



ARCTIC  
INSPIRATION  
Youth Prize

# NOMINATION GUIDE

## 2025-2026

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# What is the Youth Prize?

The Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize funds and supports youth who have ideas to bring positive change to the North.

The Youth Prize offers up to \$700,000 each year, with seven different youth teams able to win up to \$100,000 each.

The Youth Prize inspires team building and encourages the development of projects that deliver immediate benefit to northern communities.

By enabling teams to carry out projects and by celebrating their achievements, others can be inspired to do the same.

**Does that sound like something for you? Read on.**



## Important due dates

**Inspiration Proposal (Optional) due date:** October 20, 2025 at 11:59 pm PT

**Nomination due date:** January 19, 2026 at 11:59 pm PT

Please check the [Arctic Inspiration Prize website](#) to learn about [upcoming webinars](#) and [additional resources](#) for teams.

## Inspiration Proposal

You can submit an Inspiration Proposal to receive feedback on the eligibility of your project. This is optional, but it is very helpful.

Inspiration Proposals can be submitted at **any time until October 20, 2025 at 11:59 pm PT**. If teams submit an Inspiration Proposal early enough, they have the opportunity to make changes based on the feedback received and resubmit their Inspiration Proposal one more time before the due date.

This is the opportunity to have your questions answered and get tips that can help strengthen your nomination and make sure you are headed in the right direction. The Inspiration Proposal will not be used in the selection process in any way.

Inspiration Proposals can be submitted on the [Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize website](#).

You are encouraged to submit Inspiration Proposals as early as possible. **The last day you can submit an Inspiration Proposal for the 2025-2026 Arctic Inspiration Prize is October 20, 2025 at 11:59 pm PT.**

# What are the Eligibility Criteria?

**“Eligibility Criteria” are the things your proposed project must have in order to be considered for an Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize.**

## Diversity

The Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize aims to inspire team building and empower Northerners to realize opportunities that are important to their communities.

### Diverse Perspectives

The Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize is an award for teams and is about team building. Individuals alone cannot be nominated. It's recommended that your team be diverse.

Diversity can refer to many things. It can mean including youth and Elders, people from communities large and small, grassroots groups, industry and governments, and/or people from research, philanthropy, culture, education, etc. Diversity can mean including a variety of perspectives and experience to ensure the project is meeting the needs of the community/region or the team possesses the necessary skills required to complete the project, from program delivery to administration/finance and beyond. If your project is in several communities, you may want to consider having team members from each of those communities. While the Team Leader and a majority of team members must be Northerners, the project can be supported by southern team members.

When you think about your project, it will be important to think about the different skills, expertise, and knowledge that your team will need to complete it. Then, build the team with those things in mind.

## Age of Team Members

To be eligible, your Team Leader and more than half of your team members must be 30 years of age or younger. Youth must lead and shape the project from inception to implementation to ensure that these projects are truly youth projects.

## Northern Led and Managed

The Team Leader and the majority of the team are required to be Northerners as the Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize is about inspiring northern youth to build, lead, and manage their own solutions. Northerners must lead and shape the project from inception to implementation to ensure that these projects are truly northern projects by the North and for the North.

For the Arctic Inspiration Prize, a Northerner is defined as:

- An Indigenous person of the North, preferably working and residing in the Yukon, NWT, Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Nunavut, Nunavik, or Nunatsiavut;
- A non-Indigenous person working and residing in the Yukon, NWT, Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Nunavut, Nunavik, or Nunatsiavut.

## Nominee and Recipient of Funds

The entity that is nominated for the Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize (the Nominee) and individuals or organizations that would receive and manage the Youth Prize funds are required to be exclusively northern.

Organizations or individuals that are not exclusively northern are ineligible to receive the prize funds, even if their project is based in the North. Southern individuals or organizations can be part of the project team or provide support; however, they cannot be the Nominee and/or recipient of the prize funds.

## Novelty

### New Project

The Arctic Inspiration Prize supports new, innovative, and novel initiatives that are ready to be implemented and have a real, relevant impact in the North. It is important that nominations clearly show how the proposed project is distinct from any ongoing work by the team or others in the same area your project would impact.

What is eligible:

- A completely new initiative.
- An initiative new to your community that is inspired by work in another community – as long as your team has not already implemented it elsewhere.
- A pilot project that has gathered community input or data showing the approach is relevant, effective, needed, and wanted in the community. This type of project may be eligible for funding to scale up or be fully implemented.

