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## **2023 CEC Youth Engagement Week (YEW) Participation Guidelines**

**Please read these guidelines carefully. By participating in the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Youth Engagement Week you attest that you understand the event guidelines and agree to abide by its rules and requirements.**

Mark your calendars for the first CEC Youth Engagement Week, taking place 14–16 November 2023, in person, in Montreal, Canada, and help address climate and environmental emergencies by reshaping youth engagement in North American environmental cooperation.

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) aims to engage with nine young individuals aged 18–35, from Canada, Mexico, and the United States (three from each country), in order to give them an opportunity at the trilateral level to share their expertise on youth-led initiatives and inspire change. The CEC is seeking to amplify the voices of youth who are at the forefront of addressing environmental challenges in North America.

Participants will have the opportunity to learn from the CEC and to network with experts from diverse backgrounds. Participating youth will meet with CEC's Secretariat staff members and potentially meet virtually with members of the CEC's Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) and Traditional Ecological Knowledge Expert Group (TEKEG) to share ideas on promoting greater youth engagement. Other youth-focused cultural, social, and educational activities involving collaborative environmental learning and action will also occur during the week, with some of the CEC's collaborators.

Marginalized voices are highly encouraged to apply, as the CEC promotes diversity and inclusion. The CEC aims to reach out to populations that have already engaged with the CEC but also those that have not been reached by the CEC before, making it possible for their perspectives to be included in the conversation. Equal representation is a core value of the event, with the aim that all voices be heard and included in the discussion.

### **Youth Engagement Week Program**

The program will consist of meetings with the CEC's Secretariat teams and collaborators and of working sessions. The working sessions will culminate in the presentation of the youths' recommendations to the CEC Secretariat for the development of the CEC Youth Engagement Strategy and the implementation of youth initiatives.

#### **Details:**

- Monday 13 November: Arriving in Montreal
- Tuesday 14 November: Official meetings with various CEC teams
- Wednesday 15 November: Working sessions



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- Thursday 16 November: Presentation of the recommendations arising from the working sessions meetings
- Friday 17 November: Leaving Montreal

#### **Expected Outcomes of the Youth Engagement Week**

- Raising awareness of youth's priorities, on a trilateral level
- Creating diverse networking opportunities
- Supporting the creation of a trilateral Youth Engagement Strategy

#### **About the CEC**

[Commission for Environmental Cooperation \(CEC\)](http://www.cec.org/about/) | <http://www.cec.org/about/>



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## CEC Youth Engagement Week

### Application Process

**Application Submission:** Interested applicants must fill out the application form by 16 October 2023, 23:59 their local time.

**Submission Evaluation:** An intergenerational selection committee comprising CEC Secretariat staff will review the application forms and select nine youth (three from each country), based on established evaluation criteria (see below).

**Selected Youth Announced:** All applicants will receive an answer by email by 31 October 2023.

**Travel Arrangements:** The nine selected youth will be contacted to make their travel arrangements. All costs associated with their participation will be covered by the CEC (transportation, accommodation, meals), with the exception of costs associated to age, citizenship and travel documentation (see below).

**Online Meetings:** The nine selected youth will be required to participate in online meetings during the weeks of 6 and 20 November 2023.

**Youth Engagement Week (YEW):** The nine selected youth will arrive in Montreal, Canada, on 13 November 2023 and take part in the activities planned for the YEW, from 14 to 16 November 2023.

## Rules and Requirements

### Participation

This event will be open to youth from across North America (Canada, Mexico, United States). This includes youth leaders, activists, students, and representatives from youth-focused nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The selection process will prioritize applicants from marginalized groups, to ensure diversity and inclusion. Applications in English, French, or Spanish are welcome. Interpretation at the CEC Secretariat in Montreal throughout the week will be provided.

### Eligibility

- **Country of residence:** Applicants must legally reside in Canada, Mexico or the United States at the time of participation in the Youth Engagement Week and possess valid travel documentation to enter Canada. Proof of residency, and travel



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documentation will be required (e.g., passport). Any costs associated with providing these documents will be borne by the participant.

