

Bow Seat

Ocean Awareness Programs

2018 Marine Debris Creative Advocacy Competition



Artwork by Ellory D., Grade 10, Texas (USA),
2016 Ocean Awareness Student Contest Participant

Have you ever been upset to see plastic bags, cigarettes butts, and candy wrappers littering your favorite beach or park? Do you wish your school provided recycling bins for single-use water bottles? Or maybe you'd prefer that your friends didn't use single-use water bottles at all!

If you care about marine debris issues *and* want to make a difference in your community, we invite you and other middle and high school students from the United States to participate in the **Marine Debris Creative Advocacy Competition!** Enter individually or rally a group to work together. There is no fee to enter the Competition.

The Challenge

We challenge you to design and lead a creative advocacy campaign in your school or community.

Your campaign should meet the Competition goals of:

- Educating the public about marine debris;
- Inspiring people to change their behavior;
- Engaging others in an activity that reduces or prevents marine debris.

OK, So What is Marine Debris?

Marine debris is defined as any persistent solid material that is manufactured or processed and directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, disposed of or abandoned into the marine environment or the Great Lakes. Our oceans, lakes, and rivers are filled with items that do not belong there – plastic bags, soda cans, tires, abandoned fishing gear, and other foreign objects – that threaten marine life, our environment, the economy, and human health.

Most importantly, marine debris is preventable. This is where you come in!

Arts for Advocacy

Advocacy is an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions and change behavior. At Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Programs, we believe in the power of the creative arts to raise awareness of the marine debris problem in ways that inspire the public to take action. Access to facts, while important, does not alone inspire long-term, measurable behavior change. The creative expression of information through the arts is a powerful tool that taps into human emotions and speaks to personal beliefs, which is necessary to drive a widespread cultural shift away from our “throwaway culture” and toward one that values the health of our oceans.

We encourage you to use the creative arts whenever possible throughout your campaign to educate your audience about reducing litter and marine debris. Consider how an informational brochure or poster, innovative media, or other art campaign can play an important role in meeting the goals of your campaign.

Benefits of Participating

This Competition is based on the growing understanding that combining skills from the creative arts with experiential, or project-based, learning is an extremely effective way to spark passion and action.

By participating in the Bow Seat Marine Debris Creative Advocacy Competition, you will have the opportunity to create meaningful change in your community at school and beyond. At the same time, we hope to increase your self-confidence and help you build skills – including leadership, critical thinking, project management, communications, and teamwork – that will be valuable in all areas of your life.

Ready to Get Started? Let's Go!

Follow the steps below to find out how to participate in the 2018 Marine Debris Creative Advocacy Competition. If you have any questions about the Competition, please email advocacy@fromthebowseat.org.

Contest Deadline: June 18, 2018

Awards

Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Programs is proud to offer awards of up to \$5,000 to students and student groups whose campaigns most effectively raise awareness of and address the marine debris problem through creativity, community engagement, and activism.

Gold Award	\$5,000
Silver Award	\$2,500
Bronze Awards	\$1,000
Honorable Mention Awards	\$500

Winners will be announced in Fall 2018. Students are free to use their awards however they choose, but they are encouraged to use their awards for continued study or development of their advocacy campaigns.

To recognize participants' commitments and efforts to make a difference in their communities, every student will receive a Certificate of Participation acknowledging their contribution to this NOAA-sponsored Competition.

Step 1: Brainstorm

Learn & Be Inspired

Immerse yourself in the issue of marine debris. Go into your neighborhood to observe and document problems such as littering or the consumption of single-use plastics. Have conversations with your principal, town officials, or local business owners to identify challenges and opportunities specific to your school or community.

We have many resources to help you get started on your campaign, including educational materials for learning more about marine debris, and inspiration to get your creative juices flowing! **Visit www.bowseat.org.**

Brainstorm ideas for how you can tackle the problems you uncovered. Who do you want to reach, and what are your goals? How can you incorporate the creative arts to raise awareness, tug at emotions, and encourage behavior change?