What is not eligible:

- Projects that are simply a continuation or expansion of work already being done.
- Replicating an existing project (even if successful) in a new location by the same team.
- Existing projects that are not collecting data to demonstrate community need or impact.

Key difference:

- Pilot project ready to grow: Has tested an idea in a limited way, collected evidence of success or need, and is now ready to be implemented at a larger scale – this is eligible.
- Ongoing project expanding: Has already been fully implemented and is now being continued, expanded, or duplicated – this is not eligible.

### Knowledge Basis

Proposed projects should be based upon traditional knowledge, scientific research, and/or practical knowledge (e.g., a small pilot project) in order to be eligible.



## Impact

The Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize aims to directly impact communities across the North.

### Relevance to the North

Your team and your project should address opportunities that are relevant and important to the people in your communities. Northerners must lead and shape the project from inception to implementation to ensure that these projects are truly relevant to the North.

Your project can have one or more focus areas, such as (but not limited to): education; health and wellbeing; culture, arts, and language; science and traditional knowledge; climate change; food security; and the economy.

### Addressing Causes Rather than Symptoms

Your project should address the causes of a northern issue, rather than its symptoms. How the project will address the causes should be clearly outlined in the nomination. For example, a project that aims to prevent oil spills addresses a cause; a project that aims to clean up oil spills addresses a symptom. This applies to all projects.

### Region of Impact

Your project needs to be carried out and have impact within one of these regions: the Yukon, NWT, Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Nunavut, Nunavik, or Nunatsiavut.

### Immediate Impact

Your project should bring about action that has immediate impact. Therefore, projects that only collect and store knowledge are not eligible. Similarly, single, short-term activities (e.g., conferences, workshops, and meetings) are not eligible unless clearly part of a broader action plan.

### Secular and Non-Partisan

Proposed projects are required to provide secular, non-partisan solutions that do not contravene the laws of Indigenous self-governments and land claims agreements. (Note that this does not exclude projects that involve Indigenous ceremony, healing, traditional practice, etc.)





## Sustainability

### Project Buy-in

The Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize is about having impact with the support of partners and team members.

Preferably your project should have some buy-in from people or groups. Buy-in means a committed financial or service contribution, which you'll need to help sustain the project beyond its planned duration.

## General

### Official AIP Ambassador

Your team must be nominated by an official Ambassador/Nominator of the Arctic Inspiration Prize who is not connected to the project or team in any way. Your Arctic Inspiration Prize Region Manager can help you find one. Ambassadors/Nominators should be aware of both the team and project, and be able to confirm the value, quality, and relevance of the proposed project by completing and signing a Nomination Letter.

Ideally your Ambassador/Nominator is from the region (or one of the regions) impacted by your project. If this is not possible, an Ambassador/Nominator from another region can nominate your project. For example, if all Ambassadors/Nominators from your region are connected to your project, then you can expand your search.

See the list of official Ambassadors/Nominators here:

[arcticinspirationprize.ca/ambassadors](https://arcticinspirationprize.ca/ambassadors)

### Maintaining Fairness in Nominations

Arctic Inspiration Prize Trustees, staff, and Selection Committee members and Rideau Hall Foundation staff, and Board Members are not eligible to be Nominees or Nominators for the Arctic Inspiration Prize during their terms, and for six months following the end of their terms.

### Nomination Template Required

Your team must use the Nomination Template and complete all sections. Incomplete nominations or those not in the template provided are not eligible.

See the Nomination Templates and Guides [here](#).

### Submit by Due Date

Submit your Nomination Template electronically to the Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize by **January 19, 2026 at 11:59 pm PT**. Nominations received after this deadline won't be accepted.



# How do you choose the winners?

Decisions made by the Selection Committees are based solely on the Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize's weighted selection criteria, which are as follows:

1. **Diversity** (weight = 2)
2. **Novelty** (weight = 1)
3. **Impact** (weight = 5)
4. **Financial sustainability** (weight = 3)
5. **Project accountability** (weight = 2)
  - Degree of accountability (leadership, management, finances, project timelines) and how progress will be measured and reported.
6. **Ability to highlight northern achievements** (weight = 2)
  - Degree of your team's ability to highlight inspiring northern achievements and innovations in the North.
  - How well you will be able to promote the Youth Prize and your involvement in it through social and traditional media.

Winner selections are final. There is no appeal process.



