

President's Environmental Youth Award

Today's Youth Protecting Tomorrow's Environment



Section 1: Program History

The President's Environmental Youth Awards (PEYA) recognizes outstanding environmental stewardship projects developed by K-12 youth. PEYA promotes awareness of our nation's natural resources and encourages positive community involvement. Each year the PEYA program honors a wide variety of projects created by young students, school classes and clubs, youth camps, and youth organizations to promote environmental awareness.

Past projects have achieved demonstrated impact in schools and communities - including building nature trails, starting recycling programs, restoring native habitats, and installing renewable energy projects. To read about past award-winning projects, visit:

<https://www.epa.gov/education/presidents-environmental-youth-award-peya-winners>

Section 2: How the Program Works

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has ten regional offices across the country. Each regional office will be responsible for selecting up to one winner in each age group, based on the evaluation criteria in Section 6. Applicants are welcome to include youth across multiple grade levels; however, the application will be categorized based on the applicant with the highest-grade level. For example, if one applicant group consists of two 4th graders, one 3rd grader and one 6th grader, the application will be evaluated in the Grade 6-12 category.

Each award-winning project will receive a Presidential plaque. The sponsors of all qualified, non-winning applicants will receive EPA acknowledgement of the applicant's efforts to protect human health and the environment.

Section 3: Program Eligibility

- Project is completed while the applicant(s) is in kindergarten through 12th grade.
- Applicant(s) is a citizen of the United States or its territories or has been lawfully admitted for permanent residency. Applicant also resides in a U.S. state, territory or tribal land.
- Project is sponsored by at least one adult 21 years of age or older.
- Project started during the 2023 calendar year and had activity during the 2023 calendar year. A project initiated prior to 2023 is also eligible for consideration as long as the project had activity during the 2023 calendar year.
- Project includes an environmental stewardship component as defined in Section 6 below.

Section 4: Project Sponsors

Each applicant or group of applicants applying for PEYA must be represented by at least one sponsor who is a teacher or other education professional. An applicant may also have a co-sponsor, who is typically another teacher or education professional or someone in the community or a subject matter expert who has provided guidance on the project. For home-schooled applicants with no interaction with formal educators or youth development clubs, the teacher sponsor can be a parent. All sponsors/co-sponsors must be adults at least 21 years of age.

Typically, sponsors/co-sponsors are individuals who have offered advice and guidance throughout the project to:

- support the student(s) in developing a well-thought-out project,
- aid the student(s) in project implementation, and
- foster work between other groups and individuals in the community and the student(s).

Sponsors/co-sponsors:

- certify that the project was completed by all student(s) by signing and dating page A-3 below,
- gather forms and other application materials and submit the application to EPA, and
- serve as the primary point of contact for EPA correspondence regarding the application.

For K-5 applicants, sponsors/co-sponsors also typically complete the application form and assist in preparing the project detailed description and any supporting information.

Questions about teacher or sponsor/co-sponsor's role should be directed to PEYA@epa.gov.

Section 5: How to Apply

Each applicant or team of applicants applying for PEYA must be represented by at least one sponsor (See Section 4: Project Sponsors above) who submits the application to EPA and serves as EPA's point of contact for the application. The application form and all application materials should be typed, but there are no defined font or spacing requirements as long as materials are legible.

This form as well as permission slips and media release forms can be viewed or downloaded at:

<https://www.epa.gov/education/presidents-environmental-youth-award-peya-application>

Steps to Apply

1. **CONFIRM ELIGIBILITY:** Applicant sponsor/co-sponsor confirms that applicants meet all eligibility requirements defined by completing the Eligibility Self-Screen Checklist on page 6 below.
2. **COMPLETE APPLICATION FORM:** Applicant sponsor/co-sponsor completes pages A-1 to A-3 of the PEYA application form below.
3. **SUPPORT APPLICANTS TO PREPARE INFORMATION:** Applicant sponsor/co-sponsor supports grade 6-12 applicants by gathering project information written by the applicants. Applicant sponsor/co-sponsor supports grade K-5 applicants by helping the applicants to write and gather project information.