Select a campaign that you feel passionate about and that is relevant to your school or community. Create a list of tasks that must be completed to achieve your objectives, including deadlines and team member roles. Identify the materials you need to carry out these tasks (e.g., flyers, art supplies, recycling bins) and the budget necessary to purchase these items.

Need help brainstorming your creative advocacy campaign? Check out the campaign examples below, or the winning 2017 submissions at www.bowseat.org.

1. Host an educational marine debris art show, film, or lecture series with an opening reception in your town or school. Bow Seat can provide you with student artwork and other resources to assist you in hosting a marine debris-themed art exhibition.
2. Create a series of public service announcements about the marine debris problem for your local TV, radio station, or newspaper.
3. Create an educational mural or storm drain public art campaign in your town.
4. Create a campaign to prevent or reduce specific types of waste on your school's campus.
5. Design and lead a marine debris-focused environmental education curriculum for your local elementary school.
6. Set up an informational table at your school or local supermarket to distribute information about marine debris; include a petition for individuals to make a personal pledge to reduce their single-use plastic consumption.
7. Work with a local restaurant to find and use more sustainable options than single-use takeout containers or encourage them to go strawless.
8. Make and market upcycled marine debris products (e.g., art, jewelry, accessories)
9. Develop or use a smartphone app or website with tools for learning about and tracking litter/marine debris in your local watershed.

Step 2: Prepare & Register

Find a Sponsor

Each individual or group who participates in the Marine Debris Creative Advocacy Competition must have the support of an adult sponsor. Your sponsor will provide you or your team with guidance throughout your advocacy campaign and will serve as an additional point of contact. This sponsor may be a teacher, community member, local business owner, etc., but may not be your parent.

You must receive a signed Letter of Commitment from your sponsor as part of the registration process for the Competition. This is an electronic form that you will request when registering.

We think that one of the most important parts of ocean advocacy is having conversations about ocean issues, including marine debris. We encourage students and sponsors to talk with each other about marine debris and how the creative arts can make a meaningful difference in our world.

Read the Rules

Don't skip the fine print! The Competition Rules contain a lot of important information about deadlines, eligibility, file formats, and more. It's important to read these through before you move forward with your campaign.

Competition Period

- The 2018 Marine Debris Creative Advocacy Competition begins September 18, 2017 at 12:01 AM Eastern Time (ET) and closes on June 18, 2018, 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET). The online submission platform will close automatically at the Competition deadline. Please plan accordingly!

Who May Enter

- The Competition is open to middle and high school students in the United States, District of Columbia, and U.S. territories who are in grades 6-12 (or the homeschool equivalent) during the 2017-2018 academic year. Eligible students enrolled in U.S.-accredited schools abroad may also participate.
- Students under the age of 13 must have documented permission from a parent or legal guardian to enter the Competition. This consent will be provided by a signed Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Programs Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) Privacy Notice form (available online) that will be required as part of the registration process.
- Entries may be submitted by an individual or by a group of unlimited size. Groups must select one group leader to serve as the primary contact, and all group members must be named in the Final Project Report. Awards will be distributed evenly among all group members.
- A student may submit (i.e., have his/her name included on) only one entry in the Advocacy Competition.
 - However, that student may submit original art, poetry, prose, film and/or music to Bow Seat's other program: the 2018 Ocean Awareness Student Contest, including works that are used as part of his/her advocacy campaign. All entries to the Ocean Awareness Student Contest must be the student's original work.

