

Environmental
**STUDENT
ACTION
CHALLENGE**



**APPLICATION
HANDBOOK**

Alberta 

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INTRODUCTION

THE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDENT ACTION CHALLENGE

The Environmental Student Action (Student Action Challenge) is back for the 2020-2021 school year, and it's up to you to take action!

The Student Action Challenge invites Alberta students to develop initiatives or projects that promote healthy environments and ecosystems or reduce carbon emissions. The program encourages stewardship in Alberta youth as they gain hands-on experience tackling environmental issues that directly impact them, their schools, or their communities.

Develop a plan for the school year, put your plan into action, and share your results with other students and your community. The Government of Alberta will award up to \$1,000 per successful applicant for a total of \$15,000* in funding to support students' environmental action projects.

The community

This program encourages students in Alberta to be part of the action. While implementing your projects, you'll be sharing your experiences and results with students across the province through an online community of peers. Some projects will have their actions featured on Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) social media channels and may even get a visit from a government representative!

WHO CAN APPLY?

The Student Action Challenge is all about student-led projects. The program is open to all students registered in a school or school association funded by the Government of Alberta.

- Projects must be conducted by a school community or student group. Students must work in teams of two or more to be eligible for the Student Action Challenge.
- Projects must include an adult supervisor and principal support.

WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

Project considerations

Successful applications must accomplish at least one of the following three goals:

- Reduce human impact on the environment.
- Restore or enhance an aspect of the natural environment.
- Reduce the carbon footprint of a particular group.

Additional considerations

Project applications should consider the following:

- Projects should reflect the level of environmental understanding of participating students.
- All projects must include an evaluation component. Evaluations can include:
 - Anecdotal / qualitative data (opinions / judgements).
 - Quantitative data (statistics, measurable outputs).
 - Traditional ecological knowledge (observations, historic application).
- Projects should include an outreach activity; to share learnings with other schools or the larger community.
- Applicants are encouraged to partner with other organizations to maximize project impact and to leverage potential resourcing options, whether monetary or in-kind. Working in partnership (especially at the community scale), will strengthen an application.
- The legacy value of a project will also be considered. How do you see this project staying active for years to come?

Project location

Projects must take place within the province of Alberta, and must occur within a school or school grounds or on public land with appropriate permission¹.

¹ To request Temporary Field Authority (TFA) for an activity on public land, please call 310-3773 to connect with a Land Approval Officer.

Project duration

Projects must start and finish within the school year. They may start before the Student Action Challenge grants are awarded but funding is not guaranteed.

HOW AND WHEN CAN I APPLY?

Complete the online application at www.alberta.ca/student-action-challenge.aspx. Applications open mid-September.

Applications for the 2021-2022 Student Action Challenge must be received prior to **4:30 p.m. October 17, 2022**.

HOW MUCH FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

The Government of Alberta will award up to \$15,000* in total funding to successful applicants.

- A single school or school association may receive up to two awards within a single school year.
- Funding may cover up to 100% of approved project-specific costs. Additional support through community sponsorships may be sought but no additional funding from other Government of Alberta sources is permitted.
- Project budgets must be included in the application.
- Cheques for funded projects will be issued to the school or school association listed on the application. Cheques will not be issued to individuals.

WHAT EXPENSES ARE ELIGIBLE?

Eligible expenses

The Student Action Challenge will fund:

- Project design and delivery, including communication about the project.

Ineligible expenses

The Student Action Challenge will not fund:

- Fundraising activities.
- Guest speakers or presentations.
- Projects outside the province of Alberta.
- Activities that are required by law or are mandated by any level of government.
- Lobbying or advocacy activities.
- Incentives or rebates.
- Any cost not tied directly to the project design and delivery.
- Other expenses as may be deemed ineligible at time of application.

HOW ARE APPLICATIONS EVALUATED?