Excess pages submitted beyond the limits stated below will not be considered. Carefully consider inclusion of web links that clearly support the project description and/or supplementary information in conveying how the project achieved applicable review criteria as reviewers will not click on more than 5-6 web links per application.

- a) **PROJECT SUMMARY:** The Project Summary, up to 300 words, is intended to describe the project's purpose and goals and identify the results achieved. Space for the Project Summary is provided on page A-3 of the application form.
 - b) **DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Grade 6-12 applicants are required, and grade K-5 applicants are encouraged to provide a more detailed description of the project preferably organized by each of the evaluation criteria in Section 6: How Applicants are Judged. The Project Description must be no more than 5 pages or 5 slides.
 - c) **SUPPORTING MATERIALS:** Applicants may submit up to 5 additional pages of optional supporting materials; for example, photographs, newspaper articles, or other information to provide a more comprehensive view of the project. Accompanying videos may be submitted, although applicants must provide a web link to where the videos can be viewed online. Please **DO NOT** send video files by email; video files sent by email will not be reviewed.
4. **SIGN AND DATE APPLICATION:** Sponsor/co-sponsor must sign and date page A-3 below. Signatures must be either electronic or ink-on-paper for applications submitted by mail; typing in the sponsor's name does not fulfill the application requirements. Page A-3 can be submitted as a separate file if needed.
 5. **COLLECT PARENT-SIGNED FORMS:** Sponsor/co-sponsor collects signed and dated permission slips and media release forms from each applicant's parent/guardian. Contact PEYA@epa.gov if applicant is age 18 or older at time of submission.
 6. **COMPLETE THE PRE-SUBMISSION CHECKLIST:** Sponsor/co-sponsor completes the pre-submission checklist below.
 7. **SUBMIT THE APPLICATION BY THE DEADLINE:** Sponsor/co-sponsor send all application materials so that they are received by **January 15, 2024**. See instructions below for submitting an application.

Consent for PEYA Student Works form and PEYA Permission Slip

- Two forms found at the end of this application, the Consent for PEYA Student Works form and PEYA Permission Slip, must be signed by the parents or legal guardian of each applicant and included with the application materials submitted unless the student is 18 years of age or older at the time of application.
- Please contact us as PEYA@epa.gov to obtain an alternate PEYA Student Works form that is signed by students age 18 years of age or older at the time of application.
- Prior to signing the PEYA Permission Slip, parents and guardians should review EPA's privacy policy found at:
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2013-11/documents/2182g.pdf>

Application Submission

- To protect the online privacy of student applicants, application materials must be submitted by applicant sponsors/co-sponsors.
- Applicant sponsors/co-sponsors are strongly encouraged to submit all application materials electronically (email). If you plan to mail some or all of your application materials, please contact us at PEYA@epa.gov so that we can ensure receipt.
- Email completed application materials to PEYA@epa.gov by **7:59 p.m. ET on January 15, 2024**. Applicants are encouraged to provide application materials via a single email, with attachments in PDF, MS Word or PowerPoint, or JPEG. Please contact us if trying to send ZIP files or file attachments over 20MB. Note also that we cannot accept links to file share drives.
- Mailed applications **must be received by January 15, 2024**, at the address below to be eligible for consideration:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Environmental Education
ATTN: President's Environmental Youth Award Program
William Jefferson Clinton North, Room 1426
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, MC 1704-A
Washington, DC 20460

- A confirmation email is sent upon receipt of the application. Ongoing correspondence regarding the application is with the sponsor/co-sponsor(s) named in the application.

Frequently Asked Questions

A list of frequently asked questions can be found at:

<https://www.epa.gov/education/presidents-environmental-youth-award#questions>

Additional questions should be directed to PEYA@epa.gov.

Section 6: How Applications Are Judged

Applications determined eligible and complete are evaluated by a regional awards panel. The panel members review and evaluate each application based on the criteria below. There are separate evaluation criteria for K-5 and 6-12 applications. A maximum of 100 points can be awarded to each application.

