



The Royal College of Science Union Science Challenge 2026

Eligibility and rules

Imperial College London

Eligibility:

The RCSU Science Challenge consists of two categories: Imperial Students and School Students.

To be eligible for the Science Challenge, you must either be:

1. Currently enrolled on an Imperial College Undergraduate/Postgraduate degree (Not including PhD).
2. A school student currently in your last three years of secondary education (UK year 11-13 or equivalent).

Terms and Conditions for Imperial Students:

- Your submission may be inspired by but should not be a direct copy of any coursework or other submission you have used or intend to use for credit in your course.
- This is an individual competition and so team entries will not be accepted.
- All prizes may be subject to change/availability.
- There is no requirement to come to the Awards Ceremony. We are hoping to live stream the event.
- If a shortlisted candidate cannot attend the Awards Ceremony, we ask that they film a video of their presentation explaining their entry, so it can be played should they win.
- We expect adherence to Imperial College's policy on plagiarism including citations where necessary and reserve the right to reject entries on grounds of plagiarism.

Terms and Conditions for School Students:

- While we will accept and encourage multiple entries per school, only one winner/runner up will be allowed per school.
- This is an individual competition and so team entries will not be accepted.
- All prizes may be subject to change/availability.

- For any in person attendance prizes, we are unfortunately unable to subsidise accommodation or travel expenses.
- There is no requirement to come to the Awards Ceremony. We are hoping to live stream the event.
- If a shortlisted candidate cannot attend the Awards Ceremony, we ask that they film a video of their presentation explaining their entry, so it can be played should they win.
- Although for school students we do not expect citations throughout the work, for essay submissions the judges note that merit is attached to submissions which provide bibliographies for their work, and indicate the sources used to find information.

Accepted Formats :

The accepted formats are:

1. Essay of 1000 words or less.
2. Short video no longer than 5 minutes.

Each Essay/Video submission should have your full name, age, contact email, and institution/school clearly displayed.

Diagrams, photographs and graphics relevant to the essay are permitted and encouraged for aiding explanations. There is no limit on diagrams or figures, but entrants should bear in mind that judges are looking for short, concise, and effective pieces of science communication.

Prize Categories:

The following prizes will be awarded:

- Best Imperial Student Essay.
- Best Imperial Student Video.
- Best School Student Essay.
- Best School Student Video.
- Overall runners up from each of the 4 judges' questions.

You may submit once per judge and may submit to multiple judges; however, you may only receive one prize in total irrespective of the number of submissions you made.

Submission of Entries:

Please attempt to upload all entries to our submissions form. This accepts files up to 1GB in size. In the event your submission is larger than this, please attempt to compress it in the first instance, or failing that please send it to us as a OneDrive link. Do feel free to reach out to us with any questions at rcsunion@imperial.ac.uk.

We can only accept entries via our form or OneDrive. If this is going to be an issue for you, please reach out to us.

Each Essay/Video submission should have your full name, age, contact email, and institution/school clearly displayed.