
56th COOLING PRIZE COMPETITION 2025

Rules and notes for entrants (closing date Sunday, 1st December 2024)

1. The competition is open to all Early Career Geotechnical Engineers with up to 7 years of industry/research experience post receipt of a relevant BSc/BEng/MEng/MSc degree (Level 6 or 7 qualification), or up to 5 years if the entrant has completed a PhD degree, on 1st December 2024. Career breaks and/or parental leave can be excluded from the 5-7 years of experience upon request, in which case a short, written explanation should be provided. Time will be calculated from the date printed on the relevant degree certificate.
2. The British Geotechnical Association (BGA) expects that entrants will be based in the United Kingdom (UK) **OR** are reporting on a project undertaken in the UK within the 12 months before the application deadline.
3. All entrants must be able to attend the competition in person, at the University of Leeds on Tuesday 11th February 2025. If successful, they must also be able to attend the upcoming BGA Annual Conference, to present their work. The BGA will cover reasonable travel expenses for entrants based in the UK but will not cover travel expenses for entrants based outside the UK.
4. For UK based entrants, it is not essential to be a member of the BGA at the time of submission, but if shortlisted, the entrant will be asked to join the BGA, at the relevant grade of membership. Entrants not based in the UK must be a BGA member for at least two years prior to the date of the Cooling Prize event.
5. Entrants will prepare a **poster** using a standard template available from the BGA website on any topic dealing with the engineering behaviour of the ground, whether it be a description of an industrial design or construction project, development of a new piece of equipment, or research. The aim of the competition is to encourage young professionals to present their work. **The poster must be on the contribution of the entrant to the project.** Although this is not a pre-requisite, the BGA expects that the work to be presented should not have been previously published or submitted for publication. Equal merit will be given to high quality industrial experience as to state-of-the-art research. The work does not have to be solely that of the entrant, but the entrant's part should be stated clearly. This must be confirmed in writing at the time of submission.
6. Upon receipt, posters are examined by a panel of BGA members. The panel will select up to 4 posters from finalists who will present their work at the competition to be held on **11th February 2025** at an event hosted by the Yorkshire Geotechnical Group (YGG). **All finalists must be able to attend in person.**

7. Three documents must be submitted (by email to bga@ice.org.uk):
 1. the poster;
 2. a completed application form in Excel format (available from the BGA website);
 3. A brief CV.

The closing date is Sunday 1st December 2024.
8. If shortlisted, presentations should be 10 minutes in length using appropriate visual aids for the audience of BGA and Local Association members. A panel of up to four geotechnical professionals will judge the competition. Presentations must keep strictly to time and should emphasise the geotechnical aspects of the work. After each presentation the Chairman will allow 5 minutes of discussion in which the judges and audience may question the entrant on their presentation.
9. After the final presentation, the judges will retire to choose the winner, considering the submitted posters, the verbal presentations, and the way they handled questions. During judging, a special lecture will be given by a guest speaker.
10. When the judges return, their chairman will comment briefly on each submission and announce the winner who is presented with prizes from the BGA and Ground Engineering magazine. Part of the BGA prize is sponsorship to attend a Young Geotechnical Engineers' Conference (YGEC), held either by the European region of the ISSMGE or (quadrennially) in conjunction with an ICSMGE. **It should be noted that these conferences require attendees to be aged 35 or under at the time of the conference.** Each finalist will receive a prize (see below). The judges may, at their discretion, recommend a runner-up to be considered for sponsorship to YGEC. Delegates to YGECs must be a BGA member and are required to submit and present a paper.
11. The winner of the Cooling Prize is traditionally invited to submit their winning poster/presentation as a paper for publication in *Ground Engineering*. *Ground Engineering* will pay £200 to the winner, once the paper has been submitted for publication, but not later than **November 2025**. Otherwise, the £200 cannot be paid to the winner. All finalists will be required to prepare their papers before the competition in October 2025. The winning paper will be included in the printed issue, while runner-up papers will be hosted online. Papers must not exceed 2000 words, excluding titles, captions, and references, and should be submitted in PDF format via the online form on the Prize Page of the BGA website. Winning and runner-up posters will be made available on the BGA website.
12. After the competition the finalists are invited to join the judges and BGA members for dinner as guests of the BGA and hosting ICE Association. For finalists based in the UK travel and accommodation expenses will be met by the BGA.

13. The criteria on which posters are judged originate from Dr Leonard Cooling and are as follows:

Content

- (a) Importance of problem and technical substance
- (b) Grasp of subject and aptness of method of approach
- (c) Clarity of presentation of main results/findings
- (d) Details of descriptions relating to ground and groundwater conditions
- (e) Intrinsic merit in stimulating thought

Presentation

- (a) Clarity of delivery
- (b) Aptness of approach and emphasis of findings
- (c) Grasp of subject and skill in summing up
- (d) Confidence and efficiency in dealing with questions
- (e) Audience reaction – interest aroused as evidenced by discussion

11. Prizes

- (a) £200 cheque from Ground Engineering
- (b) Cut glass decanter or alternative trophy
- (c) BGA sponsorship to the YGEC the following year (2026) if eligible
- (d) Either “The Consulting Engineers” or “The Contractors” ICE publication
- (e) Dinner
- (f) Refereed paper added to your list of publications
- (g) The kudos (to be proudly displayed on your CV) of being a Cooling Prize winner or finalist.

Runners-up are given (d) to (g) and possibly (c)

BGA/23.10.2024