

Anthropocene Classroom Challenge

Overview:

A new geological epoch—the Anthropocene—has been proposed by scientists to mark the fact that humanity has now become the primary driver of physical change on the planet. Our everyday activities are now permanently affecting the Earth’s natural processes more than all other natural forces combined — causing unprecedented changes and unforeseen outcomes. Many students are unaware that everything they do places a demand on nature, from the food they consume to the clothing they buy. **The primary objective of this challenge is to deepen student understanding of human-environment interactions at local, regional and global scales and inspire the next generation to take action against unsustainable everyday human practices.**

The Anthropocene Project, which is spearheaded by artists Nicholas de Pencier, Edward Burtynsky and Jennifer Baichwal, has had great success in helping audiences understand the intricacies of the Anthropocene through film installations, books, large-scale high-resolution murals enhanced by film extensions, 360-degree virtual reality films and augmented reality installations. **Thus, the second objective of this challenge is to give students the opportunity to explore creative storytelling through these various forms of media and share their stories about Earth and humanity’s role within nature with the rest of Canada and the world.**

Eligibility

Teachers who participate in this Challenge must currently be teaching at a grade 4 to 12 level in a Canadian school.

Students must be from a Canadian school and in grades 7 - 12 (école secondaire in Quebec).

A “classroom” is a group of three or more students from the same school instructed by a teacher certified in the Canadian Province or Territory in which the school is located, or a group of three or more students instructed by the same individual and following a curriculum approved by the Canadian province or territory in which the students reside (this includes public, private, separate, charter or home schools).

Teachers and students cannot enter the contest if they work for, or have immediate family who works for, The Royal Canadian Geographical Society, Canadian Geographic, The Anthropocene Project, Mercury Films or the Edward Burtynsky Studio.

Deadline

The Challenge closes on May 6, 2022, at 11:59 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

Requirements

Teachers will submit a mini Anthropocene project developed by their students.

Their submission must be based on original work and should investigate the human influence on the state, dynamic and future of the Earth using a combination of scientific research and art, writing, film, virtual reality and/or augmented reality. It will be up to each teacher and their students to decide the format, theme and content of their submission. For example, classrooms may choose to produce a documentary of an ongoing issue in their community, a photo essay showcasing everyday human-environment interactions, a series of art installations designed to transform the school cafeteria or the local park, or a website showcasing their own photography.

Other examples include:

- Digital art
- Free/Street art
- Portraits
- Magazines
- Mixed media
- Sculptures
- Posters
- Contemporary art
- Performance art
- Creative writing
- Augmented reality
- Virtual reality
- Silent film
- Experimental and scripted film
- Interpretive dance

Each submission will require a 500 word (maximum) description detailing the vision behind the project and the main message to the audience. The following headers can be used to structure this document:

- Project background
- Project objectives
- Research methods
- Lessons learned
- Take home message

Note: If students' faces are shown in videos or photographs, teachers must get parental consent prior to submission (Can Geo Edu will supply a consent form). Teachers will be required to collect written consent forms and may be asked to submit these forms to the RCGS.

How to enter

Complete the Anthropocene Classroom Challenge Entry Form by filling in all of the required information and submitting it on the Anthropocene Classroom Challenge website.

Upload your submission to the Anthropocene website by Friday, May 6, 2022. All submissions must be done through the program website. If classrooms choose to do a project that incorporates physical elements, they can submit photos or a video of the final product.

Upload a 500 word description of the project detailing the vision behind the project and the main message to the audience.

Only one entry per teacher, per class.

Judging

A panel of judges consisting of staff from The Royal Canadian Geographical Society, Canadian Geographic, The Anthropocene Project and The Royal Bank of Canada will be responsible for judging all contest submissions.

Winners will be selected according to the following:

- Demonstration of learning: how the project connects back to the concepts of the Anthropocene
- Communication and presentation: effectiveness in telling a story and the quality of the final product
- Originality, creativity and artistic merit

Can Geo Edu supply a judging rubric to teachers and judges.

Prizes

Winners will be announced the week of June 5, 2022, at 11:00 a.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

A total of ten (10) winners will be selected, consisting of 5 top winners and 5 honourable mentions. These ten submissions will be showcased during a special event for the public at a location to be determined. The top ten submissions will also be showcased either on the websites, social media or in-house screens of the Challenge partners.

The grand prize: The overall winning submission will receive \$ 4,000, an original Edward Burtynsky print, a trilogy of films on Blu Ray or DVD (including *Manufactured Landscapes*, *Watermark* and *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch*), a hardcover version of the book *Anthropocene*, and merchandise from Canadian Geographic. All prizes will be awarded to the school of the winning classroom.

Second place: The second place runner up will receive \$ 3,000, a trilogy of films on Blu Ray or DVD (including *Manufactured Landscapes*, *Watermark* and *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch*), a hardcover version of the book *Anthropocene*, and merchandise from Canadian Geographic. All prizes will be awarded to the school of the winning classroom.

Third place: The third place runner up will receive \$ 2,000, a trilogy of films on Blu Ray or DVD (including *Manufactured Landscapes*, *Watermark* and *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch*), a hardcover version of the book *Anthropocene*, and merchandise from Canadian Geographic. All prizes will be awarded to the school of the winning classroom.

Fourth place: The fourth place runner up will receive \$ 1,000, a trilogy of films on Blu Ray or DVD (including *Manufactured Landscapes*, *Watermark* and *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch*), a hardcover version of the book *Anthropocene*, and merchandise from Canadian Geographic. All prizes will be awarded to the school of the winning classroom.

Fifth place: The fifth place runner up will receive \$ 500, a trilogy of films on Blu Ray or DVD (including *Manufactured Landscapes*, *Watermark* and *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch*), a hardcover version of the book *Anthropocene*, and merchandise from Canadian Geographic. All prizes will be awarded to the school of the winning classroom.

The remaining five honourable mentions will receive a prize pack that contains the following items: a Canadian Geographic classroom gift bag, a one-year subscription to Canadian Geographic magazine per winning class, and a classroom set of augmented reality coasters.



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Project legacies

After the winners are selected, all winning submissions will be showcased on the Anthropocene Classroom Challenge website.