PICTURE POSTCARDS – The Future

Birthe King RDP FRPSL writes:

Since picture postcards were invented and popularized in the 1890s, it has been a popular interest to collect such cards. The very early ones from 1890s up to World War I are very sought after, and both during the war and after the production continued, and collection was a popular pastime. In more recent times many philatelists have also discovered that postcards can provide interesting stories, not purely as illustrations in other kinds of displays or exhibits, but also in their own right.

With increased co-operation between the federations at bi-lateral and regional exhibitions FEPA decided that it would be appropriate to introduce European rules. The aim was to regularise the judging and thus to help judges and exhibitors to work to the same standards. Also, the Guidelines should be kept to four pages, to keep them as simple as possible, to encourage Picture Postcard exhibitors, and not to be restrictive. So, in 2015 FEPA presented the first European 'Guidelines', Special Regulations for the Evaluation of Picture Postcards Exhibits at FEPA Exhibitions, in Athens 15 November 2015, where they were accepted. These Guidelines have been used successfully at exhibitions in Europe, e.g. at Finlandia in 2017. By 2018, the then president of FIP, Bernie Beston, introduced picture postcards as an experimental class at international level with 'Guidelines for Judging Picture Postcard Exhibits', closely resembling



the FEPA Guidelines. Since then, some amazing exhibits have been shown at all competitive levels, creating more displays and exhibits across the world.

However, at the international Boston 2026 World Expo in May something extraordinary happened. The 14 picture postcards exhibits were not shown in the large exhibition hall, but in a small upstairs meeting room shared with postcard dealers. Maybe it was thought that this would be a good idea, but there was ample space on the ground floor to have a decent sized section, shared by the postcard exhibits and the Trade.

The Boston 2026 GWSE Individual Regulations (IREX) obviously referred to by the exhibitors, were changed, apparently during the exhibition. The appointed jurors for the Picture Postcard class were handed judging schedules that included a change to the marking system under Knowledge and Research. Nowhere in the IREX was this mentioned. The total of 35 points were split into two components, with a new Philatelic Knowledge component being introduced at 20 points.

On the contrary, the extracts from the Boston IREX listed at the end make it clear that we, the exhibiters, have no rights or redress, and neither do the jurors, despite the Guidelines on the FIP website being superseded at the exhibition. The result was that most exhibits lost points and dropped at least one medal level, some even two. This procedure was repeated at the international World Exhibition in Macao in June.

But what about the exhibitors, who had prepared their exhibits and paid their frame fees? What could they do? Nothing, because we all sign our rights away on the exhibition application form. Neither the Boston Organising Committee nor the FIP have explained anything. Fait accompli. Picture postcards have nothing to do with routes and rates, it is in the name PICTURE Postcards.

So, what will we do in FEPA? FEPA shows with Patronage or Recognition could offer exhibitors to enter their Picture Postcard exhibits under the 'present' FEPA Guidelines and disregard what the FIP might or might not do in the future. The wording on the FIP website is still 'FIP Picture Postcards Special Regulations 2018' and 'FIP Picture Postcard Guidelines 2018's (2026.08.24).

I would encourage all Picture Postcard exhibitors to continue to enjoy their displays and exhibits and to enter these at national or regional shows in Europe and at FEPA shows. It might, however, cause problems at exhibitions with FIP Patronage or Recognition.

Please FEPA, stand firm for the sake of Picture Postcard collectors, displayers, and exhibitors and maintain the present FEPA Guidelines.

Extract from Boston 2026 IREX

Article 6 – JUDGING OF EXHIBITS AND AWARDS

6.1 Exhibits in the Competitive Classes will be judged by the appointed and/or accredited FIP judges in accordance with the principles in the GREV and SREVs. Any deviation in the judging system must have the prior approval of the FIP Board.

Article 15 – RIGHTS OF ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

15.1 Every exhibitor applying to exhibit at BOSTON 2026 GWSE is deemed to have accepted the stipulations of the IREX.

15.2 The Organizing Committee shall have the right to adjudicate any matters arising that are not covered by FIP Regulations or by this IREX, and its decisions shall be final.

15.3 The Organizing Committee shall have the right to revise the IREX after consultation with the FIP Consultant. In such case, exhibitors shall be promptly notified of any such revision either directly or through the National Commissioner.

Article 16 – ACCEPTANCE OF THESE REGULATIONS

16.1 By signing the Exhibit Application Form, the exhibitor shall be deemed to accept the stipulations of the IREX, GREX, GREV and SREVs.