Evaluation Criteria K-5 (100 points)

Youth Initiative (15 points)

How did the applicant(s) come up with the idea for the project? To what extent does the applicant(s) take charge of the project?

Environmental Stewardship and Impact (30 points)*

How did the project address environmental stewardship as defined below? How did the applicant(s) identify the environmental need for this project? How did the project positively affect the environment? Did the applicant(s) complete the project?

Achieving Competition Goals (15 points)

Winning projects may address environmental stewardship in a variety of areas. How did the project specifically address environmental stewardship in one or more of the focus areas of the competition, which are:

- climate change;
- environmental justice;
- water infrastructure;
- lead in drinking water;
- food waste in school cafeterias;
- agricultural practices;
- ocean litter;
- school gardens;
- recycling; and
- using STEM in environmental education.

If the project did not address one or more of the above competition focus areas, how did the project address environmental stewardship related to one or more other areas?

Community Involvement (15 points)

To what extent did the project involve others in the school or community? Please describe the community.

Project Creativity and/or Innovation (15 points)

What creative and/or innovative approach(es) did the applicant(s) use for the project?

Project Approach (10 points)

To what extent does the application tell a complete story about the project? Did the applicant(s) have a thought-out approach to solving the problem?

***Definition:** “Environmental Stewardship” is voluntary commitment, behavior, and action that results in environmental protection or improvement, or conservation of our natural resources. Stewardship refers to an acceptance of personal responsibility for actions to improve environmental quality and to achieve conservation outcomes. Stewardship involves lifestyles and business practices, initiatives and actions that enhance the state of the environment and natural resources. Some examples are: living or conducting business in such a way as to minimize or eliminate pollution at its source; using natural resources efficiently; decreasing the use of hazardous chemicals; recycling wastes effectively; and conserving or restoring soil, forests, prairies, wetlands, rivers, and parks. Stewardship can be practiced by individuals, groups, schools, organizations, companies, communities, and state and local governments.

Evaluation Criteria 6-12 (100 points)

Youth Initiative (15 points)

To what extent was the project designed, coordinated and implemented due to applicant(s) initiative? How was the project created and completed by the applicant(s)? The driving force for the project must be the applicant(s), not the sponsor/co-sponsor.

Environmental Need and Appropriateness (20 points)

To what extent was there a clear environmental need for the project? How appropriate was the project for the community in which it was performed?

Environmental Stewardship and Impact (15 points)*

How did the project address environmental stewardship as defined below? How did the project positively affect the community? Were there any long-term environmental benefits or outcomes of the project? Did applicant(s) complete the project?

Achieving Competition Goals (15 points)

Winning projects may address environmental stewardship in a variety of areas. How did the project specifically address environmental stewardship in one or more of the focus areas of the competition, which are:

- climate change;
- environmental justice;
- water infrastructure;
- lead in drinking water;
- food waste in school cafeterias;
- agricultural practices;
- ocean litter;
- school gardens;
- recycling; and
- using STEM in environmental education.

If the project did not address one or more of the above competition focus areas, how did the project address environmental stewardship related to one or more other areas?

Community Involvement (15 points)

To what extent did the project positively involve others in the community? Please describe the community. What community resources, expertise, leadership, or publicity did the applicant(s) use?

Project Creativity and Innovation (10 points)

How did the applicant(s) use innovative approaches to achieve positive results?

Soundness of Approach, Rationale, and Scientific Design (10 points)

Was the approach to the problem clear? Did the applicant(s) have a sound justification for choosing that approach? If so, what is that justification?

***Definition:** “Environmental Stewardship” is voluntary commitment, behavior, and action that results in environmental protection or improvement, or conservation of our natural resources. Stewardship refers to an acceptance of personal responsibility for actions to improve environmental quality and to achieve conservation outcomes. Stewardship involves lifestyles and business practices, initiatives and actions that enhance the state of the environment and natural resources. Some examples are: living or conducting business in such a way as to minimize or eliminate pollution at its source; using natural resources efficiently; decreasing the use of hazardous chemicals; recycling wastes effectively; and conserving or restoring soil, forests, prairies, wetlands, rivers, and parks. Stewardship can be practiced by individuals, groups, schools, organizations, companies, communities, and state and local governments.

