



## 2025 Space4Youth Competition Call for Abstracts and Essays

### Description

The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) and the Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) are thrilled to announce the sixth edition of the Space4Youth Competition. This year, students and young professionals are invited to share innovative ideas on **how the global space community can create more opportunities for young people, support youth development, and establish new attainable pathways to space-related resources**. UNOOSA is the only United Nations Office entirely dedicated to outer space activities and works to strengthen international cooperation in space activities and the use of space science and technology for achieving sustainable development. The Space Generation Advisory Council, in support of the United Nations Programme on Space applications, is a global non-governmental, non-profit organization and network representing university students and young space professionals to the United Nations, space agencies, industry, and academia.

### Context

Youth engagement in the space sector is critical to realizing the potential of space to address global challenges. Many young people are already vocal and active in advocating for causes like climate action, social justice, and technology for good. Space technologies have a vital role in these causes, and as the leaders of tomorrow, engaged youth have the potential to influence the direction of relevant policymaking to ensure that space tools, like satellite monitoring and remote sensing, are adequately leveraged to address global challenges. In addition, with the dynamic evolution of the space sector into innovative space areas, there is an increasing demand for skilled professionals in different STEM fields including space science, engineering, artificial intelligence, robotics and related fields. It is therefore essential to build a pipeline of talented young individuals who are equipped to meet the future needs of the evolving space sector. Engaging the youth now ensures that we're fostering the skills and expertise needed for to sustain the growth of the space sector.

However, despite their enthusiasm, many young people face significant barriers when trying to enter and thrive in the space industry. Opportunities for space science and engineering graduates are highly competitive and often inaccessible for many aspiring students particularly those from underrepresented regions and backgrounds. Internships, scholarships, and training programs are limited, and the high costs of advanced education pose further challenges for talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds. With funding programs also highly competitive, pursuing a career in this field becomes challenging for many. As a result, educational and professional opportunities in the space industry remain unevenly distributed. To harness the full potential of youth in this field, international collaboration and policies are needed to ensure equal opportunities for all, foster skills development, and support pathways into space-related careers.

UNOOSA's "Space4Youth" initiative, together with SGAC, supports this mission by providing a platform for young people worldwide to share their voices, ideas, and visions for the future of the space sector. Aligned with the **"Space2030" Agenda** (A/RES/76/3) and the Overarching Objective 3, the competition emphasizes *leveraging the potential of space to inspire youth, increase the involvement of young people in the space sector, support national and international initiatives that inspire the interest of young people in space activities, from elementary school*



onwards, and strengthen their engagement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects.

### **Topic of the Competition**

#### **"Empowering Youth for the Future of Space "**

The competition invites participants to propose solutions to:

- **Enhance opportunities for education, training, internships, and careers in the space sector**, especially for underrepresented communities.
- **Foster partnerships and programs** that equip young professionals with the skills needed for the evolving space industry.
- **Develop policy recommendations** that foster collaboration across all nations, backgrounds and economic circumstances, and support emerging young professionals in the space industry.

Participants should submit an abstract presenting their vision for a more open and representative space sector. The ideas could range from policy initiatives, educational reforms, international collaborations, to technological solutions that make space resources and opportunities more reachable for youth.

Submissions should focus on practical, scalable solutions that enhance youth engagement and support young leaders in shaping the future of space exploration.

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### **How to participate in the essay competition?**

The competition is structured in 2 phases:

1. Applicants submit an **abstract of maximum 100 words** and fill in the [online application form](#) by **8 December 2024**.
2. If the abstract is positively evaluated, the applicant will be asked to submit an **essay of maximum 1,000 words**, to be based on the previously submitted abstract.

