



Thank you for participating in the 2021 Capture the Dark Photography Contest!

We will be accepting submissions for the contest between June 21, 2021, at 12 pm PDT, and July 23, 2021, at 12 pm PDT.

*To ensure your submission is successfully received, please **carefully** use the following instructions. There is also a video walkthrough located [here](#). For higher resolution, you can download it from that link.*

1. Determine what category you are submitting your photo for. You can find descriptions for each of them on darksky.org/capturethedark. *Please note that there is a different link to submit to each category. **Double-check** that you are submitting to the correct category.*

For your convenience, here are the submission links for each category:

- [Connecting to the Dark](#)
- [International Dark Sky Place](#)
- [The Impact of Light Pollution](#)
- [The Bright Side of Lighting](#)
- [Creatures of the Night](#)
- [Deep Sky](#)
- [The Mobile Photographer](#)
- [Youth](#)

Also, remember that we only accept one submission per photographer per category.

2. When you click the category that you wish to submit your photo to, it will take you to a page that looks like this:



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Connecting to the Dark

Experiencing a natural night provides perspective, inspiration, and leads us to reflect on our humanity and place in the universe.

Share a photo that illustrates our connection to the night.

EMAIL ADDRESS

YOUR NAME

UPLOAD SET TITLE

CREDIT ©

Ensure that you see the category title and description that you want to submit to before continuing.

3. Begin filling out the form by entering your email address and name. For the **'Upload Set Title'** you can put the title of your photograph. Where it says **'Credit ©'** please enter your name and any social media handles, such as your Instagram, or website. Review the terms of service and click, **'I Accept'**.

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VAULT

Creatures of the Night

Light pollution doesn't only erase our view of the stars, scientific evidence suggests that artificial light at night has negative and deadly effects on wildlife including amphibians, birds, insects, and mammals.

Share a photo of a creature that is impacted by light pollution.

EMAIL ADDRESS

YOUR NAME

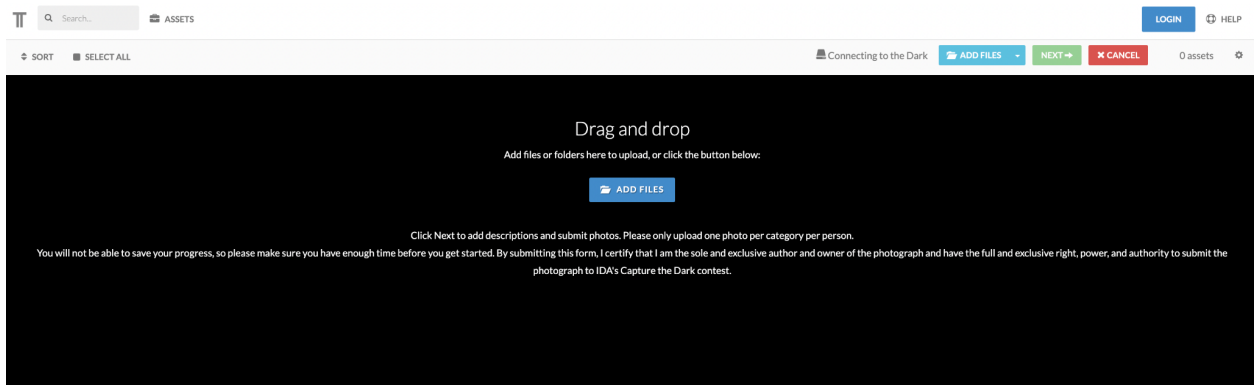
UPLOAD SET TITLE

CREDIT ©

BY CLICKING "I ACCEPT," YOU ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING TERMS OF SERVICES



4. Next, you will be brought to a screen that looks like this:

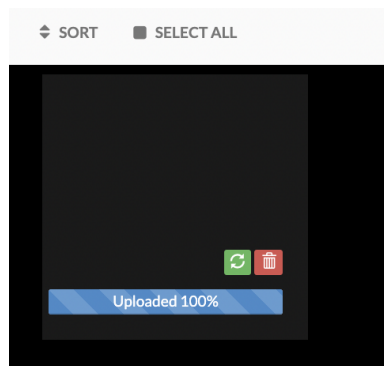


This is our guided upload for the contest. Select '**ADD FILES**' and you will be able to browse your computer for the photograph file you'd like to submit. Once you select your photo it will begin uploading.

