby**
 - Entry made by **Laura Willoughby, Open Call Contestant** on 2021-12-29 11:48:00
 - Comment: **Testing another one**
- A star rating graphic: ★★★★★★
- A summary box containing:
 - Daily Newspaper CIR CAT103 01
 - Baltimore Sun
 - Features
- A warning: "DO NOT HIT YOUR BACK BUTTON"
- A "Submit Another Entry" button.
- A link "or [Manage Entries](#) | [Logout](#)", where "Manage Entries" is circled in red.

Paying for Entries, cont.

Or, pay once all entries are submitted. Either way, you will follow the process from No. 2 onward to pay

1. Sign into your Better Newspaper Contest account at https://betternewspapercontest.com/open_contestants/login
2. At the top of the menu, choose "Manage Entries."
3. Click the blue "Calculate Entry Fee" at the top right of the screen.
4. Select the pieces with their associated entry fees by clicking the check box(es) under the column heading, Select Entries to Pay.
5. Scroll until you can choose the "Check out with PayPal" option at bottom, OR use a credit card.
6. You will see a confirmation page after you've paid for your entries. Please print this screen for your records: there is no automated email receipt.

Home Contest Info Open Call Contestant Find Contests

Welcome LJ Perry

You are managing entries for: 2023 Washington, D.C., SPI Dateline Awards Change

Payment: Through PayPal only.

Submit Entry

You have a total of 1 entries. Calculate Entry Fee

Entries

Media Organization	Category	Title	Pages	Files/URLs	Created	Actions
Test site.com	ADE Blog/site	Test headline for entry	1	w	2023-01-03 13:33:08	Label Edit Disable Delete

Please contact the Dateline Awards coordinator for any clarifications or with any questions:

Georgia Handforth

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