Eligibility Self-Screen Checklist

*Sponsors/Co-Sponsors: Before starting the PEYA Application on the following page, please complete the checklist below to confirm that the applicant(s) and project meet the eligibility requirements of the PEYA program as defined in **Section 3: Program Eligibility**.*

Yes **No**

Project was completed while the applicant(s) was in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Applicant(s) is a citizen of the United States or its territories or has been lawfully admitted for permanent residency. Applicant(s) also resides in a U.S. state, territory, or tribal land.¹

Project is sponsored by at least one adult 21 years of age or older.

Project started during the 2023 calendar year and had activity during the 2023 calendar year. As long as a project had activity during the 2023 calendar year, a project initiated prior to 2023 is also eligible for consideration.

Project includes an environmental stewardship component as defined in **Section 6: How Applications are Judged**.

¹The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services defines lawful permanent residency as any person not a citizen of the United States who is residing in the United States under legally recognized and lawfully recorded permanent residence as an immigrant, also known as “Permanent Resident Alien,” “Resident Alien Permit Holder,” and “Green Card Holder.”

OMB Control No. 2090-0031

The public reporting and record-keeping burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5.6 hours per response. Send comments on the Agency's need for this information, the accuracy of the provided burden estimates, and any suggested methods for minimizing respondent burden, included through the use of automated collection techniques to the Director, Collection Strategies Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2822T), 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20460. Include the OMB control number in any correspondence. Do not send the completed PEYA application forms to this address.

Individual Application

Full Name	
Project Title	
Project Location: (project city, state/territory, ZIP code and school name)	
Project Start Date	
Project End Date (if applicable)	

OR

Team Application

Team Name	
Project Title	
Project Location: (project city, state/territory, ZIP code and school name)	
Total Number of Applicants	
Project Start Date	
Project End Date (if applicable)	

Please check the box below for the applicable grade level category:

- K-5 6-12

Did the project receive press coverage? If yes, please attach press clippings.

- Yes No

Applicant Grade Level(s):

Complete the table below with information for each of the applicant(s). Attach additional sheet if needed. Each applicant under 18 at time of application must have a signed Consent for PEYA Student Works form and a signed PEYA Permission Slip from their parent or guardian. Please contact us at PEYA@epa.gov for alternate forms signed by students age 18 or older at time of application.

Full Name (to be printed on awards, certificates and program materials)	Grade

Full Name	Grade

Teacher/Primary Sponsor

Teachers provide work associated information ONLY and provide full address for mailing awards and certificates. For home-schooled applicants with no interaction with formal educators or youth development clubs, the teacher-sponsor can be a parent and provide work or personal contact information. The teacher / primary sponsor and co-sponsor (if applicable) must sign and date page A-3 of the application.

Full Name	
School Name/Street Address/ City/State or Territory/ZIP:	
Relationship to Applicant(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor <input type="checkbox"/> Co-sponsor
Work Phone Number	
Work Email	

Sponsor/Co-sponsor (if applicable)

Full Name	
Relationship to Applicant(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor <input type="checkbox"/> Co-sponsor
Phone Number	
Email	

Description of the Project

Please type a brief project summary (maximum 300 words) of the project in the space provided below describing the project's purpose and goals and identifying the results achieved. Please no hand-written project summaries.

A more detailed description of the project can be included separately (maximum 5 typed pages or 5 slides); it is strongly recommended to organize the detailed description according to the applicable review criteria. You may also include up to 5 additional pages of supporting information such as project photographs, press clippings, sample materials, links to project videos, etc.. Please do not submit hand-written project descriptions.

Project Environmental Focus Area(s)

Environmental focus area(s) addressed by the project. Check one or more as appropriate.

