



2025

Student Challenge Competition Guide

University-Age Division

Submit an Entry Here: bit.ly/G4C-Competition

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT:
April 18, 2025 @ 11:59PM PT**

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THE STUDENT CHALLENGE

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G4C Learn's flagship program, the G4C Student Challenge, is an international game design competition that invites youth to create social impact games as well as original artwork. The program develops coding and digital design skills, problem solving, collaboration, creativity, and other critical skills to prepare young people for jobs in the gaming and technology sectors. The Challenge is also a platform for amplifying student voices, empowering young people to imagine creative solutions to social problems, and to see themselves as engaged citizens and changemakers.

G4C LEARN

G4C Learn programs empower youth to become socially conscious digital storytellers, using game design to integrate STEAM skills with social emotional learning — including empathy, cooperation, communication, problem solving and systems thinking. G4C designs learning experiences that are safe and inclusive, encourage hands-on participation, and meet learners where they are with programming that is relevant to their skills, experience, and interests.



GETTING STARTED with the STUDENT CHALLENGE

Welcome to the Student Challenge! We have developed a checklist for submitting your design to the competition.

QUICK GUIDE TO SUBMITTING A GAME

1. Make sure you know the submission guidelines for the game you are submitting, by reading about it in this guide.
2. Go to the Competition portal: bit.ly/G4C-Competition
3. Log in or create an account
4. Click “My Submissions” on the left-hand toolbar to start a new submission form (or to view and edit one that you’ve already started).
5. Fill out the form!
6. Click “Save” to save your progress (if you want to finish the form later) OR click “Save and Finalize” to complete your entry form and enter your submission into the Student Challenge Competition before the April 18 deadline!
7. Keep an eye out on your email for any important announcements or potential follow-up about your submission.

DO YOU WANT FEEDBACK ON YOUR GAME?

We are excited to introduce a new Student Challenge feature: a platform that allows participants to playtest one another’s digital games. Share your game on The Studio by Endless Studios to participate in real play-testing and feedback for your own game as well as other submissions. Feel free to also explore learning resources including tools, tips, and techniques to help you in your game-making journey.

To access the The Studio by Endless Studios:

- Navigate to: <https://studio.endlessstudios.com/studio/>
- Use Access Code: **G4C2025University**
- For additional guidance using The Studio by Endless Studios, please navigate to [this help page](#).

IF YOU ARE AN EDUCATOR

Join the Student Challenge mailing list for access to resources and important announcements to support your students.

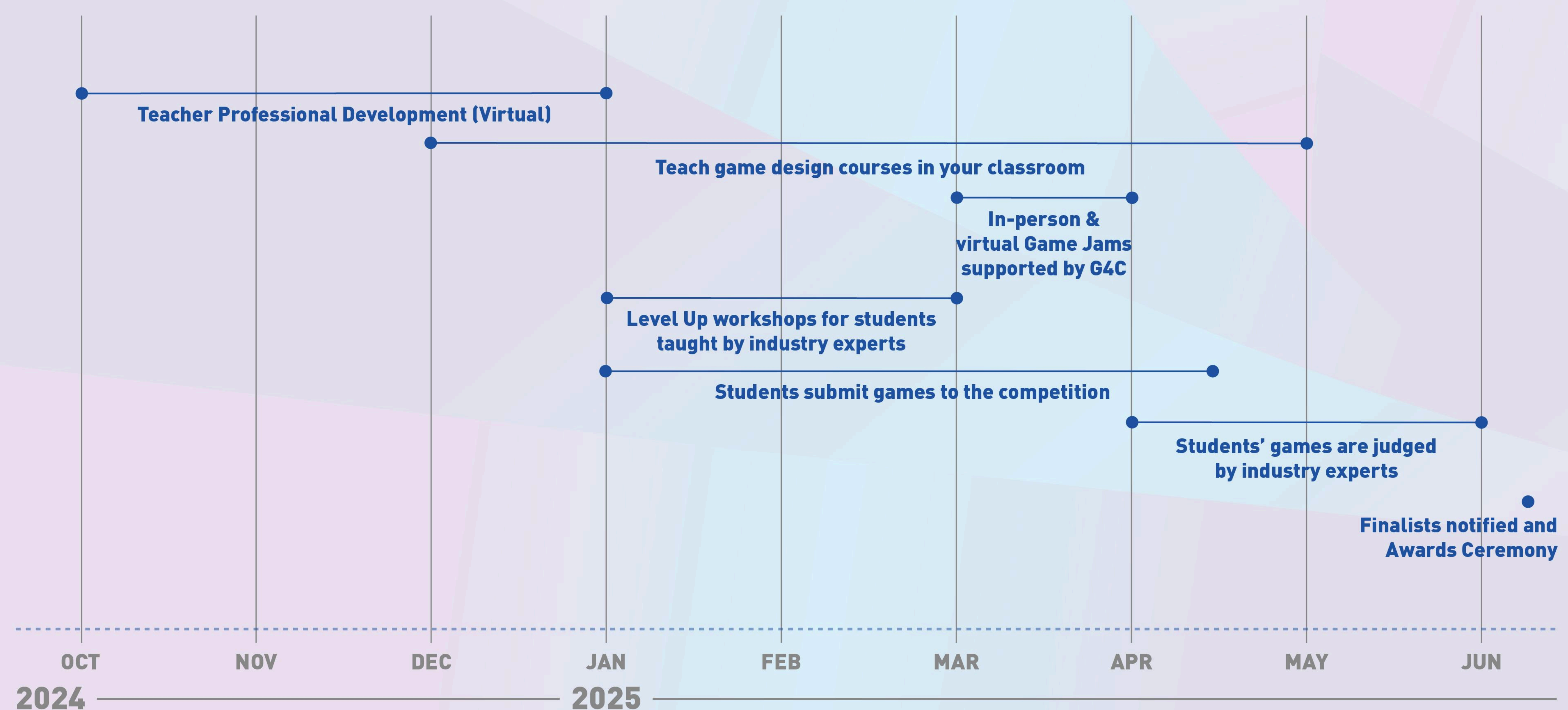
[JOIN HERE](#)