Project applications for awards of up to \$500 and awards up to \$1,000 will be evaluated based on the same criteria, although applications for awards up to \$1,000 are expected to provide additional details. The Student Action Challenge applications will be evaluated based on:

- **Level of measurable environmental impact.** How well does this project reduce the carbon footprint of a group, reduce human impact on the natural environment, or restore/enhance an aspect of the natural environment?
- **Legacy value of the project.** Does this project result in environmental learning for future years?
- **Scope of educational collaboration.** How well does the project collaborate with others in the school and community?
- **Level of planning and research.** Is the project well thought out or is it only in the preliminary stages of planning?
- **Timeliness.** Does this project address a current issue or challenge?
- **Cost effectiveness.** Does this project include ineligible expenses (such as guest speakers or fundraising activities)? Does this project use the funds wisely and leverage additional funding or in-kind support?

- Each application will be assessed in one of four divisions:
 - Division I: Kindergarten to Grade 3
 - Division II: Grades 4 to 6
 - Division III: Grades 7 to 9
 - Division IV: Grades 10 to 12

Refer to Evaluation Criteria – Appendix A for full details.

WHAT ARE THE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

Online community

Students are expected to engage with the Student Action Challenge online community once a month or more throughout the course of their project. This includes but is not limited to: blogs, photos, or video updates.

Please note: Images (photographs and videos) where individuals can be identified must be accompanied by a Media Release Form. Participants that opt out of media releases will not be included in Student Action Challenge publicity; these individuals must be identified in advance of public activities.

Project wrap-up

The Student Action Challenge program concludes during Environment Week (first week of June). The wrap-up includes a Celebration, held in the form of a digital town hall event, and Project Presentations.

- **Required for all grants:** Project teams must provide a short reflection on their project. This should include a description of the process (challenges, successes, and surprises) and an outline of how the project is expected to continue into the future.
- **Required for grants of \$500-\$1,000:** Students must create 2-minute videos providing a summary of their projects. Portions of the video will be shown during the Celebration event.
- **Optional:** Students can choose to deliver a 20-minute presentation during Environment Week (first week of June), outlining the challenges and successes that they encountered throughout implementation of their project, as well as answering questions from

other projects.

- **Optional:** Students may receive a visit from the Student Action Challenge Coordinator, their local MLA, or even the Minister of Alberta Environment and Parks!

Media

All successful projects will be recognized on the Student Action Challenge website. Other recognition, such as school visits, blog posts, and social media posts, may occur throughout the school year.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about the Student Action Challenge, please contact the Student Action Challenge Coordinator at:

Student.Action@gov.ab.ca

APPENDIX A: EVALUATION CRITERIA

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Size of award applied for: up to \$500 | up to \$1,000

This project: Reduces human impact to the environment | Restores or enhances an aspect of the natural environment | Reduces the carbon footprint of a group

Division: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

(scored on anticipated grade level skills and knowledge)

CRITERIA	0	1	2	3	4	SCORE
Level of measurable environmental impact	Project is expected to have no measurable impact.	Project may have an impact though it would be challenging to measure.	Project may have a classroom measurable environmental impact.	Project may have a school measurable environmental impact.	Project may have a school community measurable environmental impact.	<u>4</u>
Legacy value	The project has no legacy value. It has no impact in the future.	The project will have an impact for the school year only.	The project will have an impact both this year and next year.	The project will have an impact for 1-5 years.	The project will have an impact for 6+ years.	<u>4</u>
Scope of reach	Only the participants are involved in the project.	Project involves others within the school but none in the larger community.	Project involves others in the school and has minimal reach in the community.	Project involves others in the school and has significant reach in the community.	Project has significant reach in the school, community, and into the rest of the province.	<u>4</u>
Level of planning and research	No research is shown in the application.	Minimal research is shown in the application.	Significant research is shown in the application.	Research is extremely relevant to the outcome.		<u>3</u>
Timeliness	Project does not address a current issue.	Project partially addresses a current issue.	Project addresses a current issue.			<u>2</u>
Cost effectiveness	Proposal includes ineligible expenses or does not have a complete budget.	Budget is complete but project is not cost effective.	Budget is complete and the project is cost effective, but there is no additional funding or in-kind support for the project.	Budget is complete, the project is cost effective, and the project leverages additional funding or in-kind support.		<u>3</u>
TOTAL:						<u>20</u>

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