

2025 Storyfest Award

Official Rules

NO ENTRY FEE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN.

VOID WHERE PROHIBITED.

- 1) Description.** The George Washington University (“University”) through Planet Forward (a project within the University’s School of Media and Public Affairs) offers the 2025 Storyfest Award (the “Award”) as an opportunity for current undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in an accredited university or college.
- 2) Eligibility.** The Award is open to any person who is (i) eighteen (18) years of age or older at the time of participation, and (ii) currently enrolled in an accredited undergraduate or graduate university or college program (“Entrants”). Entrants may compete either as individuals or in collaboration with one (1) additional person. The Award is void where prohibited or otherwise restricted by law, rule, or regulation. All applicable United States federal, state, and local laws and regulations apply to this Award and any Prize disbursement, including without limitation federal immigration or sanctions laws. By participating, Entrants agree to be bound by these Official Rules.
- 3) How to Enter and Qualify.** To enter and qualify for the Award, Entrants must complete and submit (i) an online Award entry form and (ii) produce an original story about inventions and/or innovations that can move the planet forward (the “Story”).

All Story submissions must be original works produced by the Entrants that do not infringe the ownership rights of any other person or entity. All Story submissions must have either primary sources identified in the Story text or annotations that identify information sources.

Any Entrants with winning Story submissions made in any prior Storyfest competitions, who are Planet Forward student staff members, or whose Story has been previously published will be ineligible for Prize consideration. All data, facts, and claims must be cited through reliable sources in order to be eligible for the Award and Prize.

Entrants are allowed a maximum of three (3) Story submissions. The period to submit a Story for the Award begins on Thursday, June 1, 2024, at 12:00 AM EDT and ends Monday, February 10, 2025, at 11:59 PM EST (“Submission Period”). Only Story submissions posted during the Submission Period will be considered for the Award.

4) Award Categories. The Story should fit into one of the following categories:

a) Best Short Video

All video submissions should be one to eight (1-8) minutes in length with HD-quality audio and visual, and include an article, which should be fifty to two hundred (50-200) words describing the video without transcription. All video submissions must be uploaded to Vimeo or YouTube. If the entry is a documentary or a longer podcast, a trailer must be submitted that satisfies the run time requirement.

b) Best Social Media Video

All social media videos should be thirty to ninety (30-90) seconds in length with HD-quality audio and visual, and include an article, which should be fifty to two hundred (50-200) words describing the video without transcription. All social media video submission must be uploaded to Vimeo or Youtube and vertically oriented (9:16 aspect ratio).

c) Best Written Story

All written submissions should be six hundred to one thousand (600-1,000) words and include a minimum of one (1) image, where the image is preferably taken by the Entrant, and feature interviews with two to three (2-3) sources.

d) Best Multimedia Story

All multimedia submissions must be authored by the Entrant and should include a combination of visual and/or audio elements including but not limited to photography, illustrations, text, embedded audio snippets, and music.

All photograph submissions should utilize digital images with a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) dots per inch (dpi) and feature detailed captions, not to exceed two hundred (200) words for each photograph. Multimedia submission must be accompanied by a written article between two hundred and four hundred (200-400) words and should summarize the submission. If a multimedia submission is prepared using Adobe Express or similar platform, then the submission must include an embed code and an additional written summary of one hundred to two hundred (100-200) words and one (1) photograph to be featured.

e) Best Podcast

All audio story/podcast submissions should be three to fifteen (3-15) minutes in length with HD-quality audio and include an article, which should be fifty

to two hundred (50-200) words describing the audio story/podcast without transcription, one (1) photograph to be featured, and a full transcription of the audio story/podcast for accessibility. All audio story/podcast submissions must be hosted on a third-party platform, such as SoundCloud or PodBean, and include an embed code.

f) Fan Favorite Award

All Finalists will be eligible for the "Fan Favorite Award." The "Fan Favorite Award" will be selected by a majority vote of 2025 Planet Forward Summit attendees and via public polling, advertised on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Voting for the "Fan Favorite Award" shall begin on Monday, March 31, 2025 at 10:00 AM EDT and end on Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 5:00 PM EDT. In the event the Entrant selected by majority vote was also selected as the Winner for another award category, the "Fan Favorite Award" shall be given to the Entrant with the next highest vote total that was not otherwise selected as a Winner for another award category.

g) GW Award

Awarded to a University Entrant whose submission most clearly demonstrates the storytelling and academic excellence of University students, consistent with the University's mission and vision.

h) Spotlight Award

Awarded to the Entrant whose submission most deeply highlights underserved communities with a focus on the extraordinary people who are innovating, leading, and inventing to address climate change, environmental degradation and injustice, and unhealthy communities.

