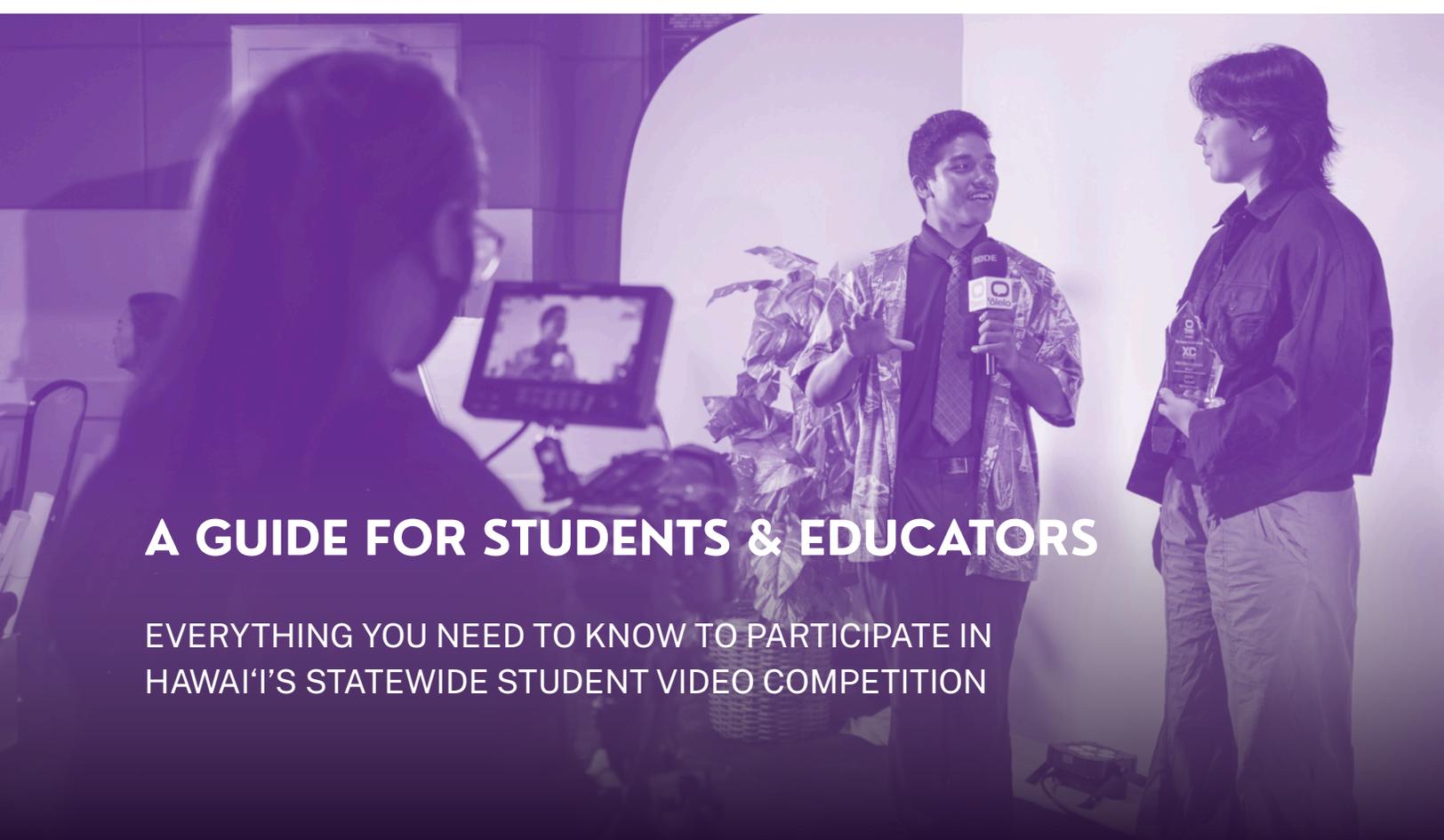




# YOUTH XCHANGE PARTICIPATION PACK



**A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS & EDUCATORS**

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO PARTICIPATE IN  
HAWAII'S STATEWIDE STUDENT VIDEO COMPETITION



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# WELCOME TO YOUTH XCHANGE

## WHAT IS YOUTH XCHANGE?



**YXC is more than a contest; it’s a powerful platform that enables youth to shape important narratives by bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world challenges.**

**History:** In the 2003–2004 school year, ‘ōlelo Community Media launched the *Youth Xchange Statewide Student Video Competition* awards event, engaging with 49 schools and 240 students statewide. The inaugural Awards Show was hosted at Ihilani Hotel (now the Four Seasons) and sponsored by Sony. Since then, YXC has grown significantly, engaging thousands of students from over 230 different schools statewide.

