Teens Dream Video Challenge 2027

Complete Guidelines

LINK TO ENTER

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Create a 60-90 second vertical video explaining what YOU would do to address one UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Show us the problem, your solution, and why it matters to you.

You will apply to **ONE** of the following project stages. Choose the stage that aligns the best with your solution:

1. Project Stage 1: **Emerging Idea** - This is for teens with thoughtfully outlined ideas for change, but haven't yet had the opportunity to put them in action. You should have a specific solution, proposed initial steps, and a clear intended impact.
2. Project Stage 2: **Established Project** - This is for teens with SDG solutions that are already in motion. You should have a specific solution, demonstrated impact, and next steps or goals to further your vision.

Deadline to submit: **January 25, 2027** at 11:59 PM EST

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS (Both Stages)

Your video will be checked for these requirements before judging, regardless of project stage. Videos must meet ALL requirements, or they will not be judged.

✓ Basic Format:

- Length: Between 60-90 seconds (not shorter, not longer)
- Orientation: Vertical (like Instagram Stories or TikTok - 9:16 ratio)
- Your Presence: You must appear on screen at some point in the video *(you don't have to be on screen the entire time)*
- Language: Spoken in English (subtitles are encouraged)
- Original Content: No copyrighted music, images, or video clips without transformative commentary or editing
    - Pro tip: You can always use royalty-free content from websites like Pexels and Bensound, or other footage from the public domain.
    - Different platforms have different policies for what content you can and can't use. Make sure you comply with the specific rules for Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, etc.

✓ Technical Quality Minimums:

- Audio and video must be clear and easy to understand
- File format: MP4, MOV, or AVI
    - (or share a link to an online platform, listed in “Submission Process”)
- Maximum file size: 500MB

✓ Required Content:

- State which SDG(s) you're addressing
- Explain a specific problem related to that SDG
- Present YOUR solution - what would YOU do or would do about it
- No hate speech, false information, or inappropriate content

JUDGING RUBRIC

Follow the rubric that best aligns with your SDG solution. You may only submit to ONE project stage - Emerging Idea or Established Project (see below).

Project Stage 1: Emerging Idea

Total Score: 25 Points (5 points for each category below)

Category	1 — Limited	2 — Developing	3 — Adequate	4 — Strong	5 — Exceptional
1. SDG Knowledge	SDG is unclear or inaccurate.	Identifies the SDG, but barely explained / missing important context.	Identifies the SDG and gives a basic explanation of the problem.	Clearly explains a specific problem with relevant context.	Excellent understanding of the SDG and presents compelling, strong examples of the problem.
2. Proposed Solution	Proposed solution is unclear.	A solution is mentioned, but vague.	Presents a clear solution that generally addresses the identified problem.	Presents a thoughtful, specific solution that clearly responds to the problem.	Presents an exceptionally clear and well-developed solution with multiple steps outlined.
3. Audience & Potenital Benefit	The intended audience is not identified.	An audience is mentioned, but it is broad and potential benefit is unclear.	Clearly identifies who the idea is intended to help and describes a potential benefit.	Clearly identifies and discusses the intended audience and how the idea will benefit them.	A thoughtful understanding of the intended audience, their needs, and how the proposed idea could meaningfully benefit them.
4. Personal Connection & Motivation	No personal connection to the issue is communicated.	Some personal interest but the motivation is unclear.	Clearly explains why the issue matters to them.	Communicates a meaningful personal connection and motivation to address the issue.	Shares a compelling and authentic connection that strongly demonstrates why they are motivated to create change.
5. Storytelling & Effective Communication	The video is difficult to follow and shows little creativity or engagement.	The main idea can be understood, but the presentation is not engaging.	The video communicates the main idea clearly and includes some creative or engaging storytelling elements.	The video is clear, well organized, and uses creative storytelling to hold attention and strengthen the message.	The video is exceptionally clear, engaging, and memorable, using creative storytelling to stand out.

Project Stage 2: Established Project

Total Score: 25 Points (5 points for each category below)

Category	1 — Limited	2 — Developing	3 — Adequate	4 — Strong	5 — Exceptional
1. SDG Knowledge	SDG is unclear or inaccurate.	Identifies the SDG, but barely explained / missing important context.	Identifies the SDG and gives a basic explanation of the problem.	Clearly explains a specific problem with relevant context.	Demonstrates excellent understanding of the SDG and presents compelling, strong examples of the problem.
2. Solution, Implementation & Progress	Solution and project activities are unclear.	Identifies a solution, but implementation is underdeveloped.	Clearly explains the solution and provides some information about how it is being implemented.	Clearly explains the solution, specific actions being taken, and meaningful progress made so far.	Demonstrates a highly developed solution with clear implementation, purposeful actions, and significant progress.
5. Audience & Impact	The intended audience is unclear and impact is not demonstrated.	An audience is mentioned, but their needs and the project's affect on them is only lightly discussed.	Clearly identifies the audience and provides some context of how the project is benefiting them.	A strong understanding of the audience and clearly describes meaningful benefits and engagement with them.	Thoughtfully demonstrates who the project serves and provides compelling examples and outcomes showing meaningful impact.
4. Personal Connection & Authenticity	No personal connection to the issue is communicated.	Some interest, but the personal connection is lacking.	Clearly communicates why the issue matters to them and demonstrates genuine commitment to the project.	Shares a strong personal connection and communicates authentic passion for the project.	Personal connection is compelling and demonstrates a deep, authentic commitment to addressing the issue.
3. Creative Storytelling & Communication	The video is difficult to follow and shows little creativity or engagement.	The main idea can be understood, but the presentation is not engaging.	The video communicates the main idea clearly and includes some creative or engaging storytelling elements.	The video is clear, well organized, and uses creative storytelling to hold attention and strengthen the message.	The video is exceptionally clear, engaging, and memorable, using creative storytelling to stand out.

