Beaker Street Science Photography Prize 2026

BEAKER STREET

Beaker Street Science Photography Prize 2026
Guide for Entrants

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The Beaker Street Science Photography Prize recognises the extraordinary work of photographers working within a wide range of science-related topics or with science-related processes that celebrate Tasmanian or Southern Ocean/ Antarctic content.

The Beaker Street Science Photography Prize is made possible through the generous support of The Pennicott Foundation and Full Gamut.

Examples of scientific photographs can be found at the end of this document

1. ENTRIES

Entries are open to all Australian residents. Photographers may submit one photograph of Tasmanian or Southern Ocean/ Antarctic content in a maximum of two of the following categories (i.e. two photos total, max one photo per category).

1. Shows a scientific theory or principle (e.g. evolution, gravity)
2. Shows a scientist at work
3. Shows scientific equipment or a research output (e.g. a radio telescope, an ice core)
4. Utilises microscopy
5. Utilises macrophotography
6. Shows the scientific value of other specialised camera equipment or photographic process (e.g. a heat-sensing camera)
7. Shows the results of a physical process that has altered a landscape (e.g. erosion or previous volcanic activity)
8. Shows a physical process in action (e.g. aurora, wave motion, volcanism)
9. Shows human impact (e.g pollution, extinction, climate change, preservation)
10. Shows a biological concept (e.g. an egg being laid, camouflage, metamorphosis, bioluminescence)
11. Shows an ecological concept (e.g. pollination, impacts of fire, vegetation succession, competition, invasive species, dispersal)
12. Other

If you are unsure whether your photograph is eligible and you require feedback, please email sara@beakerstreet.com.au, no later than 22 April with the subject line "Photo Competition".

Entries must be received no later than **11:59pm on Wednesday 29 April 2026** and must include:

1. One Beaker Street Science Photography Prize entry form for each photograph submitted (max 2)

2. A description (max. 150 words) of each image that gives the scientific context for the image and provides insights that tell a scientific story. If your photo includes a living being, please include the species name if possible (both its common name and its scientific name, e.g. "Tasmanian Devil, *Sarcophilus harrisii*"). If relevant, include the location where the photograph was taken.

   See examples at the end of this document.

3. Entrants must provide both a high-res and low-res version of the image. The photograph may be landscape or portrait in 2:3 or 3:4 ratio. Any images outside of these ratios (e.g. panoramas or square) will not be accepted.

   Low-res images must be:
   a. web-optimised and may include a watermark for display online, but please limit the size of the watermark.
   b. Supplied in .jpg format

   High-res images must be:
   a. Supplied in either .jpg or .tiff format.
   b. Supplied with no watermark, for printing at A2 size.
   c. **Ideally 6500x4595 pixels**, **and can be no smaller than 3000 pixels on the short side**. This is to ensure that the A2 prints can be produced at the highest quality for exhibition.

2. ENTRY DISPLAY AND JUDGING

To give your photograph the best chance of selection, carefully consider your scientific description and choose the category that best fits your work. Entries will be judged on both the quality of the photograph and the accompanying description.

Shortlisting
All eligible photographs and captions will be reviewed by a panel of science and photography experts, who will select a shortlist of 25 images across the competition categories.

The shortlisted images will be displayed on the Beaker Street website from 9 June to 28 June 2026. Public voting will open during this period and close at 5:00pm on 28 June 2026.

Finalists
12 finalists will be selected by public vote via the Beaker Street website.

Finalists' images will be displayed at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, the state gallery, throughout August, coinciding with Beaker Street Festival.

Judge's Choice Winner
The judges will choose one winner from the shortlist. This winner will be announced at the beginning of the Festival.

People's Choice Winner
All finalists will be in the running for the People's Choice Award, with voting to take place in-person only at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG).

To view the exhibition and place your vote, attend the exhibition at TMAG between 6 August – 6 September 2026.

People's Choice voting will close at 4pm on 6 September, and the People's Choice Winner will be announced on social media shortly after.

3. PRIZES

There will be a prize for both the Judge's Choice and the People's Choice winners. Prizes will be announced after the opening date of the competition.

