

2026 Junior Scholar Best Paper Competition POMS College of Operational Excellence

The College of Operational Excellence POMS is administering a best-paper competition to recognize Junior Scholar's outstanding research in the field of operational excellence. This serves as an announcement for this award, with entries due on **January 4th, 2026**.

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General information

The competition recognizes leading Junior Scholar's research in operational excellence. Appropriate topics encompass a wide range, including, but not limited to, technology-enabled operational improvement, operational excellence programs and paradigms (e.g., Six Sigma, Lean, Continuous Improvement, etc.), organizational change associated with operational excellence, operations strategy, and interfaces between operations and other organizational functions.

The author(s) of the best paper will receive an award diploma and honorarium of \$1,000. Honorable Mentions may also be awarded depending on the number of qualified submissions. All finalists will be notified prior to the POMS Annual Meeting in Reno, NV, May 07–11, 2026. The awards will be announced after finalists present their work at the POMS Operational Excellence Mini conference. Note that the entrant CANNOT submit the same paper to ANY other POMS College Best Paper Competition for the 2026 POMS Annual Conference.

Eligibility

- To be considered for the award, a submission must be a **working paper**, not published (or accepted for publication) elsewhere *at the time of submission*.
- Applicants must submit a 50-word abstract to the **Operational Excellence** Track at POMS by the POMS submission deadline. Applications submitted to other tracks will be disqualified.
- The **first author** must be a Junior Scholar (maximum 6 years since completion of PhD).
- The Junior Scholar must **register** at POMS conference 2026. Finalists must agree to present their work at the 2026 POMS OPEX College Mini Conference.

Judging criteria

Papers will be reviewed by a panel of judges from the College of Operational Excellence based on four dimensions: (1) contribution to advancements in operational excellence research, (2) originality, (3) readability, clarity, and organization of the paper, (4) technical content and scope relative to the length of the paper, and (5) presentation at the Mini-conference.

Application process

Please send the following in an email to matthias.thuerer@mb.tu-chemnitz.de, with an email subject line of "Operational Excellence Best Paper Competition":

- 1) A title page, including the submission number, full title, all names and affiliations of all co-authors, and an indication of the corresponding author, with email address. Declare that the paper was not accepted at a journal at the time of submission, and the year of PhD dissertation of the Junior Scholar.
- 2) A full paper (at most 30 pages), laid out using the formatting standards of the POM journal (at least 11 pt., double-spaced). Nowhere in the paper should the names or affiliations of its author(s) be revealed.
- 3) A screenshot showing that you have submitted the manuscript to the Operational Excellence track.

Any questions? Please contact Matthias Thürer (matthias.thuerer@mb.tu-chemnitz.de), on behalf of the POMS College of Operational Excellence.

Organized by the POMS College of Operational Excellence.

2024-2026 College Officers: Giuliano Marodin, Juriaan de Jong, Serena Finco, Richard Peng, Anto John Verghese, and Matthias Thürer

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