

## **IRE Board Call Minutes May 19, 2011**

Present on the call were:

Sarah Cohen, Lea Thompson, Alison Young, Manny Garcia, David Cay Johnston, Rob Cribb, Andrew Donohue, Phil Williams, Cheryl Phillips, Aaron Pilhofer, McNelly Torres, Mark Horvit, Lauren Grandestaff and Alan Lynes

The call began at 11:30 Central.

Young explained that the board was trying to get a sense of direction for the contest rules, in order to have a final vote on the changes at the June board meeting in Orlando. She emphasized that the board is looking for a framework.

Thompson added that the Contest Committee members have been terrific in this process.

Phillips thanked Young and Horvit for their feedback. Phillips emphasized that what was happening was really a complete revamp of the contest rules. The committee recommends dividing the entries into four main categories – text, video, audio and multi-platform. Then they are further divided by size. She explained that the real guiding question as to which category an entrant goes in is “what is the primary platform?”

Phillips further explained that the size categories will be based on circulation for print publications, market size for broadcast and audience reach for online (national, metro/regional, local).

She said there were mixed opinions about the “breaking news” category. The number of entries has varied in the first two years, and some entries don’t fit the category description. One suggestion is to keep the category and only award it when the number of submissions warrants it.

There was some discussion about the partnership category. Size for these entries will be determined by the largest partner, and the entry will be submitted into whatever category fits the work (print, video, audio or multi-platform).

Phillips added that because newspaper circulation has declined, staff will look at whether it makes sense to change the category sizes.

Williams gave kudos to the committee, saying they had developed a simple structure that is workable.

Thompson added that there are board members from all platforms; it would be good for them to consider how these new guidelines would affect their shop.

Many board members praised the committee's work; Pilhofer on said he thought the committee "knocked it out of the park."

Phillips added that, as is the case now; judges have the authority to move entries around between categories as they feel are appropriate.

Cohen emphasized the importance of the way these new rules will be announced and that the group needs to work on the wording and marketing of the new guidelines

Young agreed and added that there needs to be an "education" campaign before this new information is implemented. She also mentioned the need to prepare to market these new guidelines.

Cribb asked about multiple submissions, and voiced the possible concern that an entry would dominate the contest, being considered in multiple categories.

Thompson said the judges could take that into consideration as they choose winners and felt it would be unlikely.

Horvit said it could happen with the present system, and could conceivably happen with the new rules.

Young said she felt the group was close to a resolution of these revisions to the contest rules, a problem they had grappled with for three years.

Horvit added a brief discussion of the budget to be presented to the board in June. There was discussion about how to announce the rate increase for membership.

Young called for a motion to adjourn the call at 12:15 central – Williams moved, Garcia seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Alan Lynes