**The Contest:** Organizations identify key topics or issues, and students respond through media that inspire storytelling and

conversation. Whether they choose to work in teams or independently, students are supported by their teachers and mentors to write, create, produce, and edit their videos, then submit them to ‘ōlelo for the competition. Category sponsors review student entries and select student winners. ‘ōlelo invites all student finalists to the annual Awards Show where we announce the winners and celebrate all finalists.

### 2024-25 CONTEST BY THE NUMBERS

**575** ENTRIES

**1,149** STUDENTS (ELEMENTARY - HIGH)

**56** SCHOOLS STATEWIDE

**100%** PARTICIPATION BY HAWAII’S 10 LARGEST PUBLIC SCHOOLS\*

\*CAMPBELL, WAIPAHO, MILILANI, FARRINGTON, MOANALUA, KAPOLEI, WAI’ANAHE, LEILEHUA, MAUI, PEARL CITY

# WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?



The Youth Xchange (YXC) Student Video Competition is open to all Hawai'i state public, private, and homeschool students who wish to share their voices on issues that matter. YXC empowers young storytellers to speak out on real community, state, or global issues through the creative and powerful medium of video.

## ELIGIBILITY

All students currently enrolled in a Hawai'i school are eligible to participate. Entries must be student-created, with adults serving only as advisors. Entries must be filmed and edited between March 1 of the previous competition year and March 1 of the current competition year. All entries must be submitted by the contest deadline.

### Homeschool Students

Homeschool students may enter with a signature from their HIDOE school or recognized homeschool organization. Prizes will be awarded to the homeschool organization.

### Team Entries

Entries may be submitted by individuals or teams of up to five students listed on the entry form. Other contributors may attend the awards banquet with purchased tickets, as space allows.

### Additional Eligibility

Students in after-school or summer media programs, as well as Hawai'i college students (Expert Level only), are also eligible.

# RULES & GUIDELINES

## ENTRY FOCUS

- Through your storytelling be CLEAR about your message. Focus on clear visual and audio communication of the specific entry topic.

## CONTEST REQUIREMENTS

- No duplicate footage/scripts: The same footage or script may not appear in multiple entries.
- Duplication across entries may lead to disqualification.
- Submit each entry into only one category.
- Students may submit one entry into one division only. (see page 7)
- Video must be shot and edited between March 1 of the prior year and February 27 of the current year.
- Work must be student-created. Adult/faculty input should be purely advisory.
- Up to five (5) students may be recognized on the entry form and invited to the awards banquet if selected as finalists. Additional student tickets may be purchased at cost, space permitting.
- Entries from any Hawai'i school (public, private, home, and college) during the dates above are eligible, even if also entered elsewhere.
- Homeschool students must obtain a faculty signature from their affiliated HIDOE school. Prizes will be awarded to the homeschool organization.

## EXPERTISE TIERS

- Students who have won twice in past Youth Xchange contests, received extensive/advanced instruction (e.g., HIKI NŌ, STN), are enrolled in an advanced video/animation class, or have been paid for related work must enter Jr. Experts or Experts (as appropriate).
- Entrants in Jr. Experts or Experts are not eligible to enter other categories.
- College students enrolled at a Hawai'i higher-ed institution may enter the Experts Category. Prizes go to the college's video/film program.

## DEADLINE & SUBMISSION

- Upload by 11:59 p.m. HST on Friday, February 27 (last Friday of February).
- Complete all fields accurately (title, category, first & last names of students, etc.). Incomplete submissions may be disqualified.
- Tip: Submit the best possible uncompressed file(s). Videos will air on cable television and be compressed for streaming.