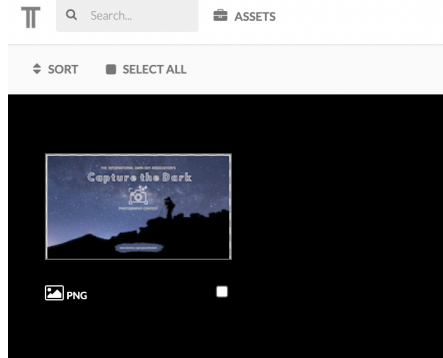
It is important that you wait until you see a thumbnail of your photo before continuing.

Even if you see a status bar that says 'Uploaded 100%' it is NOT done uploading until you see the thumbnail of your photo.

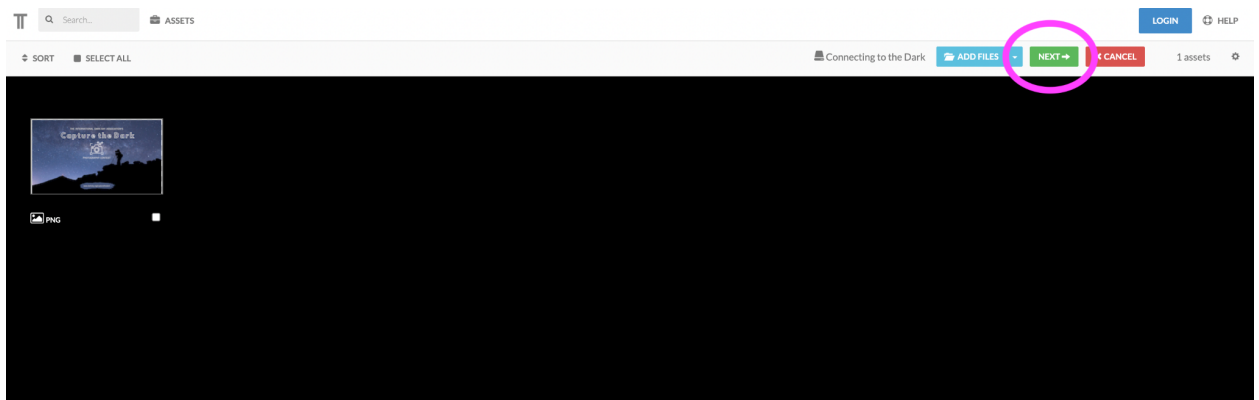
This is **not** done uploading it still needs to process:



Your screen should look like this before clicking next:



- Once you see a thumbnail of the photo that you uploaded click on 'NEXT' in the upper right. See below:



This will take you through so you can provide additional information about your photo.

- First, you will be asked the title of your image. You will see that it is prefilled with what you entered on the first page for the '**Upload Set Title**'. Here, you can make any changes that you may want. Or, if everything looks okay simply click '**NEXT**'.

Add Details

What is the title of your image?

This is for administrator reference only. You can create a public link and name for these photos later.

[NEXT →](#)

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7. Next, please enter the location that you took your photo. Be as specific as you can, but at a minimum provide the city/town and country. When you're done, click **'NEXT'**.

Add Details

Where was this photo taken? Please include the town/city and country.

Include as much detail as possible.

NEXT →

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8. On the next page you will see several fields to fill in:

Add Details

Who took this photo?

Enter your first and last name.

If you have a model release, please attach it.

Choose File No file chosen

[Add another...](#)

Do you have copyright info?

Provide any copyright/credit information such as your social media/website if applicable.

Do you have usage terms?

Please indicate here if you would like to opt out of allowing IDA to use your photograph for promotional and/or marketing purposes such as newsletters, mailings, fundraising, and social media.

NEXT →

- For **'Who took this photo?'** please enter your first and last name.
- If you have a model in your photo and a signed model release, you may attach it here. Otherwise, just ignore this.
- **'Do you have copyright info'** will be pre-populated with what you entered on the first page. You may edit it here if needed. Provide any credit information you'd like us to know to properly credit you for the photo such as your name, social media, or website.
- Finally, in the **'Usage terms'** you may indicate if you would like to opt out of giving IDA permission to use your submitted photo (even if it does not win) for marketing purposes such as in our newsletters, social media, fundraising, etc.



Please note that if we do use your photo we *will* properly credit you with the information that you supply in the copyright section.

- When you're done, click '**NEXT**'.
9. On the next page you will see a list of tags. You can select those that apply to your photo. For example, if your photo has people in it, check off 'People' or if you took your photo in an urban setting instead of a dark sky location you can choose 'Urban astrophotography'. You may select all that apply but please *only* select those that are relevant to the photo that you are submitting.