- **Age:** Applicants must be 18 to 35 years old (inclusively) on the date they submit their application form (proof of age will be required).
- **Availability:** Applicants must be available to join an online orientation meeting before the YEW (during the week of 6 November 2023), and a debrief meeting after the YEW (during the week of 20 November), as well as to travel to be in Montreal, Canada, from 13 to 16 November 2023.
- **If applicable, passport:** Applicants must have a valid passport at the time of application.

### How to participate

To apply, we encourage participants to read the Guidelines to understand the expectations of their engagement, and to fill out the application form afterwards. Applicants must complete the application form by filling **every** required section. There is no cost to apply.

- a. We encourage applicants to prepare for the questions in advance, either independently or by consulting peers in their organization (if applicable). Note that only ONE person per application is allowed.
- b. We highly recommend that applicants read the supporting documents (provided in the application form) before providing their recommendations.
- c. Applicants will be able to edit their responses after submitting their application form as long as they do so before the application deadline. To do this, they will need to access the application form from the same device they used to fill it out the first time.
- d. Applicants must submit their application forms by 16 October 2023, 11:59 p.m., their local time.

**Important: NO applications received after this deadline will be considered; no exception.**

### Deadlines

- **Submission Deadline:** All fully completed application forms must be submitted by 23:59 your local time on 16 October 2023. Application forms that are incomplete or are posted after this time will not be considered eligible.
- **Youth Selection:** The selection committee will choose nine youth (three from each country) to take part in the Youth Engagement Week.
- **Announcement of results:** All participants will be contacted by email by 31 October 2023.



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## **Selected Participants**

- Three participants per country will be selected by the selection committee comprising CEC Secretariat staff members.
- The top applicants will be selected based on the criteria described below.
- The top participants will be determined in October 2023. The selected participants will be notified by email.
- The selected youth will be invited to attend virtual meetings and travel to be in Montreal, Canada, from 14 to 16 November 2023, and take part in all the activities planned for the Youth Engagement Week.
- Transportation and lodging, airport transfer expenses, and a daily stipend for food will be provided. The traveler is responsible for obtaining, the necessary preliminary travel documents, such as a valid passport and travel visa (if applicable), and the costs thereof.
- The selected applicant is the only person eligible to participate in the Youth Engagement Week.
- The selected youth participants must acknowledge their agreement to participate in the Youth Engagement Week no later than one week following notification of their selection, in order to remain eligible to receive transportation and lodging, airport transfer expenses, and a daily stipend for food.

## **Selection**

- Applicants must indicate their experience representing youth voices in organizations, events, activities, and initiatives, as well as their interest in environmental issues, international relations, sustainability and/or other relevant issues, and life experiences that inspired their interest in these areas.
- Application forms will be judged using the following criteria: Vision on Youth Engagement (25%), Background (25%), and Recommendations (50%).
- The selection committee will comprise CEC Secretariat staff members.
- Responses in the application form must reflect the applicant's vision of what meaningful youth engagement means to them.
- Application forms must be filled out by youth aged 18–35 (inclusively) residing in Canada, Mexico, or the United States.
- Any submissions containing vulgarity, nudity, discrimination, violence, defamatory language, or any other subject matter deemed by the CEC to be inappropriate will be disqualified and given no further consideration.

Participants agree that the decisions of the selection committee are final.

## **Evaluation criteria:**

Submitted application forms will be judged using the following criteria: Vision on Youth Engagement (25%), Background (25%), and Recommendations (50%).



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- **Vision on Youth Engagement (25%)**

- What does meaningful youth engagement mean to you? Why do you consider it important?

- **Background (25%)**

- Tell us about past experiences during which you represented youth voices and felt engaged and/or heard as a youth.
  - Provide examples of past, current, or planned future participation in organizations, youth-oriented events, activities, or initiatives, in which you represented youth voices; and/or examples of non-youth-related events where you brought forward a youth voice.
- Tell us why you are interested in environmental issues, international relations, sustainability and/or other relevant issues. What life experiences have inspired your interests in these areas?

Optional (if not provided, this does not affect a participant's evaluation):

- Please share with us any additional material that will help us get to know you better—e.g., video, cover letter, presentation, social media post, poem.

- **Recommendations (50%)**

- Propose recommendations on enhancing youth engagement initiatives in a trilateral/intergovernmental setting.