# RULES & GUIDELINES

## COPYRIGHT & CLEARANCES

- Teachers and/or adult advisors are responsible for obtaining copyright clearance for all materials used. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

## CATEGORY MINIMUMS

- Categories with five or fewer entries will not compete unless approved by the sponsor or program director; submissions may be placed in a similar category.

## FILE REQUIREMENTS

- Team photo required with each entry (max 10MB).
- Format: MOV or MP4 only. Max file size: 1GB.
- Video size and quality preference is 1080p with the default bit rate.
- Export using the H.264 codec/format.



## SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on a real issue  | <input type="checkbox"/> Format: MOV/MP4, max 1GB            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> One category + one division per entry  | <input type="checkbox"/> Team photo attached, max 10 MB      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Submit by the annual deadline  | <input type="checkbox"/> Export using the H.264 codec/format |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shot & Edited: March 1 of the prior year and February 28 of the current year |  |



## FORMAT

All entries must be submitted as either Long Form or Short Form. (see page 6)

### Long Format

Length: 3–5 min.

- Narrative
- Mini Documentary
- Informational
- Call to Action

### Short Format

Length: 30 sec.–2 min.

- Public Service Announcement (PSA) (30-60 sec)
- News Story (1-2 min)



## CATEGORY

Each entry, regardless of format, must be submitted in one of the following categories:

### General Category

- No required theme
- Chosen independently by the student
- Requires a creative and clearly informative message

### Sponsored Category

- Features an annual theme or prompt
- Provided by a sponsoring organization
- Requires a student-created narrative response



## DIVISION

Entries are assigned to Beginner or Expert divisions based on age and experience. (see page 7)

### Beginner Divisions

- Beginner Elementary
- Beginner Middle
- Beginner High

### Expert Divisions

- Junior Expert (Elementary/Middle)
- Expert (High School)

# SHORT FORMAT VS. LONG FORMAT

## SHORT FORMAT

*30 seconds-2 minutes, credits not counted*

**PSA's** (Public Service Announcement): A focused message that raises awareness or encourages action on an issue that matters to your audience.

**News Stories:** A factual, journalistic piece that informs viewers about a timely event, issue, or community story using interviews, narration, and visuals.

## LONG FORMAT

*3-5 minutes, credits not counted*

**Narrative:** A scripted story with characters, dialogue, and a plot, fiction or inspired by real experiences.

**Mini Doc:** A short, nonfiction film exploring a real person, place, or topic through interviews and footage.

**Informational:** A clear, educational video that explains a topic, process, or concept in an engaging way.

**Call to Action:** A persuasive video that motivates viewers to get involved or make a positive change around an issue.

# BEGINNER VS. EXPERT DIVISIONS

To ensure fair judging and recognize a range of student experience levels, Youth Xchange divides entries into two skill-based tiers: Beginner and Expert. Each tier includes specific grade-level divisions. Entries are judged only within their respective tier and division.

## BEGINNER

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The Beginner Division is for students who are new to video production or have limited formal training.

### Eligible grade levels:

- Elementary (Grades K-5)
- Middle (Grades 6-8)
- High School (Grades 9-12)



## EXPERT

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The Expert Division is for students with advanced media experience or prior Youth Xchange success.

### Eligible grade levels:

- Elementary/Middle (Grades K-8 combined)
- High School (Grades 9-12 and College)

### Expert Eligibility

Students must enter Expert if they have:

- Won twice or more with Youth Xchange
- Received advanced media training (HIKI NŌ, STN, advanced courses)
- Taken an advanced media class
- Been paid for production work

# ANNUAL TIMELINE



## OFF-ISLAND PARTICIPATION & TRAVEL TIPS

For neighbor island schools, we encourage early planning so students can fully enjoy the YXC experience.

The Awards Event takes place each April on O‘ahu, and many schools choose to attend as a culminating celebration of their students’ work. Be sure to note the finalist notification date so you have enough time to book flights, secure chaperones, and complete any required permissions or travel forms.

When preparing for the trip, allow time for check-in, coordinate group travel, and help students understand the day’s schedule.