4. TIMELINE

- Entries Open: 2 April 2026
- Entries Close: 29 April 2026 at 11:59pm
- Shortlist announced / Online Voting Opens: 9 June, 2026
- Online Voting Closes 28 June, 2026 at 5:00pm
- Finalists announced mid-July 2026.
- Judge's Choice winner announced and exhibition opens 6 August 2026
- People's Choice Winner announced mid-September 2026

5. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. This competition is run by Beaker Street Ltd (ABN: 86646424777). Employees and Board members of Beaker Street, their families, or anyone else directly associated with the running of this photography competition are not eligible to enter.
2. Entrants must reside in Australia.
3. Entries must be submitted via the Entry Form and comply with all requirements under section 1. Entries.
4. Photographers can submit a maximum of two images, however these must be in different categories. Late entries will not be accepted, and proof of transmission will not be accepted as proof of receipt. Entries must not be sent through agencies or third parties.
5. Photographs must relate to science and Tasmanian and Southern Ocean/ Antarctic content only.
6. Photographs that were entered into the Beaker Street Science Photography Competition in previous years may not be re-entered. However, previous entrants are encouraged to enter again with a different photograph.
7. The entrant may enter a new photograph taken specifically for this competition or one from their back-catalogue, however, images must have been taken within the past five years. (In the case of a scientific time-series, the most recent image in the series must have been taken within the past five years.)
8. Images must not be AI-generated.

9. By entering, the entrant confirms that they are the creator and copyright owner of the photograph, and any post-production and editing must be the work of the entrant. (See point 11 for rules on editing.)
10. All eligible images that are shortlisted will be displayed online (with the photographer's watermark if they choose to include it in the image). Each photograph will be attributed to the photographer in the description of the image. By entering this competition, the entrant authorises the use of their image for this purpose.
11. All finalist photographs will be professionally printed and exhibited at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery from 6 August - 6 September 2026. Each photograph will be attributed to the photographer in the description of the image. By entering this competition, the entrant authorises the use of their image for this purpose.
12. All captions/descriptions will be reviewed by one of our partner scientists to make sure they are scientifically accurate, and captions may be edited for accuracy, style, and clarity.
13. Image manipulation, beyond basic darkroom optimisation (cropping, reasonable adjustments to exposure, colour, and contrast, etc.), is not allowed. However, editing that does not include manipulation of the image, but that enhances the scientific nature of the entry - e.g. juxtaposing side-by-side two or more images that depict change over time - are acceptable. Whether an image manipulated in such a way is eligible is at the discretion of the competition judges. Therefore, if there is any doubt, please submit the image at least a week in advance of the deadline and request feedback. The use of specialised photographic equipment used for scientific purposes, e.g. heat-detecting cameras, is allowed, so long as the resulting image is not manipulated.
14. The entrant is responsible for obtaining all relevant model and/or property releases.
15. Results will be final. No correspondence will be entered into after the decisions are made.
16. Finalists will be announced on social media and notified by email. Winners will be announced on social media and notified by email.
17. Beaker Street reserves the right to exclude any photograph, at any point in the competition, if it is determined that the photograph does not conform to the competition rules or if the subject matter is not appropriate for this competition.
18. While we encourage entrants to share their photographic entries with their networks, we do not allow the purchase, trade, or solicitation of online votes. This is not in the spirit of this competition or the Beaker Street community, and doing so will eliminate an entrant from the competition.
19. Entrants retain copyright of their photographs but grant Beaker Street a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to use, reproduce, and publish the images in perpetuity in connection with the promotion of the Beaker Street Science Photography Prize and the Beaker Street Festival (including online, in print, and in public exhibitions). Entrants will be credited wherever possible.
20. Submission of an entry will be taken to mean acceptance of these terms and conditions.

SAMPLE PHOTOGRAPHS WITH CAPTIONS

(Note these do not all feature Tasmanian or Southern Ocean/ Antarctic content — which would make them ineligible — but they are provided to illustrate the various categories only.)