IF YOU ARE A DISCORD USER

Join our [Student Challenge Discord](#)! We will be sharing important announcements, helpful resources, and all the information you’ll need to successfully submit your design to the competition. It’s also an active community hub where students can find teammates, troubleshoot design issues, and playtest each others’ games.

[JOIN HERE](#)

2024-25 PROGRAM TIMELINE



October 2024 - January 2025

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATORS

- The Student Challenge [professional development catalog](#) is designed to prepare teachers to bring social impact game design into their classrooms using G4C Learn's curricula and teaching guides.

December 2024 - May 2025

LEARN GAME DESIGN

- Educators take what they learned at our Student Challenge PD workshops and bring it into their classroom, rolling out game design courses for their students.
- Students learn game design with G4C's [Intro to Game Design curricula](#), and move through the game design cycle to create their submissions.

January 2025 - April 2025

COMPETITION PERIOD

- The Student Challenge Competition opens for submissions on January 6, 2025 and the deadline to submit designs is April 18, 2025.
- Educators/guardians will help their students enter one or all of the competition categories for a chance to win prizes and international recognition.
- Give and get feedback on your game before you submit [HERE](#)
 - Use access code: **G4C2025University**

January 2025 - March 2025

LEVEL UP WEB SERIES

- The Level Up Web Series leverages Games for Change's community of creators and designers with various roles in the video game industry. It includes online workshops on a variety of topics (level design, world-building, 3-D animation, etc.).
- The goal of the series is to introduce students to the wide variety of STEAM careers in the game industry and illuminate the multiple pathways to becoming a part of the industry.

January 2025 - April 2025

GAME JAMS

- Game Jams are fast-paced, play-centered events where student game creators come together to conceptualize, design, and rapid-prototype impact games from scratch.
- Students can keep working on their prototypes to develop further into games for submitting to the Competition portal.

April 2025 - May 2025

JUDGING AND FINALIST NOTIFICATION

- Industry professionals are invited to judge all student submissions to the Student Challenge Competition. Student finalists will be notified by mid-May 2025 of their standing.

June 2025

AWARDS CEREMONY

- Finalists, educators, parents and partners are invited to a virtual Awards Ceremony to celebrate the winners and the accomplishments of the Student Challenge.

July 2025 - September 2025

PRIZES DISSEMINATED

- G4C will send finalists and winners prizes, virtually and through snail mail when appropriate.

STUDENT CHALLENGE THEMES

Each year Games for Change introduces social impact themes inspired by the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) by partnering with NGOs all over the world. Each theme is meant to inspire student creators to learn about a pressing social issue and design a game around their learning. Social impact themes elevate civic engagement, ignite curiosity, and inspire students to research and design original impact games. ALL competition submissions must reflect ONE of the three social impact themes.



THEME #1

PEACEFORMERS CHALLENGE



The Issue: It is more likely for a society to be a peaceful place when everyone has the resources they need to survive and thrive, such as water, shelter, electricity, access to healthy food, freedom, and access to education. Catastrophes like violence and natural disasters can make it really hard for people to have these needs met, and people in power must make difficult decisions about how to ensure their citizens have the resources they need. What would you do in that situation?