Climate Change
Environmental Justice
Water Infrastructure
Lead in Drinking Water
Agricultural Practices

Food Waste in School Cafeterias
Ocean Litter
School Gardens
Recycling
STEM in Environmental Education

Other Focus Area(s):

By signing below, the sponsor/co-sponsor(s) certify that the applicant(s) has performed this project, the applicant(s) and project is eligible, and that the information contained in this application is accurate to the best of their knowledge. If needed, please refer to these [instructions for e-signing a PDF in Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).

Teacher Signature

Date: _____

Sponsor / Co-sponsor Signature

Date: _____

Pre-Submission Checklist

Sponsors/Co-Sponsor(s): Please carefully review the pre-submission checklist below to ensure that all requirements have been met and to confirm that the application package is complete. Please note that application materials submitted after the competition close date of January 11, 2023, at 7:59PM ET will not be considered.

Yes No N/A

Eligibility Self-Screen Checklist was completed by sponsor or co-sponsor and applicant was deemed eligible.

Application form and attachments are typed, not handwritten. Please contact PEYA@epa.gov if assistance is needed with the application materials.

The full name of each student applicant is listed along with respective grade level(s). The name(s) reflect how the student prefers to be referred to on a certificate, plaque, and/or at a program ceremony. Names are accurate and do not omit any team members to be acknowledged.

At least one sponsor is an teacher or education professional. For home-school applicants who have no interaction with formal educators or youth development clubs, the sponsor can be a parent. Please see **Section 4: Sponsors** for more details regarding the role of project sponsors.

Applicant(s) have identified the current competition environmental focus area(s) addressed by their project. Note: Projects that do not clearly identify how their project addressed a current environmental focus area of the competition will generally receive fewer points for the review criteria *Achieving Project Goals*.

Grade 6-12 applicants have written a detailed description of the project. The detailed description does not exceed 5 pages or 5 slides. Applicants are strongly recommended to organize the detailed description by the application review criteria defined in **Section 6: How Applications are Judged**.

Grade K-5 applicants have written, with the assistance of the sponsor/co-sponsor(s), a description of the project. The detailed description does not exceed 5 pages or 5 slides. Applicants are strongly recommended to organize the detailed description by the application review criteria defined in **Section 6: How Applications are Judged**.

The detailed project description and supplementary information combined, including photographs, newspaper articles, or other information about the project, does not exceed 10 pages in length.

All acronyms (for clubs, organizations, and school names) are spelled out at least once in the application.

The primary sponsor has signed and dated the application and provided a valid mailing address.

For students under the age of 18 at the time of application: Parent or guardian has signed and dated both the Consent for PEYA Student Works form and PEYA Permission Slip.

For students aged 18 years or older at the time of application: Student has signed and dated the EPA alternate media release form. Please contact PEYA@epa.gov to obtain a copy of this form.

For applications submitted by email: All file names indicate the content of the file (eligibility self-screen checklist, application form, detailed description, supplementary information, permission slip, media release, signature page, combined files, and pre-submission checklist) and project name. Parent-signed forms can include student first names or student initials in file name. The files must be saved as a PDF, MS Word, MS PowerPoint, or JPEG. Files may not be transmitted using private share drives (for example, Google Drive).

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

Consent for PEYA Student Works

THE PARENT / LEGAL GUARDIAN

Printed Full Name (hereinafter referred to as "the Parent and/or Legal Guardian")

THE CHILD

Printed Full Name (hereinafter referred to as "my Child")

As the Parent and/or Legal Guardian of the above-named child, I hereby grant a non-exclusive, no-cost, worldwide, transferable, irrevocable license in all media and languages now or hereafter known to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) authorizing EPA and others acting on its behalf to publish, use, duplicate, disclose, exhibit, display, modify or edit the following work or works, as listed below by title and/or description, which have been created by my Child, including any related audio recordings, videos, transcriptions, and presentation materials ("the Work" or "Works"):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I understand and agree that the Work or Works may be edited and used in whole or in part for EPA's purposes and/or the purposes of those acting on EPA's behalf, including for broadcast, publication, promotion, and publicity, as well as posting online to the worldwide web and for inclusion within the public access file created for EPA's President's Environmental Education Youth Award (PEYA) program.