Add Details

Add tags/keywords that apply to every photo here:


You can apply keywords to individual photos later

- Deep space
- International Dark Sky Place
- Lighting
- Light pollution
- People
- Urban astrophotography
- Wildlife

10. On the final step you will see your photo and several fields to be filled in. **Be sure to include all of the required information in the caption section.** See *below*.

Add Details

Thank you for entering the basic info for this upload. Now it's time to add specific caption information and tags for each photo. Without proper caption and tags, your photo will not be submitted to the photo contest. In the caption please describe which technical category your photo falls under from the following: single-exposure, blend, stacked, tracked, panorama (you may select more than one). More information on each category can be found on darksky.org/capturethedark. Also, please use the caption space to illustrate the connection to the contest category (less than 100 words) and provide any additional information you would like us to know about the photo.



1.png

Caption

The camera settings you used for the photo (focal length, ISO, shutter speed, etc.). Which technical category your photo falls under. The connection your photo has to the contest category. Any additional info you'd like to share about the photo.

Creator **Location**

First and Last Name Where photo was taken

Copyright

Copyright/credit information. Your name/website/social media handles.

Usage Terms

If you'd like to opt out of IDA using your photo for marketing do so here.

Tags

In the caption section you will need to provide the following information:

- The camera settings you used for the photo (focal length, ISO, shutter speed, etc.) If submitting to the mobile category let us know what you used to take the photo. Be as detailed as you can.
- Which technical category your photo falls under (details on this below). Select all that apply.
- The connection your photo has to the contest category (less than 100 words)
- Any additional information you'd like to share about the photo

For your convenience here are the technical categories:

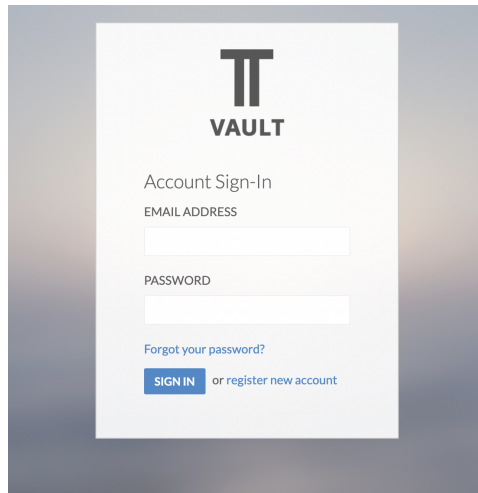
- **Single exposure:** The image is a single exposure. In expression: the camera triggered only once to acquire the image. The image is a single light frame.
- **Blend:** A digital combination of several images taken from the same tripod position, during the same night, with the same shooting direction and focal length. This includes:
 - Foregrounds captured during the blue hour/with moonlight, combined with a sky captured during astronomical night/without the moon in the sky.
 - Focus stacks for an increased depth of field.
 - Tracked skies, blended with untracked foregrounds. In this case, small movement of the tripod position (i.e. to the backside of a foreground feature, to avoid too much blur in the tracked sky image) is acceptable but must be stated.
- **Stacked:** Noise reduction by stacking multiple images taken in immediate succession and with exactly the same settings, focal point, and length, field of view, and tripod position.
- **Tracked:** A tracking mount was used to capture the sky. These devices rotate the camera to counter earth rotation and thus allow longer exposures without producing trailed stars. Tracked & Blended images are allowed if they were both taken using the same tripod position as stated above.
- **Panorama:** Multiple images stitched to produce a larger field of view. The individual images must be taken during the same night, from the same tripod position, and at the same focal length.

*The following are **not** allowed for this contest:*

- **Composite:**
 - Images merged together from different tripod positions/locations or with different viewing directions.
 - Images merged together taken during different nights.
 - Images merged together with different focal lengths.
 - Images merged together with daylight foregrounds and night skies.

11. The rest of the fields should be populated with information you added in the prior steps. Double-check all the information and make any necessary changes.
12. Be absolutely sure that you have entered all the required information. Then, click **'NEXT'**. Note that by doing this you are submitting your photo to be reviewed. You will *not* receive a confirmation email or see an on screen confirmation of your submission. If you see a screen asking you to log in, consider that a confirmation that it went through. You do **not** need to log in or sign up for anything.

*Again, if you see the screen below your photo has been submitted. **You do not need to register or log in.***



13. We will review your photo and information submitted to be sure it follows all the rules and guidelines before passing it along to judging.

Having trouble? Please contact support@darksky.org and we would be happy to help.

Good luck and thanks for participating!