Schools often find it useful to review expectations, pack only essential equipment, and plan for meals, transportation, and comfortable attire.



# SUBMISSION PROCESS

- Review all general rules, regulations and guidelines for YXC contests
- Plan a Short or Long Format video about an issue that impacts Hawaii youth
- Produce a Short or Long Format video that meets all YXC contest guidelines
- Upload the entry before deadline using the [YXC Upload Portal](#)

## SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY

- Prepare your entry for upload, export using the H.264 codec/format
- The preferred export should be an MP4, MOV, or M4V file/container
- Video size and quality preference is 1080p with the default bit rate
- Follow the steps on the [YXC Upload Portal](#) to submit your entry
  - Click the button for the contest you want to enter to open the Google Form
  - Google Form Section 1 - Entry Identification and Photo
  - Google Form Section 2 - Upload your video entry, preferably under 1GB
- Receive on-screen confirmation that your entry has been received

*(Refer to checklist on page 4)*



## YXC UPLOAD PORTAL



# JUDGING RUBRIC

## CONCEPT & MESSAGE

- Is the idea clear and on-theme?
- Does it communicate something meaningful?

## IMPACT

- Did it move, inspire, or stick with you?
- Would it connect with others too?

## CLARITY

- Was the story easy to follow?
- Did it keep your attention?

## CONCEPT & MESSAGE

- Is the idea clear and on-theme?
- Does it communicate something meaningful?

## PRODUCTION QUALITY

- Is the video and audio clear and easy to watch?
- Does it feel polished enough to share publicly?



## AWARDS SHOW



The Youth Xchange (YXC) Awards Show is Hawai‘i’s annual celebration of student storytelling through video. All finalists are invited to attend this exciting event, where

community partners recognize the creativity of students. Since its launch in 2003, the YXC Awards Show has been held each late April at a variety of locations across O‘ahu, showcasing the diversity and spirit of Hawai‘i’s youth. Winners receive trophies, prizes, and recognition from local media professionals, educators, and community leaders. Every finalist’s work is celebrated, making the YXC Awards a highlight of the school year and an inspiring showcase of student voices.

NEW

## PARTNERS & PATHWAYS

Following the Awards Show, ‘Ōlelo invites students, educators and families to connect with opportunities beyond the event. Sponsors, colleges, workforce development programs, and community partners will host booths to share resources and learning options. Attendees can explore, engage, enjoy food, and discover next steps in a welcoming, interactive space.



# THE JACK BATES MEDIA TEACHER AWARD



The Youth Xchange Media Teacher Award honors educators who ignite creativity, elevate youth voice, and champion media literacy in the classroom. It celebrates those who go beyond instruction to nurture curiosity, foster inclusive spaces, and encourage authentic storytelling.

Presented in memory of Jack Bates, a visionary advocate for youth expression, this award pays tribute to his legacy of empowering others through storytelling. His work at 'Ōlelo Community Media, Alaska Airlines, and Hawaiian Airlines reflected his deep belief that media is a powerful bridge that connects communities, amplifies voices, and inspires change.





**Q: What are the video export format specifications required for submission?**

A: All entries must be submitted in MOV or MP4 format, with a maximum file size of 1GB.

**Q: Can students work individually, or must they be in a group?**

A: Students may work individually or in a group.

**Q: Is there an entry fee for the competition?**

A: No. There are no entry fees to participate.

**Q: Is there a limit on the number of students in a group?**

A: There is no limit on group size. However, only five students from the finalist team will receive complimentary invitations to the awards show.

**Q: Is there a limit on the number of students participating per school/division?**

A: There is no limit on the number of students who can participate from a school or division.

# STAY CONNECTED

Thank you for taking the time to explore the Youth Xchange (YXC) Video Competition and for supporting Hawai'i's next generation of storytellers. Whether you're an educator guiding young creators or a student discovering your voice through media, your participation helps strengthen our island community through creativity, collaboration, and positive storytelling.

YXC continues to grow thanks to the dedication of teachers, students, and families across Hawai'i who believe in the power of media to inspire change. We're honored to celebrate your hard work and can't wait to see your stories come to life at this year's annual Youth Xchange Awards.



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