I represent and warrant that I am authorized to provide the license or licenses granted herein, and that (1) the Work or Works are original to the above-named Child, and do not contain any material that would violate the copyrights, trademarks, or any other property rights of others, or (2) that I have obtained sufficient rights with respect to any third party materials included in the Work or Works to provide the license or licenses herein.

Signature (Parent / Guardian)

Date

If needed, please refer to these [instructions for e-signing a PDF in Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

PEYA Permission Slip

Dear Parent / Guardian:

Your child is applying to participate in the President's Environmental Education Youth Award (PEYA) program. Because this U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) program includes features that require us to collect personal information from your child, we are contacting you to obtain your consent so that your child may participate in the program, as described below.

Please read EPA's privacy policy, which can be found at (<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2013-11/documents/2182g.pdf>) and attached to this form. If this privacy policy and the terms represented below are acceptable to you, please provide your consent by signing this form. Signed forms should be returned to the teacher or project sponsor / co-sponsor helping to complete your child's PEYA application.

The PEYA program requires parental/legal guardian consent from all minors under the age of 18 seeking to participate in the program. This form also satisfies requirements of the Children's Online Privacy Protect Act (COPPA), under which the owners of certain types of websites and online services must obtain "verifiable parental consent" before collecting, using or disclosing personal information from children under the age of 13.

With your signature below, you hereby attest to the following:

1. I am 18 years of age or older and the parent/legal guardian of _____ (my Child).
2. I have read the EPA privacy policy, linked above, and consent to my Child's participation in the PEYA program.
3. In connection with the PEYA program, I also consent to EPA's disclosure of my Child's first and last name, the name of their school (city and state), the name of their project and their grade level.
4. I further consent to the potential disclosure of this information on EPA's social media and/or webpages to promote my child's environmental project. I understand that EPA employees administrating the PEYA program will potentially use this information to promote participating students, such as my Child, and their environmental projects through national and regional press releases, EPA-produced videos, EPA's official website, printed PEYA program awards booklets, and EPA social media pages displayed on online platforms such as Facebook, Youtube, and Twitter.
5. I understand that EPA employees may also use my Child's personal information to connect my Child to other children participating in the program through an online community featuring past PEYA winners (e.g., via Facebook groups, LinkedIn).
6. I understand that EPA videotapes and photographs the PEYA ceremony. EPA intends the video and photographs to be used for informational, educational, and/or public relations purposes both within the EPA and by the general public. I understand the video and photographs from the ceremony may feature my Child's image and/or voice and may appear online as soon as 30 minutes after the taping. I understand the video and/or photographs will remain online indefinitely and may subsequently appear in EPA hard copy publications or other non-EPA publications that EPA deems appropriate to help promote or publicize the event or purpose for which the video, photo(s) and/or voice recording was prepared.
7. I authorize disclosure and release of the video, photo(s) and/or voice recording to EPA.
8. I have read and understand the foregoing and I consent to the use of my Child's video, photo(s) and/or voice recording as specified for the above-described purpose(s). I further understand that no royalty, fee or other compensation of any character shall become payable to me or my custodian by EPA for such use. I understand that consent to use my Child's video, photo(s) and/or voice recording is voluntary.
9. In addition, I waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product, including written or electronic copy, wherein mine or that of my Child's video likeness appears.
10. I hereby hold harmless and release and forever discharge the United States and EPA from all claims, demands, and causes of action which I and/or my Child, heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other persons acting on my behalf or on behalf of my estate or that of my custodian have or may have by reason of this authorization.
11. As the legal guardian/custodian of my Child, I am competent to contract in my own name and/or in the name of my Child. I have read this release before signing below and I fully understand the contents, meaning, and impact of this release.

Parent / Guardian Signature

Parent / Guardian Printed Full Name

Date