The Game Design Prompt: Design a game in an imagined world where players need to take action about how resources are shared and divided. The main goal is to keep the peace among all groups in a fair and equitable way in your game civilization.

Theme Resources can be found [HERE](#).

Which SDG is this connected to?



Supported by



<https://wpdi.org/>

THEME #2

NURTURE YOURSELF WITH NATURE



The Issue: Eco-anxiety is defined as a chronic fear of environmental doom; young people, in particular, are feeling the effects of the climate crises on their mental health, voicing their concerns about the future of planet Earth. One way to ease these worries is by nurturing a strong connection to nature, which can be achieved through 5 pathways: sensory contact with the natural world, taking time to appreciate the beauty of nature, thinking about the meaning and signs of nature, finding an emotional bond with and love for nature, and showing compassion and care for nature. It's important to note that not everyone has equal access to nature. We must listen and learn with the communities we wish to engage as we face the challenges of climate change.

The Game Design Prompt: Imagine the powerful role nature can play in boosting the mental health and well-being of young people while also easing eco-anxiety. Your challenge? Design a game that not only educates players about their personal bond with nature but also guides them through the five pathways to deepen that connection. Get ready to inspire discovery, foster resilience, and embark on a journey that connects hearts and minds with the natural world.

Theme Resources can be found [HERE](#).

Which SDG is this connected to?



Supported by

earthwatch
EUROPE

<https://earthwatch.org.uk/>

THEME #3

OUTPLAY HUNGER



The Issue: Hunger is a big problem affecting nearly 1 in 10 people worldwide. It's not just about feeling hungry – it's also when someone doesn't have enough food to stay healthy and active. Hunger makes it hard for kids to learn in school. Many children miss classes because their families can't afford food, or they struggle to focus when their stomachs are empty. You might think hunger happens because there's not enough food, for example, because of war or natural disasters, but that's not always true. Often, it's because food isn't distributed fairly, some people can't afford nutritious food, and a lot of good food goes to waste.

Did you know that about one-fifth of all food produced worldwide is lost or wasted? Meanwhile, many people eat foods that aren't very healthy or nutritious. To solve the hunger problem, we need to improve how we produce and distribute food, learn more about healthy eating, and work together to make sure everyone has enough good food. You can help too! By learning about hunger and making smart food choices. Can you help us outplay hunger?

The Game Design Prompt: Think about two important hunger challenges: How to reduce food loss and waste, and how to achieve a healthy food diet in your school, community, or country context. Using a design tool of your choice, design a game on either of those two challenges in a way that informs and encourages your players to make a difference.

Theme Resources can be found [HERE](#).

Which SDG is this connected to?



Supported by



World Food
Program USA

<https://www.wfpusa.org/>

The Competition

University-age game designers are invited to showcase their talents and submit their original games into the Student Challenge Competition. Winners won't just receive recognition, they'll grab the spotlight on an international scale! Prizes include games, technology, and a \$10,000 grand prize.

ELIGIBILITY

- Participants must be young adults, under the age of 25, who are no longer enrolled in high school, secondary school, or the equivalent.
- Participants do not need to be enrolled in a University program to participate.
- For GAME ENTRIES: Participants can work as individuals or in teams of 2-5.
- If participants are working as a team, only one participant per team submits, who will be designated the 'Team Leader,' responsible for submitting the entry form for their team.

GAME ELIGIBILITY

- English-speaking, expert Judges need to be able to play and understand students' games.
 - If your game is in another language, please provide additional resources to enable English-speaking judges to understand and play your game.
- Games must be playable on a web browser and accessible via a URL.
- Games must be created using a free or open platform (ex: Scratch, Unity, Construct, Co-Spaces, Game Maker, Twine, Godot etc.).
- Games must be about one of this year's 3 themes.
- Games must be original work created by 1- 5 participants, the majority of whom are 18 - 25. Any mentorship or other team members who contributed to the design of this game must be identified on the submission form. Please include their full name in describing their contributions.
- Games submitted with Unreal Editor for Fortnite (UEFN) :
 - Should include an island code for judges to access the game through Fortnite.
 - In the event that participants are not able to provide a published link, a full video playthrough can be submitted.

USE OF AI

Some students might decide to use AI tools to assist in the design of their game. Responsible use of AI is allowed.

- Participants are required to report use of AI in their game design.
- AI tools cannot be used to create the entirety of the project. Participants are expected to demonstrate their own coding skills and originality.
- Copying or heavily relying on AI-generated solutions without customization or understanding is strictly prohibited.
- There will be a question in the competition portal about students' use of AI.
- If we find that AI was used in a game but participants did not report it to us, the submission will automatically be disqualified.

