



Frequently Asked Questions

What is ACT-SO

The NAACP's Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics is a yearlong achievement program designed to recruit, stimulate, and encourage high academic and cultural achievement among African American high school students.

ACT-SO includes 33 competitions in STEM, humanities, business, and performing, visual and culinary arts. Almost 300,000 young people have participated from the program since its inception.

ACT-SO's Founder

ACT-SO was founded in 1978 by author and journalist Vernon Jarrett. The program is intended to provide recognition to young people who could demonstrate academic, scientific, and artistic achievement, allowing young people to gain recognition equal to that often achieved by entertainers and athletes.

Who Is Eligible to Participate

Students of African descent who are U.S. citizens enrolled in grades 9-12 and are amateurs in the categories are eligible to participate.

What are The Benefits of Participating in ACT-SO

The ACT-SO program is an enrichment program. Over the course of each year students work with local volunteer instructors and mentors to develop projects and participate in enrichment opportunities, including workshops, tutorials and field trips specific to their competitions.

The local ACT-SO competitions and ceremonies showcase the results of the students' hard work. Competition winners receive medals and prizes provided by the local and regional sponsors and contributors. The local Gold Medalists advance to the national competition and have the opportunity to receive scholarships and other rewards provided by national sponsors.

Participation Opportunities

ACT-SO is a community-based program that provides multiple opportunities for involvement. Community members may participate as: Chairpersons, mentors, sponsors, organizers, competitors, benefactors, educational partners, etc.. The program receives support from schools, local businesses, community organizations, churches, foundations, major corporations, and individuals. For more detailed criteria

and information about how to get involved, please contact the National ACT-SO office.

With the exception of Culinary Arts*, Entrepreneurship, and Hospitality Management students can select up to 3 competitions from a total of 33 offerings in 6 categories.

The 33 ACT- SO competitions include:

2023/24 CATEGORIES AND COMPETITIONS

STEM	HUMANITIES	PERFORMINGARTS	VISUAL ARTS	BUSINESS	CULINARY
Architecture	Music Composition	Dance: Ballet	Drawing	Entrepreneurship	Culinary Arts
Biology/Microbiology	Original Essay	Dance: Contemporary	Filmmaking	Hospitality Management	
Chemistry/Biochemistry	Playwriting	Dance: Modern	Painting		
Computer Science	Poetry—Written	Dance: Traditional	Photography		
Earth and Space Sciences	Short Story	Dramatics	Sculpture		
Engineering Mathematics		Music: Instrumental—Classical			
Medicine and Health		Music: Instrumental—Contemporary			
Physics		Music: Vocal—Classical			
		Music: Vocal—Contemporary			
		Oratory			
		Poetry—Performance			

*** To compete in Culinary Arts competitors MUST BE a Junior or Senior enrolled in or have taken culinary courses.**