5) Selection and Notification of Finalists. University staff will review all Entrants' Story submissions and select several to advance in the Award selection process ("Finalists"). Finalists for the Award will be announced on Monday, February 24, 2025 via email.

6) Selection of Winners. A panel of independent judges and Planet Forward staff (the "Selectors") will award the Prize. The panel of independent judges will determine the Award for categories a through e; Planet Forward staff will determine the Award for categories g and h. Winner selection will ultimately be at the University's sole discretion and based on the following storytelling criteria:

- a) Creativity and effectiveness of chosen format/s;
- b) Excellence in written/verbal communication and/or technical and production skill;
- c) Factual accuracy, including attribution of facts, data and quotes, and superior research that considers different perspectives; and

d) Overall potential impact of the storytelling format and techniques. There will be seven (7) Winners from among the Entrants who compete for the Award. A Winner shall be selected for each of the categories noted in Section 4.

7) Prize. The Winners will receive the Award and be selected by Planet Forward staff for the following expedition:

Exploring Galápagos: One Week Sailing the Islands
Aboard the National Geographic Gemini
July 18, 2025 – July 27, 2025

The Prize specifically consists of accommodations, food, and costs associated with relevant expedition-led experiences. All Winners are otherwise responsible for costs associated with air and ground transportation and all other personal expenses. Alcoholic beverages aboard ship, purchases in the ship's global gallery, gratuities, wellness treatments, laundry, internet access, passport expenses, and travel insurance are not included. Winners should consult with Alexandra Daley-Clark (alexdc@expeditions.com) at Lindblad Expeditions if they have additional Prize questions.

For Winners that are part of a team, the entire team will be recognized in any University Award presentation (e.g., certificate or plaque); however, only one (1) Prize will be available for the entire team. If space is available, other team members may travel with Planet Forward should the additional team members or their host university wish to fund their travel. For the avoidance of doubt, the Winners from a team must designate only one (1) team member to receive the entire Prize. In no instance shall a cash equivalent be provided to Winners from a team in lieu of the Prize or in exchange for the Prize's cash value.

The Prize expedition must be completed between July 18, 2025 and July 27, 2025, or the offered Prize will be forfeited. If forfeited, the Entrant is still considered a Winner and maintains the accolade associated with the Award. The Prize restrictions/conditions stated herein are not all inclusive, and the Prize may be subject to additional restrictions/conditions which may be stated in the Affidavit/Release (described below) and/or a Winner's travel documents. If a Prize is not redeemed, then it is void. Unused components of the Prize have no redeemable cash value. Any unclaimed and/or unused Prize element will be forfeited by and will remain the property of Lindblad Expeditions, and Lindblad Expeditions shall not be responsible for any inability of Winner to accept or use any portion of the Prize for any reason. All Winners will be required to agree and abide by Lindblad Expeditions' Cruise Ticket Contract Terms and to otherwise agree to Lindblad Expeditions' other applicable eligibility terms (e.g., affidavit of eligibility, liability release, publicity release) as conditions to redeeming their respective Prizes and embarking on the applicable expedition. Winners also will be required to

attend a preparation webinar with Lindblad Expeditions staff prior to the expedition.

Each Winner will be solely responsible for all taxes on Prize. All federal, state, local, and other taxes associated with the acceptance and use of the Prize are the sole responsibility of the Winners. There are no Prize substitutions or options available. The Winners shall not be permitted to replace the Prize with another item or cash equivalent. The Prize is not transferable. If the Prize becomes unavailable, the University reserves the right, exercisable at any time and in its sole discretion, to either substitute a prize of comparable value or not award any prize to the Winners. All Prize awards are at the University's sole discretion.

