

SLINGSHOT CHALLENGE 2025



SEVEN WAYS
to make your
NEXT Slingshot
Challenge submission
even better than
your first!

Did you enter a previous Slingshot Challenge? You can enter again in 2025 with a video that 1) better highlights your **original idea**, 2) updates us on your **project progress**, or 3) proposes a **brand new solution**. Here are seven ways to help your new-and-improved Slingshot Challenge project shine!

Get started on your next Slingshot Challenge submission by logging in to your Videos for Change account at [Slingshot.videosforchange.org](https://slingshot.videosforchange.org). Submit your one-minute video by **February 7, 2025**, for a chance to receive up to \$10,000 in funding.

1 Keep putting in the work

Your solution idea will grow as you continue to work on it and give you a new and even more incredible story to tell.

2 Sharpen Your Focus

Was your previous solution idea broad and global? Choose one specific, local action you can take close to your home or school and do it.

3 Collaborate

Think about other people who can help you with your project. What roles can they play? Friends, family, mentors and community organizations have the skills and resources to make your dreams into a reality.

4 Get Inspired

Learn more about the work of [National Geographic Explorers](#) who have projects like yours. How do they take action to make a change? How can you?

5 Show Your Impact

Now that you have been working on your idea, you have more to show. Take pictures, conduct interviews, or collect data to show how you are making a difference.

6 Innovate

Innovators are constantly tweaking their ideas based on successes and challenges. How can your previous idea get even better? What does your project look like leveled up? Check out the [Selection Criteria Explained](#) and choose one or two areas that you can focus on for improvement this year. You can sign up for a [Redesign Lab session](#) to get one-on-one feedback on your previous solution idea.

7 Turbocharge Your Storytelling

Use the planning documents in the Participant Toolkit to outline a video that has a strong flow and shows the power of your idea.

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Selection Criteria Explained

Want to know what the Slingshot Challenge selection panelists are looking for when they review videos? The panelists give each video a rating in each of the seven [Selection Criteria](#). To help you max-out your rating, we have given you some video examples for each category to spark your own ideas and inspiration. **Just think of this as your Slingshot Challenge cheat-code.**





ISSUE COMMUNICATED EFFECTIVELY

Link clear global descriptions of the problem with **specific and easy-to-imagine** local examples of the problem, like [No Food Left Behind](#). They saw a national issue, but investigated how it impacted their local community.

Tell the story of your discovery of the problem as a way to share important statistics like [Reducing Academic Paper Consumption](#). In this video, the creator uses playful storytelling to introduce her research. She also translates her data into a format people can understand when she says schools use “250 trees worth of paper each year” rather than saying “2,012.031 pages.”

Be specific about the **exact problem you want to solve**. The [Starting a Pure Day with PureDae](#) team focused on air pollution caused by cars stopped in traffic jams at specific high-traffic intersections in their home city. In the [Trash Cup Challenge](#), students use photography and video to show the problem of plastic waste in the local river.



EMOTIONAL IMPACT

Introduce the audience to **you and your community** through your words and images. Watch how [Los Angeles Climate](#) introduces the videomaker and his community with a personal voice and casual video of the community in the environment.



Use a story that **shows, not just tells**, the impact of your issue on you and your community. The [Trovador-Tree Planting Robot](#) whisks the audience away on a bike ride through Portugal’s fire-scarred landscapes, vividly narrating the toll on its lush greenery. Then, the video uses a real interview to drive the message home, all eliciting an emotional response from the audience.



UNIQUE/CREATIVE

Can you make it easy for **new groups of people** to help solve local problems? The [Urban Pollinators](#) team invited local gardeners to rethink the way their green spaces could support the environment. The [Dishes on Demand](#) team found ways to make school sports teams partners in eliminating disposable plasticware.



Some of the most creative solutions are **applications** that help people make green decisions, like [Reducing Academic Paper Consumption](#). Do you think people would live greener lives if only they had a tool to help them? Make an app for that!

Think about **new ways to make people care** and want to act. In [Escuchando el Humedal](#), the challenge participant records the sounds of the wetlands to share with his community.

EFFECTIVE USE OF VIDEO MAKING TECHNIQUES

Show the audience **real people in real places**. [Take Action for Endangered Species](#) uses photographs and videos collected from the past to tell the story, while [Trovador-Tree Planting Robot](#) uses live videos shot on location and an interview to bring the audience into the setting.

Use **live video and “actors” to show your story**. In [Dispensing Plastics](#), the team used live shots of students at school, mixed with graphics to illustrate the problem.

Mix up your **video shot types to create visual drama**. The panning and zooming used in [Wildlife Superheroes](#) and [Escuchando el Humedal](#) create a sense of movement and make the viewer feel like they are walking through the same unique locations as the videomaker. See the [Participant Toolkit](#) for more details on shot types.





CLEAR, ACHIEVABLE CALL TO ACTION

Include a **detailed description** of your solution and the **action people can take**. In [Friendly Neighborhood Composters](#), the videomaker outlines her hyper-local solution and shows how neighbors can use a QR code to take action.

Think about **what each person can do**, even if it is unusual. In [Blue crab](#), the team provides recipes that encourage people in Italy to catch, kill, and eat a delicious, but threatening, invasive species.

EXPLORER CONNECTION

Learn more from stories of impact about [National Geographic Explorers](#) or search the [Explorer Directory](#). **Find an Explorer whose project inspires you** and dig a little deeper by watching videos of presentations or exploring their website. You may get great ideas like [Fight Floods, Transform Cities](#) and [Firemapper: Collecting Wildfire Data](#) or find an inspirational quote like [Mazah: Food Waste Fighting App](#).



Remember, there are **special awards** for drawing connections to National Geographic Explorers.

RECYCLER: WHERE WE CREATE LIFE



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Be clear and specific about how the problem is **impacting your community** with examples. Also show how your proposed actions will make a difference in the community. [RECYCLER: Where we create life](#) uses on-site footage to show how humans have destroyed and repaired the land in the videomakers own home region.

Show **who will need to act** and how you will work with them to take action. [Friendly Neighborhood Composters](#) shows how the videomaker helps her neighbors make their trash a little greener.

Work with an **existing group** that is already **helping your community**. The [Wildlife Superheroes](#) video shows how their team is working with a local science center to reach young learners with exciting technology. The [Trash Cup Challenge](#) team connected canoeing clubs with wildlife groups to protect the river they all love. These groups brought new ideas and energy to existing organizations to spark change.