How to Enter

- There is no fee to enter the Competition.
- Students must select an adult to be their sponsor for the Competition. This sponsor may be a teacher, community member, local business owner, etc., but may not be their parent.
- Students and groups interested in participating in the Competition must create an account and register through our online system. During this step, students will provide basic contact information, briefly describe their campaign ideas, and request a sponsor letter of commitment. (Students under the age of 13 must also upload a Bow Seat COPPA form.)
- Registration must be approved before moving forward in the Competition. Registrations are evaluated and approved on a rolling basis; students and their sponsor will receive an email regarding their registration status within one week of submission.
- Upon approval of their registration, students will be emailed a link to access their online Project Report. Final Project Reports and supporting materials must be submitted

through our online system by June 18, 2018, 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET) in order to be considered for the 2018 Competition.

- All activities detailed in the Final Project Report must be developed or take place during the 2017-2018 academic school year. We understand that the entire campaign may not be completed by the Competition deadline.
- Only complete Project Reports will be considered for the Competition. Consult the Final Project Report checklist to keep track of the information and supporting materials needed for submission.
- Each student must complete the required Pre- and Post-Participation Surveys, which will be made available after the student's registration has been approved and after the Final Project Report has been submitted, respectively. These surveys are intended to gauge participants' environmental awareness and attitudes, which will inform Bow Seat's program evaluation and development. The surveys are in no way tied to the judging process.
- The supporting video that is required as part of the Final Project Report must comply with the following requirements:
 - Be uploaded to YouTube or Vimeo and named: *2018 Bow Seat Marine Debris Creative Advocacy Competition-Project Title*
 - Be 3-5 minutes in length (end credits, if applicable, do not count towards this time limit)
 - Include an overview of the marine debris problem; campaign goals, audiences, activities, challenges, and accomplishments; and a call-to-action
 - Credit all sources used to create the video in the end credits
- Additional supporting materials for the Final Project Report must be submitted as one of the following file types: Word, PDF, JPG, or PNG. These supporting materials should be named in the following manner:
 - Campaign Artifacts:
Artifact-Student First Name-Student Last Name-1, Artifact-Student First Name-Student Last Name-2, Artifact-Student First Name-Student Last Name-3, etc.
 - Works Cited:
Works Cited-Student First Name-Student Last Name

Judging

- Judging begins immediately after the Competition closes. Decisions of the judges are final.
- Submissions will be evaluated based on the quality and thoughtfulness of the Final Project Report, how well the campaign addressed the Competition's goals, and how effectively students integrated the creative arts into their campaigns. The required supporting video will not be evaluated by its technical quality; rather, judges will consider its artistic voice and students' passion in advocating for behavior change to address the marine debris problem.
- Due to regulations governing NOAA's Federal grant, we are unable to award submissions that include any lobbying activities. If you are unsure if your activities qualify as lobbying, please contact us at advocacy@fromthebowseat.org.
- Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Honorable Mention winners will be selected. Students are free to use their awards however they choose, but they are encouraged to use their awards for continued study or development of their advocacy campaigns.

- Winners and their sponsors will be notified via email before they are publicly announced on Bow Seat's website in Fall 2018.
- All winners must submit a W-9 form before receiving their awards.
- Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Programs reserves the right to use students' work for marketing and promotional purposes in any and all media.
- Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Programs promises to administer this Competition fairly, ethically, and with integrity.

Register

Students and groups interested in participating in the Competition must create an account and register through our online system. We encourage you to register early!

You will need:

- Basic contact information
- A brief description of your campaign idea
- Name and contact information for your adult sponsor
- Parent/guardian permission form (required for students under the age of 13)

Your registration must be approved before moving forward in the Competition. Registrations are evaluated and approved on a rolling basis; you and your sponsor will receive an email regarding your registration status within approximately one week of submission.

Step 3: Take Action

Fill Out the Pre-Participation Survey

After your registration is approved, you will receive a link for a pre-participation survey. Survey responses will not influence judging. The survey is intended to measure participants' environmental awareness and attitudes, which will inform our program evaluation and development.

Review the Final Project Report Checklist

Use our Final Project Report checklist to keep track of the information and supporting materials you'll need to document and collect throughout your campaign.