8) Winner Notification. The Winners will be notified at the Planet Forward Summit on Friday, April 18, 2025. Additionally, if a potential Winner is found to be ineligible or if the potential Winner does not comply with these Official Rules, such potential Winner will be disqualified and, at the University's discretion, an applicable runner-up will be notified. All Entrants agree to comply fully with each provision in these Official Rules. Any Entrants attempting to defraud or in any way tamper with this Award, and any Entrants who do not comply with these Official Rules, will be ineligible for the Prize. If during the Submission Period, for reasons beyond the University's control, the Award is not capable of running as originally planned, the University, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to cancel or modify the Award without liability, and to the extent feasible, will determine the Winners and award the Prize among Story submissions received prior to cancellation or modification.

9) License. All Entrants, and specifically each Winner as a condition of receiving the Prize, hereby grants the University a transferable, irrevocable, perpetual, non-exclusive, fully paid-up, and royalty-free license to copy, distribute, publish, and display their individual Story on the Planet Forward website (as applicable), at the Planet Forward Summit, and in other Planet Forward marketing materials.

10) Use of Name and Likeness. The Winners agree to allow the University to use their names and images on future Award promotional materials, with regards to the Planet Forward Summit and on the Planet Forward website for promotional purposes.

11) Release of Liability and Issues of Law. By participating, all Entrants release the University, Lindblad Expeditions Holdings, Inc. and its subsidiaries and affiliates ("Lindblad"), National Geographic Partners, LLC, its parent, subsidiaries (including Global Adrenaline, LLC d/b/a National Geographic Expeditions) ("National Geographic") (collectively, the "Released Parties"), and each of the Released Parties' respective parents, subsidiaries and other affiliated or related companies, and all officers, directors, employees, shareholders, members, tour operators, agents, suppliers,

contractors, sub-contractors, representatives, successors, assigns, insurers and volunteers of each of the foregoing entities for any loss, claims, causes of action, injury, illness, death, emotional distress, mental suffering, psychological injury, property damage, or other damage whether or not involving negligence or willful fault (collectively, "Losses"), and from any and all liability with respect to and in any way arising from participating in an Award submission and/or acceptance or use of the Prize. Released Parties are not responsible for lost, late, incomplete, inconsistent, damaged, inaccurate, stolen, delayed, undelivered, or garbled Story submissions; or for lost, interrupted, or unavailable network, server, internet service provider, website; or for other errors or difficulties of any kind whether human, mechanical, electronic, computer, network, typographical or otherwise relating to or in connection with the Award, including, without limitation, errors or difficulties which may occur in connection with the administration of the Award, the Story submission, or the announcement of the Winners. Released Parties also are not responsible for any incorrect or inaccurate information, whether caused by other Entrants, tampering, hacking, or by any equipment or programming associated with or utilized in an Award submission. Released Parties are not responsible for injury or damage to any Entrants' computer or tracking device related to or resulting from participating in an Award submission. Entrants who tamper with or abuse any aspect of the Award submission process, who act in an unprofessional or disruptive manner or who are in violation of these Official Rules, as solely determined by the University, will be disqualified. Should any portion of an Award submission be, in the University's sole opinion, compromised by virus, worms, bugs, nonauthorized human intervention, or other causes which, in the sole opinion of the University, corrupt or impair the administration, security, fairness, or proper play, the University reserves the right at its sole discretion to suspend, modify, or terminate the Award selection process and, if terminated, at its discretion and to the extent possible, determine Winners from all eligible Story submissions received prior to action.

12) Governing Law; Parties in Interest. These Official Rules are governed by all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The local and federal courts of the District of Columbia shall have sole jurisdiction of any controversies regarding the Official Rules and laws of the District of Columbia shall govern the Official Rules. All Entrants waive any and all objections to jurisdiction and venue in those courts and hereby submit to the jurisdiction of those courts. Lindblad Expeditions shall be a third party beneficiary of these Official Rules for purposes of Sections 7 and 11-12.

13) Communications. Any Entrants with questions or comments regarding the Official Rules should contact storyfest@planetforward.org.