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About the Challenge

What is the Climate Mayors Stories of Impact Challenge?

The *Climate Mayors Stories of Impact Challenge* is a national competition among member cities, showcasing stories of bold, innovative local climate solutions. This challenge builds on Climate Mayors [Impact, Multiplied](#) campaign that highlights local solutions that scale across the US for national impact. The *Stories of Impact Challenge* asks mayors to submit short, 1-2 minute videos highlighting a local project in one of two categories: ⚡ **Energy Affordability** or 🌱 **Nature-based Solutions**.

Who is eligible to participate?

Participation is open to all Climate Mayors member cities. The mayor must appear in the submitted video. Climate Mayors membership is free—if your city is not yet a member, you can learn more and join at climatemayors.org/join-us.

How many winners will there be?

Each category will be awarded 2 winners and 2 runner-ups for a total of 8 prize winners.

What are the prizes?

Each category will be awarded 2 winners and 2 runner-ups. Winners and runners-up in each category will receive in-kind funding for one of the following activities:

- Video production to expand on winning video highlighting their project
- Communications support to increase viewers of video content (boosted posts, influencers, paid advertisements)
- Social media graphics and communications support specific to the city's initiative
- Funding for local NGO supporting the city to implement the project

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- Paid digital promotion to put video content in front of new audiences

All prizes will be given in consultant services or direct grants from Climate Mayors totalling the awarded amount. The prize amount will not be directly given to the city as a cash price. In addition to prizes listed above, award winners will receive:

- Amplification through Climate Mayors social media channels, press release, newsletter as well as targeted media pitches in winners' local media markets and national outlets
- Video hosted on Climate Mayors website
- Announcement of winners at the Climate Mayors Leadership Forum in New York City on September 23rd
- Communications and social media guidance from the Climate Mayors team, including customizable graphics, language for winners to share in their communities (and specific ask as part of award responsibilities).

Are prizes paid as cash?

No. All prizes are awarded as in-kind support—delivered through consultant services or direct grants from Climate Mayors totaling the awarded amount. Prize funds are not given directly to the city as cash.

What are the two award categories?

⚡ Energy Affordability Award: This category includes projects that are addressing the intersection of climate action and energy affordability such as: rooftop solar or geothermal, EV-charging construction and local energy efficient programs and incentives.

🌱 Nature-based Solutions Awards: This category includes projects that are utilizing nature based solutions to address climate resilience such as: expanding access to green space and strengthening community resilience through nature, such as urban tree canopy programs, open space and greenway preservation, trail and pathway development, urban greening and land stewardship, or natural stormwater infrastructure.

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How do I submit a video once it's complete?

Please use our video submission form [here](#).

What information is required for submission?

The submission form will ask for: the project or initiative name; mayor name; city name; primary contact name, email, and phone; website and social media handles; a brief project summary (up to 150 words); award category selection; your video upload; and agreement to the Stories of Impact Terms and Conditions.

What are the submission dates?

Submissions open July 20, 2026 and close August 14, 2026. Winners will be announced at the Climate Mayors Leadership Forum in New York City on September 23, 2026.

How will submissions be evaluated?

A review panel of 5–8 members—representing diverse professional backgrounds, ages, and geographies—will score each submission on a 1–5 scale across four criteria:

1. Alignment with the submitted category
 2. Impact for families and communities (tangible benefits such as affordability, health, safety, jobs, or resilience)
 3. Equity and community reach (whether the initiative reaches families and neighborhoods that need it most)
 4. Storytelling quality (whether the video is compelling, clear, and inspires action)
- Each eligible submission will be reviewed by at least two panelists.

After scoring, the review panel will be asked to offer optional brief qualitative reflections for each submission including but now limited to the following questions and prompts:

- What is most compelling about the submission?
- What information is missing or unclear?
- Any questions or concerns about impact, feasibility, or scalability?

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The final awardees and honorable mentions are ultimately confirmed by the Climate Mayors team, with judge feedback driving the majority of the decision.