The Competition (continued)

SUBMISSION PROCESS

1. Participants can submit their designs by filling out a submission form through the competition portal between **January 6, 2025 - April 18, 2024**.
2. Participants will be asked to provide the following on the form:
 - a. Contact information (including full name, birthday, location, etc.)
 - b. Names and email addresses of game creators
 - c. If working in a team, one creator must be identified as the 'Team Leader'
 - d. URL link of their game
3. Participants will be asked to choose which award categories they would like to submit their game to. They are allowed to choose all that apply.
 - a. For example: a game submission made in Unity related to the Outplay Hunger theme is eligible for both the 'Unity' and the 'Outplay Hunger' categories, though it can only win in one category.
4. The portal link will be accessible to students through the Student Challenge website.

STEP BY STEP SUBMISSION DIRECTIONS

1. Before submitting: If the game was designed as a team, determine the Team Leader who will submit the game.
 - a. Optional: Come up with a "game studio" name for the team.
2. Go to the competition portal.
3. Log in or create an account.
4. Click "My Submissions" on the left-hand toolbar to start a new submission form (or to view and edit one that you've already started).
5. Follow the directions in the form to submit, including responding to any prompts.
6. When prompted to answer which award category your game is eligible for, students may select all that apply.
7. Students may save and return to the portal. To continue working on a submission, click "My submissions."
8. (Optional) Follow the prompts in the portal to upload additional materials to the submission form for the judges to view (ex: storyboard, essay, art/assets used, plans for future levels, etc.)
9. Submit and finalize your submission. (Please note - once you finalize and submit your game it should not be edited to avoid breaking the game link or the game itself)

The Competition (continued)

COMPETITION STRUCTURE

Each game and submission will go through 3 rounds of judging. In the first round, finalists will be determined. In the second round, a winner for each category will be determined. In the third round, all of the winners from digital games submission categories will be eligible for the “Game of the Year” Award.

RESULTS & PRIZES

The scores for each game are determined by a jury of video game industry experts and theme content experts using the evaluation rubrics below. The final decisions regarding finalists and winners for each category are based on the judge’s scores and determined by the G4C Learn staff.

Participants will be notified of their standing in the competition by mid-May 2025 via email. Winners are announced live during a virtual Awards Ceremony in June, to which all participants will be invited. Winners will receive games, technology, and experiential prizes. The team who wins Game of the Year will receive a \$10,000 award (divided amongst team members).

Award Categories

**Best
Peaceformers
Challenge Game**

**Best
Nurture Yourself
with Nature Game**

**Best
Outplay Hunger
Game**

**Made
with
Unity**

Game of the Year

THEME AWARD CATEGORY #1: **BEST PEACEFORMERS CHALLENGE GAME**

Prompt: Design a game in an imagined world where players need to take action about how resources are shared and divided. The main goal is to keep the peace among all groups in a fair and equitable way in your game civilization.

THEME AWARD CATEGORY #2: **BEST NURTURE YOURSELF WITH NATURE GAME**

Prompt: Design a game that not only educates players about their personal bond with nature but also guides them through the five pathways to deepen that connection. Get ready to inspire discovery, foster resilience, and embark on a journey that connects hearts and minds with the natural world.

THEME AWARD CATEGORY #3: **BEST OUTPLAY HUNGER GAME**

Prompt: Think about two important hunger challenges: How to reduce food loss and waste, and how to achieve a healthy food diet in your school, community, or country context. Using a design tool of your choice, design a game on either of those two challenges in a way that informs and encourages your players to make a difference.

THEME CATEGORIES:

For the three theme categories, submission guidelines, directions, and evaluation criteria are as follows:

THEME SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Games must be about one of this year's social impact Themes.
- Games must be made using any free/open platform (ex: Scratch, Unity, Twine, CoSpaces, etc.).
- Games must be playable on a web browser and accessible via a URL.
- Use of AI must be reported.

THEME SUBMISSION JUDGING CRITERIA

All games submitted to one of the three theme categories will be evaluated using this rubric:

Games will be assessed on these 4 criteria.	Use of Theme	Game Play	Aesthetics & Use of Platform	Fun Factor
Benchmark Statements for Judging	<i>Through game play, players engage with important content relevant to one of this year's themes.</i>	<i>The rules of the game are clear, the game is playable and provides players meaningful choices while achieving the game's goals.</i>	<i>The game is well designed, legible, and includes components that are pleasing to look at.</i>	<i>Playing the game is an enjoyable and engaging experience.</i>

AWARD CATEGORY #4: **MADE WITH UNITY**

Prompt: Design a game made with Unity that showcases your knowledge and understanding of the Unity platform and inspired by this year's social impact themes.