- Statement of Problem (50 words)
How does marine debris impact your school or community?
- Objectives (100 words) – What specific goals did you hope to achieve through your campaign?
- Target Audiences (100 words)
Who did you engage in your campaign? Did you form any partnerships? Who benefited from the campaign?
- Anticipated & Actual Challenges (100 words) – What challenges did you expect to face during your campaign? What complications actually arose? How did you modify your campaign to address these unexpected challenges?

- **Budget Narrative (150 words)**
Did you need funding to execute your campaign? How did you raise money? If applicable, please list your expenses and funding sources.
- **Campaign Activities (250 words)**
Describe at least one marine debris prevention activity or event that you completed as part of your advocacy campaign. Include how you integrated the creative arts into this activity.
- **Impacts (200 words)**
What did you achieve? Be specific! (For example, did you educate other youth about recycling, or reduce plastic use?) How many people did you reach? How many volunteer hours were spent on your project? Do you think that your campaign has the potential to have continued, long-term impacts?
- **Personal Reflection (250 words)**
What has been the most meaningful part of the campaign to you? What skills have you gained from this experience? How have your environmental attitudes changed? Has this experience changed actions in your everyday life?
- **Supporting Materials:**
 - **Video (required)**
URL link to original 3-5 minute YouTube or Vimeo video that includes an overview of the marine debris problem; your campaign goals, audiences, activities, challenges, and accomplishments; and a call-to-action
 - **Campaign Artifacts (optional, but recommended)**
Copies of creative materials created during campaign development, including – but not limited to – research or brainstorming notes, interview transcripts, task lists, maps, artwork, photographs, audio files, communications materials such as flyers or brochures, and PowerPoint presentations
 - **Works Cited (required, if applicable)**
List of the sources of all works of art used in your campaign that are not your own

Document Your Journey

Capture every step of your campaign so that you can share your journey with others. How does marine debris impact your community? How did you try to address these problems through your campaign? Who did you engage? What challenges did you face? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

You will use your footage and photos to create an edited 3-5 minute video (to be submitted as part of your Final Project Report) to educate others about the marine debris problem and inspire them to become a part of the solution in their communities. This video itself does not count as your project or campaign; rather, it should illustrate your process and bring your Final Project Report to life.

Never made a video before? No problem! We have resources to help you create one at www.bowseat.org.

Save Campaign Artifacts

As you work, save copies of materials created while you develop your campaign, including – but not limited to – research or brainstorming notes, interview transcripts, task lists, maps, artwork, photographs, presentations, and communications materials such as flyers or brochures. Be sure to record the sources of all works of art used in your project that are not your own.

Step 4: Submit

Complete Your Final Project Report

When Bow Seat approves your registration, you will be emailed a link to access your online Final Project Report. This will be the primary way for you to report on your advocacy campaign, and by which Bow Seat will judge your submission to the Competition.

You must submit your Final Project Report and supporting materials through our online system by the Competition deadline: June 18, 2018, 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET).

Now sit back and feel awesome about yourself and the work you've done on behalf of our Blue Planet.

Fill Out the Post-Participation Survey

After you submit your entry, you will receive a link for a post-participation survey. What did you learn from the project? Have your attitudes towards marine debris changed at all? We want to know! Survey responses will not influence judging. The survey is intended to measure participants' environmental awareness and attitudes, which will inform our program evaluation and development.

Nominate Your Sponsor for an Award

Bow Seat grants Sponsor Appreciation Awards of \$750 to sponsors who help change the lives of their students and change the world for the better! These awards are nomination-based, so give props to your sponsor today! Complete the nomination form at www.bowseat.org.

The Marine Debris Creative Advocacy Campaign is made possible by a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Debris Program, which supports projects that use outreach and education to inspire people to reduce and prevent marine debris. These projects aim to change behavior, especially among youth, and to provide them with opportunities to engage in active, hands-on experiences that deepen their understanding of the marine debris problem.

Get started at www.bowseat.org