When will winners be announced?

Winners will be announced at the Climate Mayors Leadership Forum on **September 23rd, 2026**.

Video Requirements

Does the mayor need to appear in the video?

Yes. The mayor must appear in the video.

What are the video requirements?

Videos must be at least 1 minute and no more than 2 minutes in length, and must focus on one of the two award categories. The [Climate Mayors Direct-to-Camera Playbook](#) is available to members to access the tools guidance needed to produce compelling, consistent digital content. This hub contains a comprehensive template library including scripts, hooks, captions and calls to action giving members ready-to-use assets that streamline content creation from start to finish. Videos can be submitted [here](#).

Does it matter if the video is vertical (portrait) or landscape (horizontal?)

Yes, videos must be recorded in vertical (portrait) orientation. Any videos not following this format will not be considered.

Can the video be filmed on a phone?

Yes. In fact, most Direct-to-Camera videos are filmed on cell phones, making them easy to create. Please be sure to review the [Climate Mayors Direct-to-Camera Playbook](#) for all the tools, resources, and guidance needed to produce compelling, consistent digital content.

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Do we need video editing capabilities in order to produce a video for this competition?

Instagram and TikTok are the most commonly used apps to record and edit Direct-to-Camera videos. Be sure to check out the Production Standards section of The Direct-to-Camera Playbook at climatemayors.org/playbook for all the tools and resources needed to access all the tools, resources, and guidance needed to produce compelling, consistent digital content.

What is the Direct-to-Camera Playbook?

The Climate Mayors Direct to Camera Playbook is a microsite designed to equip cities with the tools and guidance needed to produce compelling, consistent digital content. This hub is a best-in-class resource to equip mayors and their teams to produce compelling, high-performing direct-to-camera social media content. The Playbook contains a comprehensive template library including scripts, hooks, captions, and calls to action giving members ready-to-use assets that streamline content creation from start to finish.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to participate?

All current Climate Mayors members are eligible to participate. You can check your membership status on our website at climatemayors.org/member-cities. If you believe there is a mistake please contact Rachel at rachel@climate-mayors.org for more information.

What if my city is not yet a Climate Mayors member?

Climate Mayors membership is free. Visit climatemayors.org/join-us to learn more about joining. Your city must be a member to be eligible to submit.

How do I know if my Mayor is a member?

You can search for your city on our website at climatemayors.org/member-cities. If you believe there is a mistake please contact Rachel at rachel@climate-mayors.org for more information.

Can I share a video that I have already published?

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Yes! We also welcome submissions from mayors who have already published a video, but the content needs to fit the award categories (Energy affordability or Nature-based solutions). Videos that do not meet this criteria will not be allowed into the competition.

Can I share my video after submitting?

Yes, once your video is submitted, you may share your video on any of your social channels. Climate Mayors will not repost any submitted videos until after the award winners are announced on **September 23rd**. By submitting a video, you grant Climate Mayors the right to share your video on our social channels, with the press, or any other platform. The team will communicate with you when and where to expect the videos to be shared.

What phase does a project need to be eligible for submission?

Projects or initiatives that are in progress or completed are eligible. Projects completed over 1 year ago will not be considered. Submissions for pledges or commitments that are not yet complete will not be considered.

How recent does a project need to be to qualify?

To be eligible, the project must have been completed or substantially implemented within the past year. Projects older than one year will not be considered.

Can a city submit more than one video?

Yes. Cities may submit one video per category, for a maximum of two total submissions.

Other

Will my video be shared, and if so, where?

Climate Mayors reserves the right to share your video on our social channels, with the press, or any other platform. The team will communicate with you when and where to expect the videos to be shared.

STORIES OF IMPACT



**IMPACT,
MULTIPLIED**

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Does Climate Mayors offer one on one support?

Climate Mayors will offer optional one-on-one technical support sessions. Cities can request a session by contacting Victor (victor@climate-mayors.org). Support will cover submission requirements, video tips, and use of the Direct-to-Camera Playbook.