1. Shows a scientific theory or principle (e.g. evolution, gravity):

Zoie Dicker, *Stance*

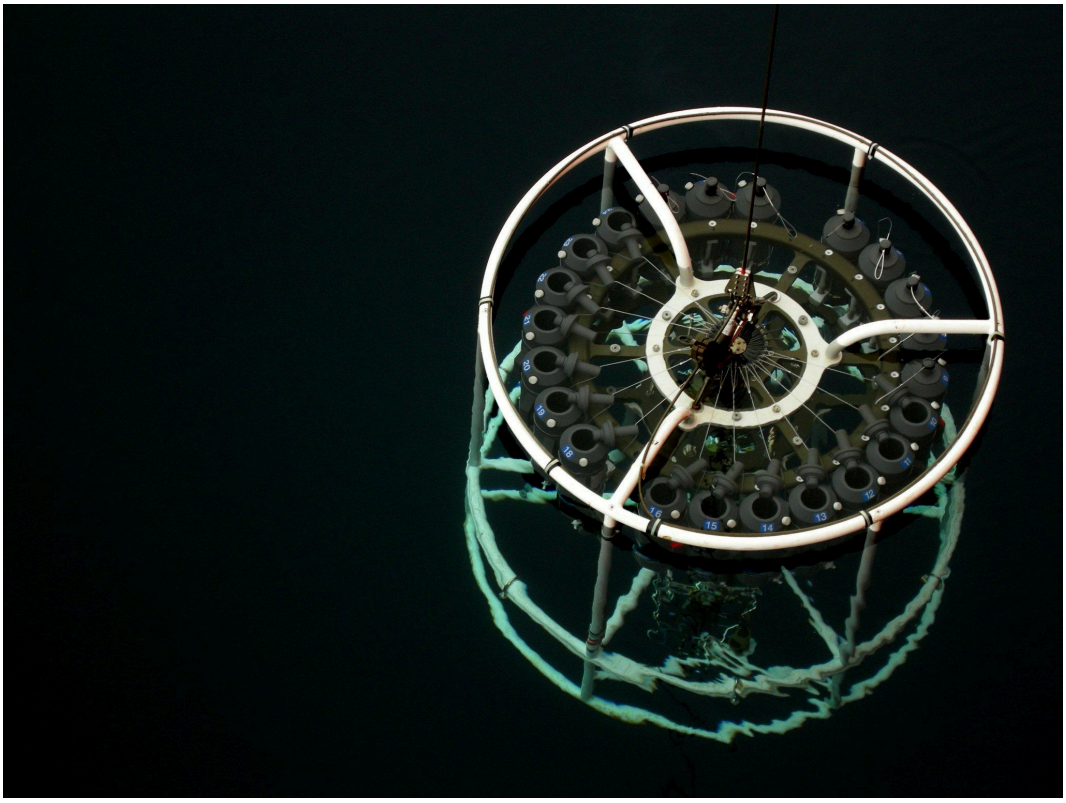
This photo is of a pied oystercatcher (*Haematopus longirostris*), showing an example of how birds have evolved to survive tough environments. By standing on one leg they reduce by half the loss of body heat through their unfeathered limbs. This ability to retain more heat enables them to survive in cold climates.

2. Shows a scientist at work:

Robyn Sewell, *Shasta Henry aka Bug Girl (with stick insect)*

Entomologist extraordinaire! Shasta Henry adorns insects in suits of armour, and customises, modifies, and splices various critters together into creations known as chimaeras, for the enjoyment of others. Here we see one of my ex-pet spiny stick insects - *Extatosoma tiaratum* (endemic to Australia) encased in a spherical glass vessel and suspended in hand sanitiser, so it appears to elegantly hover in space. This allows for uninterrupted observation ex situ of the otherwise perfectly camouflaged stick insect in its eucalypt home.

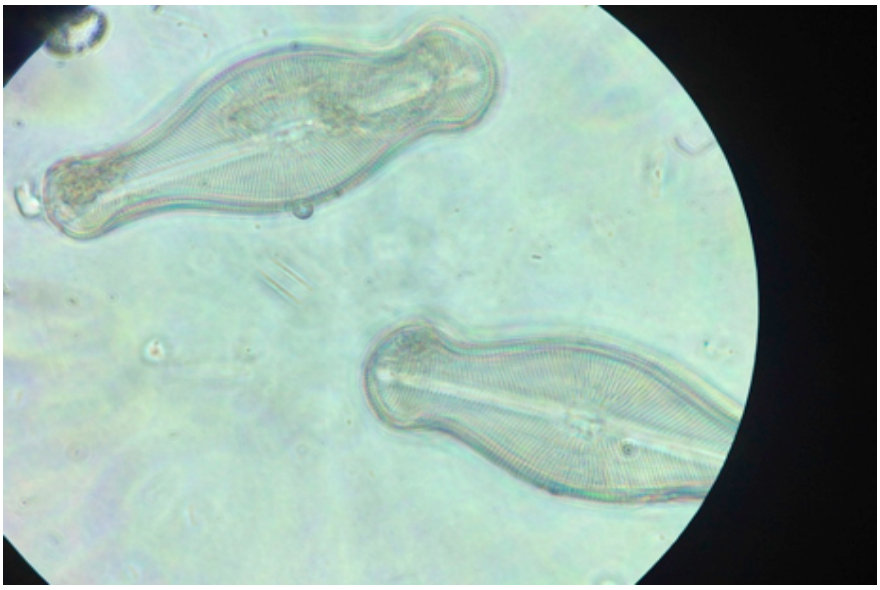
3. Shows scientific equipment or a research output (e.g. a radio telescope, an ice core):



Sandra Potter, *Probing the Chill*

CTD (conductivity temperature depth) devices are used to detect how the conductivity and temperature of the sea water column changes relative to depth. Conductivity is a measure of how well a solution conducts electricity, and is directly related to salinity. As with temperature and depth, it is an important physical characteristic to consider when studying many different ocean processes, including marine animal distributions. The instruments may be lowered many kilometres – this one, into a dark and glassy Southern Ocean.