### **Eligibility criteria**

- The competition is open to all students and young professionals from any Member State of the United Nations.
- All participants shall be of the age **between 18 and 35** inclusive (up to the day of their 36th birthday) on 28 February 2025.
- The competition is open to individuals - no team submissions are allowed.
- Competition organizers and judges are not eligible for the competition.
- Winners of previous editions will not be considered for this current selection.
- The United Nations encourages all qualified applicants, regardless of gender, disability, sexual orientation, cultural or religious backgrounds, to apply.

### **Application**

- To apply, please register and submit the abstract through the [Space for Youth Competition Form](#) by **8 December 2024, 23:59 CET**.
- Please note that you will have to insert your abstract directly in the online form. We suggest you prepare the abstract ahead of completing the application form.
- Results of the abstracts selection will be communicated to successful candidates by **10 January 2025, 23:59 CET**.
- Successful candidates shall submit their essay. The deadline is **26 January 2025, 23:59 CET**.



The results of the competition will be announced **by 19 February**.

Please note that if you have not been contacted within these dates, you have not been selected.

### Opportunities/award for authors of best essays

- The authors of the best 5 essays will win a trip to the United States to meet with representatives of the U.S. space sector and attend an Adult Space Camp at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama<sup>1</sup>.
- The authors of the best 5 essays may be invited to attend other international events.
- Priority will be given to participants from developing countries.

### Requirements for the submission

- Any submissions after the deadline will not be considered. In case of lack of quality of submissions, the Selection Committee reserves the right to extend and, or cancel the competition.
- The abstract will be submitted through the [Space for Youth Competition Form](#).
- The essay should be submitted as a PDF document under 5 MB. The name of the file should be "Name\_Surname\_Space4Youth Competition". Please make sure the title of the file includes your name and surname.
- The abstracts and the essay must be written in English.
- The abstract and essay should include a title.
- The abstract should **not** exceed **100 words**.
- The essay should **not** exceed **1,000 words**, bibliography **excluded**.
- **Do not attach any images or pictures to your essay** as this will prevent OOSA from sharing it on the "Space for Youth" webpage.
- The font used should be Times New Roman with a 12-font size.
- For references, please use the Chicago referencing style. Copying the work of others without appropriate attribution to its source will result in the loss of points and/or disqualification. Failure to properly acknowledge sources may constitute plagiarism. Provide links for researched information and facts that you include. The bibliography does not count in the 1,000 words.
- **The use of any sort of AI tool is strictly forbidden.**
- The text may draw examples from organizations, companies or other entities, but it cannot promote or advertise them.
- Provide definitions for technical terms you use.

### Tips for abstract and essay preparation

Aim for consistent, clear, concise, and comprehensive writing in simple English. As you write, keep these helpful tips in mind.

- If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
- Do not use a long word when a short one will do.
- Use the active voice rather than the passive voice as it is more engaging and easier for readers to understand. It is better to avoid the passive continuous construction ("a conference is being organized").
- Write simple and avoid complicated sentence structures and keep in mind what you're trying to express.

You can use short and relevant subheadings to break up longer text for easier reading.

Use concrete facts, data, and numbers, rather than generalizations wherever possible: "the chlorophyll concentration has increased by 20%" is more interesting and credible than "the chlorophyll concentration has significantly increased." Indicate the source of the figure, whether

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<sup>1</sup> Confirmation and satisfaction of U.S. visa approval will be required.



internal or external. Ideally, provide a link to this source. E.g., "According to the European Commission concentration in the Eastern Bering Sea has increased by XX% from 2000 to 2001 [LINK TO SOURCE]."

Finally, read through your article several times and edit duplications of the same message.

#### Structure

- Introduction: set the ground and main thesis
- Main body: justify the idea and practical solution you are proposing
- Conclusions: reiterate your idea and potentially identify future developments

#### **Evaluation criteria**

The evaluation criteria of the abstract/essay are:

- Relevance of topic
- Coherent and sound reasoning
- Clear structure
- Grammar and sentence structure
- Feasibility of idea
- Originality of idea

For any questions, please contact [space4youth@un.org](mailto:space4youth@un.org)