## How do we apply?

To be considered for the Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize, you have to 1) fulfill our Eligibility Criteria and then 2) provide all the information we require in the Nomination Template.

Please note that this alone doesn't guarantee that a team will receive an Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize. Only those projects that most strongly fulfill the selection criteria will be selected as Laureates/Winners.

An electronic copy of your completed Nomination Template must be submitted to the Arctic Inspiration Prize office at:

Email: [aip@rhf-frh.ca](mailto:aip@rhf-frh.ca)

If you have issues sending the file by email, you can upload the file [here](#).

The Arctic Inspiration Prize office will confirm receipt of the nomination.

If you have any questions about the nomination process you can contact the Region Manager in your region: [arcticinspirationprize.ca/connect/](https://arcticinspirationprize.ca/connect/).

## When do we need to apply?

Send your nomination no later than:  
**January 19, 2026 at 11:59 pm PT.**  
Nominations received after this time will not be eligible.

# What happens if we win?

**First, you celebrate! Then you can get started. Here's what you and your team agree to:**

- You'll carry out the project as described in your Nomination Template, as this was the basis of the project becoming a Laureate/Winner. Changes to any major elements of the project require the approval of the Arctic Inspiration Prize in advance.
- All winning team members will have to pass an enhanced criminal record check if your project involves working with vulnerable peoples (e.g., children, people with disabilities, the elderly).
- Photographs and information about your team and your proposed project can be used for the promotion of the Arctic Inspiration Prize and other promotional activities (e.g., on the Youth Prize website, social media channels, in media releases). The Arctic Inspiration Prize team will reach out for relevant team or project photos.
- You will participate in Arctic Inspiration Prize activities, including regional promotion of the Prize, media conferences, ceremonies and receptions.
- Your team and your Ambassador/Nominator will not reveal that you have been selected as a finalist or a Laureate/Winner until you have been given written clearance to do so by the Arctic Inspiration Prize Team.
- Your team will share media coverage of your winning project (that you're aware of) with the Arctic Inspiration Prize office.
- You will clearly note in any communications about your project that you are a 2025-2026 Arctic Inspiration Prize Laureate.
- Arctic Inspiration Youth Prize staff, Trustees, and Selection Committee members may visit your winning team/project during the proposed duration of the project.
- The Arctic Inspiration Prize will retain \$4,000 of the prize amount to conduct an independent impact visualization/evaluation. The results will be given to you and can assist you in fundraising.

## Nomination Template

The Nomination Template will help guide you as you put together your nomination package. It outlines each section, what information to include, and how a nomination should be organized. This template will become the core of your nomination package. You will merge your letters into this document and submit it as a single file.

The Nomination Template is provided as a workable digital file and must be used to complete your nomination. To be considered eligible, all sections of the template must be completed in written or video format, as indicated.

[Download the Nomination Template here.](#)



# Frequently Asked Questions

## What if I need help with a nomination?

There are a variety of resources available to help you as you put together your nomination including an [Inspiration Proposal](#), [webinars](#), and [more](#).

The Arctic Inspiration Prize office and the Region Managers can give general advice concerning the regulations and proper use of the nomination materials. However, they cannot help you prepare your nomination or offer opinions about your nomination's chance of success.

## Are Arctic Inspiration Prize awards taxable?

Prize recipients should contact the Canada Revenue Agency or their provincial/territorial revenue department with any tax-related questions.

## Can a nomination be resubmitted from a previous year?

No, all teams have to submit a revised nomination for their project each year they want to be considered. Nominations are not carried over from year to year. Be sure to review the Nomination Template for the new prize year. There may be revisions, and not using the appropriate template and format will result in a nomination's ineligibility.

## Can a nomination be submitted to multiple prize categories in the same year?

No, a nomination can only be submitted in one Arctic Inspiration Prize category. Team Leaders and Nominators are encouraged to carefully choose the most appropriate category to apply for. See the table [here](#) for the differences between the prize categories.

## Is the information in the application protected?

The Arctic Inspiration Prize will protect personal information as required by the *Privacy Act*. The Canadian *Privacy Act* gives individuals the right to access and request correction of personal information about themselves. All information may be accessible to others under the *Access to Information Act*.



# SHAPE YOUR NORTH

RISE TO THE PRIZE



[arcticinspirationprize.ca/youth-prize](https://arcticinspirationprize.ca/youth-prize)