4. Utilises microscopy:



Zoe Kean, *Rock Snot*

Didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*), or “rock snot,” is shown here under a light microscope at 100x magnification. Didymo is a diatom, a form of alga with silica cell walls. While beautiful under the microscope, this species appears in waterways as a slimy, fouling colony. Native to the Northern Hemisphere, Didymo has wreaked havoc in New Zealand’s freshwater waterways. It has yet to reach Tasmania, and is considered a biosecurity threat.

5. Utilises macrophotography:

Milson Barnard, *Tasmanian Side-eye*

This is a close up of the right eye and exoskeleton of the shiny Tasmanian cockroach species, *Polyzosteria yingina*. Iridescent colour, like that pictured, is due not to pigment absorbing light, but to micro-structures refracting light. It is sometimes called structural colour or photonic colour. This macroscopic photo is a composite of 92 focus-stacked images which cover about 3 mm of the animal. Even so, the microstructures are not visible, since they are only 1/30 of a millimetre thick. Other examples of structural colour include mother-of-pearl in seashells, iridescent bird feathers and opals.

6. **Shows the scientific value of other specialised camera equipment or photographic process (e.g. a heat-sensing camera):**

Sebastian Greenwood, *Infrared and gravity*

I used a R72K Hoya filter on my camera which captures infrared light invisible to the human eye. Another photo is taken at exactly the same spot of a friend in the air completing a mountain bike jump in South Hobart. I combined the two images in strips, the two scientific phenomena create an exciting composition of movement and light.

7. Shows the results of a physical process that has altered a landscape (e.g. erosion or previous volcanic activity):

Zoe Kean, *Fe2O3*

This photograph depicts sheets of corrugated iron that have been exposed to the elements for varied lengths of time. As such, they have varying levels of rust. Rust, or Iron Oxide (Fe2O3) occurs when Iron combines with Oxygen, such as through exposure to air and water.

8. Shows a physical process in action (e.g. aurora, wave motion, volcanism):

Kim Dunstan, *The Power of the Wind*

The West Coast of Tasmania is noted for having “rough seas,” which can be attributed to the Roaring Forties which occur in between latitudes 40 – 50 degrees south in the Southern Hemisphere where winds blow persistently from the West. As there is not a lot of land mass to slow these Westerly winds down, huge waves can be formed that are able to reach up to 10m with measured gusts of up to 200 km/hr recorded in the area.

9. Shows human impact (e.g pollution, extinction, climate change, preservation):

Arwyn Dyer, *A New Normal?*

New tree fern fronds contrast against blackened trunks in the Tahune. Tasmania's January 2019 bushfires devastated large parts of the Huon and TWWHA. With climate change increasingly contributing and/or causing wild fires, is this a new kind of normal for our unique and irreplaceable wilderness areas?

10. Shows a biological concept (e.g. an egg being laid, camouflage, metamorphosis, bioluminescence):

Keith Martin-Smith, *Getting the jab*

The parasitoid wasp Gasteruption primotarsale has an ovipositor longer than its body. It uses this precision injecting tool to probe in holes in rotting logs looking for the larvae of longhorn or jewel beetles. When it finds one of these unfortunate insects it will lay an egg on the larva which will develop inside, and eventually kill, the host.

11. Shows an ecological concept (e.g. pollination, impacts of fire, vegetation succession, competition, invasive species, dispersal):

Antje Worledge, *Sunflower and the Honeybee*

Honeybees are well known as incredibly efficient pollinators and have a beneficial impact on our food supply, although, being non-native, they are not beneficial in the natural environment. This macro shot depicts a worker honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) covered in the pollen of a sunflower. The pollen covering the bee's body and wings makes her look like she is sparkling.

12. Other:

Chris Grose, *Heavens Above*

The core of our galaxy arcs across the night sky above Illawarra Church. At 13.2 billion years old, containing 200-400 billion stars, about 110,000 light years in diameter and moving at 600km per second, our galaxy is just one of billions scattered through the universe. Some time in the distant future our home galaxy will collide with our nearest neighbour, the Andromeda galaxy. Don't worry though — it's still four billion years away, as determined using measurements made by the Hubble space telescope.