MADE WITH UNITY SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Games must be made using Unity to qualify for this category.
- Games must be playable on a web browser and accessible via a URL. Unity games are often uploaded to itch.io to be played via browser.
- Games must be about one of this year's social impact Themes.
- Use of AI must be reported.

MADE WITH UNITY JUDGING CRITERIA:

All games submitted to the Made with Unity category will be evaluated using this rubric:

Games will be assessed on these 4 criteria.	<i>Use of Theme</i>	<i>Game Play</i>	<i>Aesthetics & Use of Platform</i>	<i>Fun Factor</i>
Benchmark Statements for Judging	<i>Through game play, players engage with important content relevant to the theme they have chosen.</i>	<i>The rules of the game are clear, the game is playable and provides players meaningful choices while achieving the game's goals.</i>	<i>The game is well designed, legible, and makes good use of the features available in Unity.</i>	<i>Playing the game is an enjoyable and engaging experience.</i>

IMPORTANT LINKS, SOCIAL MEDIA, POINT OF CONTACT

IMPORTANT LINKS

Student Challenge Website: www.gamesforchange.org/studentchallenge

Student Challenge Discord: <https://bit.ly/G4C-SC-Discord>

SOCIAL MEDIA

Twitter: [@G4C](https://twitter.com/G4C)

Facebook: [@gamesforchange](https://www.facebook.com/gamesforchange)

Instagram: [@gamesforchange](https://www.instagram.com/gamesforchange)

YouTube: [G4C Student Challenge](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG4CStudentChallenge)

Hashtag: [#G4CStudent](https://twitter.com/G4CStudent)

POINT OF CONTACT

For all questions please email the Student Challenge Team at studentchallenge@gamesforchange.org

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is there a place where participants can get feedback on their games before they submit to the competition portal?

- Yes! Navigate to the Studio by [Endless Studios](#) with access code: **G4C2025University** - to receive and feedback on your game.

Where can I find curriculum and other resources?

- Everything students need this year is available on the [Student Challenge website](#).
- For educators, additional teaching resources and professional development are on Participate (email studentchallenge@gamesforchange.org for access).

How can participants better prepare for the competition?

- Participants can join one of our events (Game Jams and/or Level Up web series) and use this handbook to set themselves up for success.

Are there any examples of games students have created in the past?

- You can play the finalist and winning games from last year's Challenge in [the 2024 Student Arcade](#).

How do I stay up to date with Student Challenge news?

- Participants can follow us on social media or join the [Student Challenge Discord](#).

Can participants submit competition entries outside of this year's themes?

- No. In order to qualify, participants must design a game about one of this year's themes:
 - Peaceformers Challenge
 - Nurture Yourself with Nature
 - Outplay Hunger

How old do I need to be to participate in the 2025 Student Challenge competition?

- You must be under 25 years old, and not currently enrolled in high school or secondary school. If you are in high school or secondary school, you can participate in the "Senior" division.

Do students have to use Scratch to create their games?

- No. You are welcome to use any digital design platform as long as it is free/open-source and the final game is playable on a web browser (ex: Unity, Construct, Python, RPG Maker, Godot, etc.). If you're unsure if a particular platform meets these requirements, just ask us!

How do students know whether or not their game platform of choice is eligible?

- If you are unsure if a particular platform meets these requirements, send an email to studentchallenge@gamesforchange.org.

How many winners will there be?

- There are many chances to win! Each award category will have one winning game/submission. All winners will receive prizes, and all finalists and winners will be featured on the G4C Student Challenge Arcade.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (continued)

Are participants limited to submitting only 1 entry to the competition?

- Participants may submit up to one entry in each Award Category. They will need to complete the submission form for each entry they submit. They are not allowed to submit multiple entries to the same award category. For example, if they make two games in Unity, they must only submit one.

What is the AI policy for submitting a game or character artwork to the competition?

- Some participants might decide to use AI tools to assist in the design of their game. Responsible use of AI is allowed.
 - Participants are required to report use of AI in their submission.
 - If we find that AI was used in a game or character design but students did not report it to us, the submission will automatically be disqualified.

Can participants update their game after submitting it to the competition?

- We STRONGLY discourage participants from updating their game after submitting it to the competition to avoid accidentally breaking their game/link to game which may lead to disqualification.

Whom do I reach out to with questions?

- Questions can be sent to the G4C team at studentchallenge@gamesforchange.org.



LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

Have a question? Send an email to the Student Challenge team at studentchallenge@gamesforchange.org