Recommended supporting documents (optional):

- 2020–2025 CEC Strategic Plan
- Council Statement (2023 Council Session)
- Executive Summary – Youth Innovation Challenge Long-term Impact Assessment

### **Additional Considerations**

Applicants will also be asked the following **optional** questions, to seek diverse representation:



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- Do you identify as a person belonging to a marginalized group? Please specify which marginalized group(s) you belong to.
- Have you collaborated with the CEC before? In which capacity? (e.g., Youth Innovation Challenge winners, youth delegation, campaigns, projects, panels, etc.)

### **Submission Use and Copyright**

- The CEC reserves the right to using and implementing recommendations and ideas submitted by participants, in any CEC-related promotional or advertising venture without notification or compensation to the participant.
- The submitters agree to the possibility of broad, multi-platform distribution of their participation in the Youth Engagement Week, including via Internet, video, and print.
- The submitters will receive credit for their contributions.

### **Official Languages**

- The official languages of the Youth Engagement Week are English, French and Spanish. Participants may submit their application forms in any of these three languages. Interpretation will be provided throughout the week at the CEC Secretariat Headquarters in Montreal, Canada and during the online meetings.

### **Liability**

- By applying to take part in the Youth Engagement Week, each participant acknowledges and agrees that the CEC, its staff, and the selection committee: (i) shall have no liability of any kind whatsoever with respect to this event, (ii) makes no warranty, guarantee or representation of any kind concerning the participation in the event, (iii) disclaims any implied warranty, and (iv) is not liable for injury, loss or damage of any kind resulting from the participant's acceptance of these guidelines and legal requirements, or otherwise from such participation in this event. The CEC, its staff, and the selection committee are not responsible for typographical or other errors in the offer or administration of this event, including, but not limited to, errors in advertising, the official event rules, or the selection and announcement of the selected youth. The CEC, its staff, and the selection committee are not responsible for any problems or technical malfunctions of any telephone network or lines, computer online systems or servers, computer software problems or traffic congestion on the Internet or at any website, and assume no liability for damage to a participant's or any person's computer resulting from participation in the event. Participants agree to release and hold harmless the CEC, its staff, and the selection committee, from and against any claim or cause of action, including, but not limited to, personal injury, death, or damage to or loss of property arising from participation in the Youth Engagement Week.
- The CEC is an international organization in Canada under the Headquarters Agreement Between the Government of Canada and the Commission for Environmental Cooperation. Nothing in this selection process, including participation during the YEW, shall be deemed to be a waiver,





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express or implied, of any immunity from suit, legal process or execution, or of any privilege, exemption or other immunity, enjoyed or which may be enjoyed by the Commission pursuant to any applicable convention, agreement, law or decree, whether international or domestic.

### **Negotiation**

- Disputes resulting from the participation in this event, or in the interpretation, validity, or enforceability of rules pertaining to this event, shall be resolved by good-faith negotiation between the participant and the CEC.

### **Entering Canada**

- The CEC will make all efforts to provide necessary documents to facilitate entry into Canada, but participants should be aware that Canadian immigration authorities may refuse a participant to enter the country, in which case the CEC will not be responsible.

### **Other**

- Any application form submitted by a participant does not reflect the views of the CEC or the governments of Canada, Mexico, and the United States, nor do these Parties endorse any representations made in the submitted application forms. Further, participants agree not to use the name or logos of the CEC or any of the three countries.
- Selected participants are not allowed to identify themselves as “CEC employees” during the event, including on social media.
- Participants must follow all instructions or risk their application forms not being accepted.
- The CEC is not responsible for other costs associated with filling out the application form (e.g., internet, computer access, etc.)
- The CEC is not responsible for lost, late, or misrouted application forms.
- Participants must inform the CEC if their contact information changes at any time between submitting their application form and the announcement of the selected youth.
- The CEC retains the right to cancel the Youth Engagement Week for any reason whatsoever, and without advance notice to the participants.
- The CEC retains the right to change the rules of this event.

If you have any questions, please contact:

[youth@cec.org](mailto:youth@cec.org)

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE APPLICATION FORM](#)

**Thank you for your interest in our event!**

**We look forward to reading your application.**