

Guidelines for 2025 A-Mark Prizes

1. Purpose

To recognize and honor outstanding investigative journalism that reveals hidden truths, holds power to account, or drives public awareness or reform.

The Prize will reward ambitious, well-researched reporting that may expose a wrong, hold powerful individuals accountable, or explore a complex problem, issue, or subject.

2. Eligibility

- This contest is open to all news media organizations based in New England whose primary medium is the written word, including their staff members. Freelance journalists based in New England, whose reporting is published by a New England news media organization, are also eligible to enter.
- The work must have been published in print and/or online between June 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025.

3. Judging Criteria

Entries will be judged on:

- **Originality:** Reporting must uncover information that was not previously known or actively concealed.
- **Journalistic Effort:** initiative, commitment, overcoming obstacles, legal battles (e.g., FOIA).
- **Public importance/Impact:** topics that matter to the community or democracy or influence community awareness, reform, debate, or public policy.
- **Quality of Work:** clarity, organization, engagement, graphic presentation, reader friendly format, multiple points of entry
- **Research Depth:** Use of multiple credible sources, public records, document analysis

4. Prizes

We will award up to \$15,000 in each New England state. If there are not enough entries in a state, or the judges determine that no entry is prize-worthy, we reserve the right to reduce the number of awards in any state, or not give any awards. The prizes in each state are as follows:

- **1st Place:** \$5,000 to journalist(s), \$2,500 to the outlet
- **2nd Place:** \$3,000 to journalist(s), \$1,500 to the outlet
- **3rd Place:** \$2,000 to journalist(s), \$1,000 to the outlet

If a winning entry was produced by multiple reporters, the prize amount will be split evenly among them.

5. Submission Requirements

- Submit published story (PDF, URL, video, etc.), along with:
 - One-page summary of the work's impact and context
 - Supporting materials (e.g., FOIA requests, data sets, letters)
- Deadline: July 11, 2025
- Entry platform: Online Form / NENPA website
- This competition is open to both member and non-member newspapers and online news publications.
- There is no entry fee for these awards. All Publick Occurrences and First Amendment submissions will automatically be entered for A-Mark Prize consideration.

6. Judging Panel

There will be a separate judging panel for each of the six New England states, comprised of veteran journalists, editors, journalism educators, and investigative specialists. Judges must recuse themselves from reviewing entries when there are conflicts of interest.

7. Announcement and Presentation

Winners will be announced and recognized at the NENPA Fall Conference, scheduled to be held at the Northampton Hotel, Northampton, MA, on September 25-26, 2025.

Winning entries will be featured on the NENPA website and may be used in promotional materials to showcase the outstanding work recognized by the contest. By entering, participants grant permission for their submissions to be published online and shared in future publicity efforts to celebrate excellence and inspire others.