

# Next Generation Speaker Series special: connecting classrooms and communities

*A Global Contest for Student-Led Projects on Planetary Health & Education*

## Contest Overview

This global contest invites educators and youth-led educational initiatives to showcase projects, educational materials, and learning experiences that bring planetary health into practice for adolescents aged 13–18. We seek diverse perspectives, approaches, and contexts—highlighting how schools and communities are connecting learning with local action, climate justice, and environmental resilience.

Selected projects will be featured in one special episode of the Next Gen Speaker Series (NGSS), providing international visibility and a platform to inspire peers worldwide.

## Quick Facts

<b>Contest Type</b>	<b>Global call for youth-led planetary health project</b>
<b>Age Group</b>	Educators and educational initiatives serving adolescents aged 13–18
<b>Project Focus</b>	Planetary health, climate action, and education
<b>Selection Method</b>	Applications scored by subcommittee on 5 key criteria
<b>Selected Projects</b>	3 projects total
<b>Presentation Format</b>	12 minutes per project + audience discussion
<b>Featured in</b>	Next Gen Speaker Series (NGSS) - Special webinar
<b>Application Deadline</b>	June 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
<b>Episode</b>	Episode July 10 <sup>th</sup> (10AM EST / 3PM GMT)

# Who Can Apply?

Your project must meet these criteria:

- You are an educator, school team, youth collective, or educational organization
- Your work is designed for or implemented with adolescents aged 13–18
- Your project addresses a planetary health-related issue (climate, environment, health equity, etc.)
- Your project is connected to a school, classroom, or educational setting
- Your project demonstrates a clear link between learning and real-world action
- Your project has been implemented or is currently in progress
- If selected, you (or your team) are comfortable presenting live and answering questions

## Types of Projects We Invite

Examples include, but are not limited to::

- School-wide sustainability initiatives
- Planetary health curricula or educational toolkits
- Peer education and awareness campaigns
- Community cleanup or conservation projects
- Classroom-to-community collaborations
- Educational media, games, podcasts, books or digital learning materials
- Student collectives addressing local environmental issues
- Partnerships between students, teachers, and local organizations
- Service-learning projects with measurable environmental or health impact
- Teacher-led or educator-supported service-learning projects

## How Are Projects Selected?



A subcommittee of youth engagement experts will evaluate applications based on 5 key domains of the Planetary Health Education Framework:

Domain	What We're Looking For	Scoring
<b>Connection with Nature</b>	Does your project combine understanding, care, AND action? Does it integrate cognitive, emotional, and behavioral learning?	1-3 points
<b>Understanding the Anthropocene</b>	Do you show how human activities impact environmental and health systems? Do you address root causes, not just symptoms?	1-3 points

<b>Systems Thinking</b>	Do you understand how different factors are interconnected? Can you identify leverage points for change?	1-3 points
<b>Equity &amp; Social Justice</b>	Does your project address who is most affected by environmental issues? How does it support vulnerable populations?	1-3 points
<b>Movement Building &amp; Change</b>	Does your project engage people and create sustainable change? Do you work with partners to scale impact?	1-3 points

Simplified scoring (1=emerging, 2=developing, 3=exemplary) ensures fair evaluation while recognizing that projects at all stages are valuable. We're interested in your genuine experience and ideas—keep your answers honest and thoughtful!

## Important Timeline

Date	What Happens
<b>May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026</b>	Contest launch and promotion begins
<b>June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026</b>	 APPLICATION DEADLINE (end of day)
<b>June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026</b>	Results Announced to selected participants
<b>June 12<sup>th</sup> - June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026</b>	Selected participants submit consent forms & media materials
<b>June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026</b>	Technical dry run with Episode speakers
<b>July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 10AM EST</b>	 EPISODE LIVE – Second group of projects presented

# The Application Process

All applications should be submitted through this [Google Forms](#) in accordance to the presented timeline.

## What You'll Tell Us About:

Your [application form](#) includes:

- Basic information (name, age, school, country, contact details)
- Project overview and timeline (title, description, start date, status)
- Educational context and target audience
- Project details and impact (what it's about, the problem it solves, activities, your role, how did it affect your community)

## How Long Will This Take?

Most [sections](#) ask for short answers (50-250 words). We want to understand your genuine experience, so keep responses clear and honest. Plan on 30-45 minutes to complete the full application.

## Questions About Language?

[Your application](#) can be submitted in your preferred language. Selected projects will be presented in English during the webinars. If you need language support, please indicate this in your application.

# What If You're Selected?

## Presentation Format

If selected, your project will be featured in a live webinar episode:

- Presentation Time: Up to 15 minutes to present your project
- Format: Live webinar with audience Q&A following your presentation
- Preparation: A technical dry-run will be scheduled before the event
- Recording: The session will be recorded and potentially shared on social media

## Technical Requirements

You will need:

- Stable internet connection
- Camera and microphone (laptop/computer or phone)
- Quiet space for presentation (30-45 minutes)
- Technical support will be available if needed

# Safeguarding & Consent

We are committed to creating a safe and ethical environment for all participants. All participants agree to:

- Media usage guidelines prior to participation
- Professional and respectful conduct during the event

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Do I need to be in a team or can I apply individually?** Both are welcome! You can apply as an individual or as part of a team. If you're in a team, designate one person as the main applicant/presenter. Applications may come from educators, schools, youth groups, NGOs, or collaborative initiatives.

**Do projects need to be led by youth?** Not necessarily. We welcome projects and educational materials created by educators or organizations, as long as they are designed for adolescents aged 13–18 and meaningfully engage young people.

**Can teachers or mentors help with my project?** Absolutely! We encourage collaboration between students, educators, mentors, researchers, and community partners.

**Can my project be planned but not yet started?** Yes! We accept projects that are planned, ongoing, or completed. If your project is still in the planning phase, explain what you've already done to prepare.

**What if I speak English as a second language?** No problem! We welcome applicants from all backgrounds. We'll provide support to help you prepare your presentation.

**Do I need special equipment to present?** No. A computer or phone with a camera and microphone is enough. We'll help with any technical setup during the dry run.

**What happens to my project after the webinar?** Your project will be featured on social media and in a global repository of youth-led planetary health initiatives. You'll inspire others!

**Is there a cost to apply or participate?** No! The contest and webinar participation are completely free.

**Will there be a prize for the awarded projects?** No. The contest is intended to recognize inspiring initiatives and encourage peers to expand their perspectives on planetary health education.

**Can teachers or mentors help with my project?** Absolutely! We encourage collaboration with teachers, mentors, and community partners. Your application will ask about their involvement.

## Have Questions?

If you have questions about the contest, application process, or eligibility, please reach out to: [prof.arruda.bio@gmail.com](mailto:prof.arruda.bio@gmail.com)

We're here to support you! Don't hesitate to ask if you need clarification on anything.