

As the WSDC judges' certification approaches, we understand that there may be some concerns about the upcoming changes and what they mean for our WCS community in 2027. To address these issues and provide clarity, the Judges Committee has created this informative document. Its goal is to support events and our community during the transition to the Affiliate Judges Program (AJP) and the WSDC Judges' Certification.

Q1

I already have a judging certification. What certifications are recognized by the WSDC?

There are several judges' certification programs administered by various professionals in our community. However, to become a WSDC Certified Judge, you must enroll in the WSDC's Affiliated Judges Program, designed and administered by the Judges Committee.
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdRn9iwwXfdkPbXWodMQcE4n4xCQ_j8J7mQOZPiiciMDasgig/viewform. These steps include enrollment, assessment of skills and knowledge, a final exam, a judge's pledge, and continuing education.

Q2

The "Public WSDC Affiliate Judge Program" Questionnaire/Poll mentions signing a "Pledge that aligns with WSDC Competition Rules & Guidelines." I would like to know more about this?

The Pledge is a formal promise to ensure that every certified judge upholds the highest standards of professionalism, fairness, ethics, and integrity. Candidates will find it's very similar to a code of conduct.

Q3

I keep seeing many judges' training programs advertised throughout our community. Should I sign up for one of these courses?

The Judges' Committee supports any form of formal or informal training for judges to gain the skills needed to pass the WSDC Certification. Education is very much at the heart of our certification program.

We anticipate that our best judges will have extensive knowledge gathered from many sources, along with practical judging experience, either through mock judging programs or judging assignments.

We encourage you to find the program and approach that best fits your needs. You are not required to enroll in any specific training program.

Q4

Where can I find information about judges' training programs? Is there any information?

The Judges Committee is currently putting together a shortlist of recommended training programs for judges. It should be available on the WSDC website around the 17th of July

Q5

I run a judges' training program. How can I request that my program be included on this list?

Please reach out to paul@worldsdc.com for more information.

Q6

Once I'm WSDC Certified, will events have to hire me?

The WSDC Certification does not guarantee that an event will hire you or even engage you to join its judging staff. You will still have to agree with the event director or chief judge for each specific event, but now you will have some information that helps both the event director and the chief judge recognise your capabilities as deemed by the WSDC.

Q7

When can I take the certification exam?

This is a challenging process that involves approximately 1,000 judges worldwide. To ensure our program progresses steadily, we have organized participants based on their experience as judges within our community into four streamlined groups. Groups A and B will begin shortly, followed by Group C and then Group D. We hope to complete all four groups by the end of the year.

Q8

Is it possible to know what group I'm currently in?

Yes! If you can complete the judges certification questionnaire from the WSDC website: [Certified judges questionnaire](#) .

You can send a enquiry to joelle@worldsdc.com or cross reference the information detailed in the 'public guidelines eligibility invitation/poll'.

For more information about the Judges Committee eligibility and streamlining criteria (for the AJP), please follow this link

<https://worldsdc.com/communityupdate/>

Q9

I have read all the published information but I still have more specific questions. Whom can I contact to obtain more detailed and accurate information about the WSDC Judges' Certification?

The WSDC Judges Committee will maintain and oversee the Judges Certification program (The AJP). Below is a link to the committee page <https://worldsdc.com/wsdc-committees/> on the WSDC website. We encourage you to contact any member directly with a specific question or alternatively, email your detailed enquiry here: judgescommittee@worldsdc.com

Q10

I've heard there may be a NEW rule requiring that all events have a percentage of their Jack and Jill judges certified in 2027.

This is correct. Judges for WSDC Jack and Jill contests must meet the following standards in 2027: Twenty-five per cent (25%) of an Event's WSDC contest judging staff must be WSDC Certified Judges [Recommended: January 1-March 30, 2026. Required: after April 1, 2026.] Exceptions will be managed by the Judging Committee.

Q11

I am an event owner/director. I would like to know how the WSDC decided on 25% of the Jack and Jill judges. What happens if my event does not meet this requirement? Whose responsibility will it be to monitor this?

Over the last few months, the Judges' Committee has been reviewing all our scheduled registry Events for 2027. Using the Judges Committee Invitation Questionnaire/Poll results that already contains 600 enrolled judges.(these are judges who have engaged with the program already, by completing the questionnaire on the WSDC website on [Certified judges questionnaire](#) And, by comparing the events judges' list from 2026 (or 2027, where possible), we anticipate that all events in April will meet this requirement.

The Judges Committee will be working with the events throughout the year, especially January to April, monitoring and helping the community, specifically events, navigate this transition.

Although we have anticipated that these guidelines for the community are very achievable, if an event is unable to meet these requirements, the Judges Committee will work with the event to

establish a more detailed understanding. The information will be forwarded to the WSDC board to help it establish more achievable next steps for integrating the WSDC judge certification.

Q12

How will I know if my event met the 25% requirements?

All events will receive a formal reply from the judges' committee on completion of their event. The judge committee will also keep detailed records to help make realistic recommendations to the WSDC to regulate updates throughout the year.

Q13

Should the event expect any requirements on how certified judges need to be used within their event?

As the Judges Committee has recommended a relatively low requirement for all events in 2027, we also recommended to the board that it's not realistic to require how events specifically use these judges. However, to support events, the Judges Committee will be sending out a best practice document to give some helpful guidelines on suggestions to best utilise their certified judges in 2027

Q14

What do I have to do next?

If you are an **event owner/director**, as you start to finalise your judges/staff for your upcoming event, ask all your potential staff/judges if they have completed the AJP enrollment questionnaire [Certified judges questionnaire](#)

Also to get a sense of your events capacity to meet the WSDC expectations, do they also know what group they are in. If there are event staff you are potentially looking to hire who haven't engaged with the AJP directly we recommend encouraging them to do so.

If you are an **existing judge** in our community, and have already completed the [Certified judges questionnaire](#) you should receive an update informing you of the group you have been placed into for our streamlined enrolment process. If you do not receive an update by the end of July, please complete this questionnaire [Certified judges questionnaire](#) (again). Also, please contact the Judges Committee directly Judgescommittee@worldsdc.com who will assist you further.

If you are **someone in our community** who would like to become a judge, the WSDC judges certification (The AJP) is rooted in 2 key criteria: education and experience. The Judges' Committee recommends that candidates take the opportunity to participate in mock judging exercises and judges' training to ensure they have the relevant experience and understanding to enter our program when it is released to the general public.

More information regarding new judges' pathways and eligibility will be available in the coming months.

Q15

I run an event in one of the Designated WSDC Growth Regions. I'm concerned that my region may not have enough qualified judges available. Are there any considerations for growth regions?

Based on our initial survey, we believe that once Groups A, B, and C are onboarded into the program, events in the growth regions will have no trouble reaching the required 25% of certified judges through their customary, experienced judging staff.

The Judges Committee has the capacity to work one-on-one with events or judges who need additional support in these early stages, and has committed specifically to support for the growth regions. We believe most of this work will lie in outreach to judges who are qualified for certification, but who may not have engaged with the program yet.

Exemptions from the 25% requirement will be available through the Judges Committee if necessary, to accommodate specific situations. Please reach out to judgingcommittee@wsdc.com

We hope this document has been helpful and informative in guiding our community through this significant and fundamental change. We are committed to transparency and collaboration. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. We welcome your feedback.

Judges Committee