NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

SLINGSHOT CHALLENGE 2027

Selection Criteria Explained

Want to know what the Slingshot Challenge selection panelists are looking for when they review videos? The panelists give each video a rating in each of the seven Selection Criteria. To help you max-out your rating, we have given you some video examples for each category to spark your own ideas and inspiration. **Just think of this as your Slingshot Challenge cheat-code.**



Photo: Suzy Altman/National Geographic

ISSUE COMMUNICATED EFFECTIVELY

Link clear global descriptions of the problem with **specific and easy-to-imagine** local examples of the problem, like No Food Left Behind. They saw a national issue, but investigated how it impacted their local community.

Tell the story of your discovery of the problem as a way to share important statistics like Reducing Academic Paper Consumption. In this video, the creator uses playful storytelling to introduce her research. She also translates her data into a format people can understand when she says schools use "250 trees worth of paper each year" rather than saying "2,012.031 pages."



Be specific about the **exact problem you want to solve**. The Starting a Pure Day with PureDae team focused on air pollution caused by cars stopped in traffic jams at specific high-traffic intersections in their home city. In the Trash Cup Challenge, students use photography and video to show the problem of plastic waste in the local river.

EMOTIONAL IMPACT

Introduce the audience to **you and your community** through your words and images. Watch how Los Angeles Climate introduces the videomaker and his community with a personal voice and casual video of the community in the environment.



Use a story that **shows, not just tells**, the impact of your issue on you and your community. The Trovador-Tree Planting Robot whisks the audience away on a bike ride through Portugal's fire-scarred landscapes, vividly narrating the toll on its lush greenery. Then, the video uses a real interview to drive the message home, all eliciting an emotional response from the audience.

UNIQUE/CREATIVE

Can you make it easy for **new groups of people** to help solve local problems? The Urban Pollinators team invited local gardeners to rethink the way their green spaces could support the environment. The Dishes on Demand team found ways to make school sports teams partners in eliminating disposable plasticware.

ESCUCHANDO EL HUMEDAL



Some of the most creative solutions are **applications** that help people make green decisions, like Reducing Academic Paper Consumption. Do you think people would live greener lives if only they had a tool to help them? Make an app for that!

Think about **new ways to make people care** and want to act. In Escuchando el Humedal, the challenge participant records the sounds of the wetlands to share with his community.

EFFECTIVE USE OF VIDEO MAKING TECHNIQUES

Show the audience **real people in real places**. Take Action for Endangered Species uses photographs and videos collected from the past to tell the story, while Trovador-Tree Planting Robot uses live videos shot on location and an interview to bring the audience into the setting.

Use **live video and "actors" to show your story**. In Dispensing Plastics, the team used live shots of students at school, mixed with graphics to illustrate the problem.

Mix up your **video shot types to create visual drama**. The panning and zooming used in Wildlife Superheroes and Escuchando el Humedal create a sense of movement and make the viewer feel like they are walking through the same unique locations as the videomaker. See the Participant Toolkit for more details on shot types.

DISPENSING PLASTICS



CLEAR, ACHIEVABLE CALL TO ACTION

Include a **detailed description** of your solution and the **action people can take**. In Friendly Neighborhood Composters, the videomaker outlines her hyper-local solution and shows how neighbors can use a QR code to take action.

Think about **what each person can do**, even if it is unusual. In Blue crab, the team provides recipes that encourage people in Italy to catch, kill, and eat a delicious, but threatening, invasive species.

EXPLORER CONNECTION

Learn more from stories of impact about National Geographic Explorers or search the Explorer Directory. **Find an Explorer whose project inspires you** and dig a little deeper by watching videos of presentations or exploring their website. You may get great ideas like Fight Floods, Transform Cities and Firemapper: Collecting Wildfire Data or find an inspirational quote like Mazah: Food Waste Fighting App.

FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD COMPOSTERS



Remember, there are **special awards** for drawing connections to National Geographic Explorers.

RECYCLER: WHERE WE CREATE LIFE



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Be clear and specific about how the problem is **impacting your community** with examples. Also show how your proposed actions will make a difference in the community. RECYCLER: Where we create life uses on-site footage to show how humans have destroyed and repaired the land in the videomakers own home region.

Show **who will need to act** and how you will work with them to take action. Friendly Neighborhood Composters shows how the videomaker helps her neighbors make their trash a little greener.

Work with an **existing group** that is already **helping your community**. The Wildlife Superheroes video shows how their team is working with a local science center to reach young learners with exciting technology. The Trash Cup Challenge team connected canoeing clubs with wildlife groups to protect the river they all love. These groups brought new ideas and energy to existing organizations to spark change.