AI POLICY

You may use artificial intelligence to assist the creation of your video, but the overall product should be your own, original work. See below for more specific guidelines.

Acceptable Uses

- **Research assistance:** Using AI as a search tool to find information about your SDG. You must verify all your information comes from REAL sources, not AI chatbots.
- **Idea generation:** Using AI for brainstorming or generating ideas as a starting point for original work.
- **Video editing:** Employing AI tools to edit or embellish the videos clips that YOU filmed.
- **Writing:** Using AI to create script outlines or key talking points for your video. However, you may not read directly from a 100% AI-generated script–try to include your own tone and voice!

Unacceptable Uses

- **Plagiarism:** Using completely AI-generated content as your own without modification, original thought or effort.
- **Video generation:** Using AI to create your video without original content or creative modification.
- **Misrepresentation:** Using AI as a research tool without checking your source material to verify that all information is correct and citable.

Email staff@globalcolab.net with any questions about our AI policy.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Step 1: Choose Your Project Stage

You will apply to only **ONE** of the following project stages. Reference the judging rubrics above to decide which stage best fits your SDG solution.

1. **Emerging Idea OR**
2. **Established Project**

Step 2: Create Your Video

Follow all the technical requirements above. Videos that do not meet technical requirements will not be considered for judging.

Step 2: Upload to YouTube or Vimeo

- On YouTube:
    - UNLISTED- if you don't want anyone else to see it except Teens Dream judges
    - PUBLIC- if you are okay with anyone watching your video
- Upload your video to Vimeo and submit the link

Step 3: Submit Your Entry by January 25, 2027 11:59pm EST

Go to teensdreamcolab.org to find the submission link. Please provide:

- Your YouTube/Vimeo link
- Which SDG you chose
- Brief description (50 words) of your solution
- Your contact information and age
- Parent/guardian consent (if under 18)

PRIZES & RECOGNITION

2 Grand Prize Winners (Emerging Idea & Established Project): $1,000

- Certificate of achievement
- Featured at our Fall Celebration
- Featured on our website

ALL Participants Receive:

- Invitation to join our SDG Hubs (work with teens globally!)
- Your video posted on our Teens Dream website
- Opportunity to attend future events
- Opportunity to apply to the UN HLPF delegation *if you become an active member of an SDG Hub*

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What if my solution already exists somewhere? A: That's okay! Explain how your approach is different, or how you'd adapt it to your community. Original thinking matters more than inventing something completely new.

Q: Do I need expensive video equipment? A: No! A smartphone is perfectly fine. Clear audio and good lighting matter more than fancy cameras.

Q: Can I use background music? A: Only if it's royalty-free or music you created. No popular songs or copyrighted music.

Q: What if English isn't my first language? A: That's okay! Clear communication matters more than perfect grammar. Adding subtitles can help.

Q: Can I submit as a team? A: Yes, but only one person can submit for your entire group.

Q: Can friends help me film? A: Yes, but anyone involved must be a teen.

Q: What happens if I'm a few seconds over 90 seconds? A: Edit it to fit the time limit.

Q: How do judges know what score to give? A: All judges use the same scoring table above. They score independently, then scores are averaged.

Q: Can I submit more than one video? A: No, only one submission per person or team.

Q: I've submitted to Teens Dream before. Can I apply again? Yes, you can submit multiple years in a row! However, if you have won before, you cannot win again.

Q: When will winners be announced? A: At our Spring Virtual Celebration (specific date to be announced)

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Before You Film:

1. Research your SDG deeply - understand the facts
2. Write an outline (not a full script - be natural!)
3. Practice explaining your solution to friends or family
4. Choose a quiet location with good lighting
5. Test your audio quality first

While Filming:

1. Speak clearly and with energy
2. Look at the camera (like you're talking to a friend)
3. Don't worry about being perfect - authentic is better
4. If you make a mistake, just start that section again

After Filming:

1. Watch your entire video - is everything clear?
2. Check that you stated your SDG
3. Verify the length is between 60-90 seconds
4. Make sure audio is clear throughout
5. Have someone else watch it and provide feedback

What Makes Videos Stand Out:

- Personal stories - Share real experiences from your life
- Specific solutions - Give concrete steps, not vague ideas
- Genuine passion - Let us see why you really care
- Clear communication - Easy to understand, well-paced
- Visual engagement - Show things when possible, don't just talk

CONTACT & SUPPORT

Questions about content, rules or technical issues: staff@globalcolab.net

Urgent issues: Use subject line "URGENT - Teens Dream Challenge"

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

✓ Deadline: January 25, 2027 at 11:59 PM EST

✓ Ages 13-19 to be eligible

✓ Must be vertical format, 60-90 seconds

✓ State your SDG in the video

✓ Upload as a YouTube or Vimeo link

Ready to change the world? Start creating your video today!

SUBMIT HERE!