



the earth prize[®] **BLUEPRINT**



The Earth Prize blueprint is the heart of your submission, comprising seven sections each telling a different part of your project's story. From the problem you noticed to your idea that can help fix it.

Pitch

Plan

Test

Create

Ideate

Talk to People

Identify the Problem

Remember to reference your sources and give credit to the people whose work helped you!

The Problem

Can you show us, not just tell us?

150 words /
900 characters

Core question:

What's the problem, and what's your evidence it's real?

Think about:

- Who is affected, and how?
- Is it local, national, or global?
- What made you notice this problem?

Submit:

Answer directly in the submission portal and include a study, government or NGO report, credible news article, or official statistics. Or, where formal data isn't accessible, a photo/screenshot or evidence from interviews and informal data collection (talking to affected people, word-of-mouth reports). Anything that shows the problem exists in the real world, not just an assertion that it does!

Dig Deeper: Problem Discovery

Go find out if people actually care.

150 words /
900 characters

Core question:

Who did you talk to about this problem, and what did they say? (This is about the problem - are people actually affected by it?)

Think about:

- Why did you choose to speak to these people, and how are they affected?
- What did you learn that surprised you or changed your thinking?
- Roughly how many people or organisations did you hear from? (There's no fixed number of people you need to talk to - some teams have 3 conversations, others run a survey of 50. What matters isn't the count, it's whether what you heard changed your thinking.)
- Did they confirm this is a real problem for them?

Submit:

Answer directly in the submission portal. Include a direct quote, a paraphrased conversation summary, or survey results with names/roles (e.g. "local farmer," "school nurse," "5 students at our school").

Your Idea

Now you've shown us the problem, what's your plan?

350 words /
2,100 characters

Core question:

What's your proposed solution, and how does it directly respond to what you gathered in Problem Discovery?

Think about:

- Has this been tried elsewhere? If so, why are you uniquely positioned to make it work here?
- Have you checked if anything similar is already patented, trademarked, or copyrighted? What did you find?
- What did you adapt from the user research?

Submit:

Answer directly in our submissions portal. This section is judged on whether the idea clearly follows from Sections 1 and 2.

P.S. For the IP question, evidence of having checked is enough (even "we looked and something similar exists, so we'd focus on X instead" counts!)

Create

Show us what you've come up with.

150 words /
900 characters

Core question:

Show us something you've made.

Think about:

- What challenges did you face building it?
- What would you change?
- What is it made of, and how big is it?

Submit:

Answer in the submission portal and include a photo or video which is required, no exceptions. Can also include results or data from testing, not just an image of the object itself. A sketch, cardboard model, mockup, basic app, or "we tried X and it didn't work, here's why" are all valid answers.

Disclaimer:

You don't need lots of resources to start building, if you have a pen and paper that is enough!



Photo & Video Tips

Want your submission to stand out? Here's a few simple tips to help with that:

- **Good lighting helps!**
 - Take your photo or video somewhere bright and well-lit. Dark photos can make it tricky to see all the details.
- **Keep your focus clear.**
 - Make sure the object or activity you're showing is in focus, sharp, and easy to see.
- **Keep it steady.**
 - Try to hold your camera still so your photo or video isn't blurry or shaky.
- **For videos with sound:**
 - Choose a quiet spot and make sure your voice or other important sounds can be heard clearly. Avoid background noise, including wind, that might make it difficult to hear.
- **Do a quick check!**
 - Before submitting, take a look (and listen!) to make sure everything you want us to see and hear is clear.

Most importantly, have fun and let your submission shine! ★



Validate Your Solution

Has anyone tried it yet? If not, what's in the way?

150 words /
900 characters

Core question:

Have people started using what you built, and does it actually help? (This is about your solution - not whether the problem is real, but whether your fix works.)

Think about:

- Have users tried or used your prototype/solution? Who, and roughly how many?
- What feedback have you gotten?
- What indicators do you have that it's working (or where it's falling short)?
- If you haven't been able to test it yet, what's stopping you, and what's your plan once those are addressed? (e.g. cost, access, or technical barriers)

Submit:

Either direct quotes, usage numbers, or a before-after comparison from real users, or, equally valid, a clear explanation of the barrier and a plan for how you'd get feedback once it's solved.

Implementation & Funding

You've shown it can work, now what?

250 words /
1,500 characters

Core question:

Now that you've validated your idea, what's your plan to make it happen – and what would funding help you do?

Think about:

- What are your next 2-3 steps, and what do you need to make them happen (people, funding, tools)?
- Who do you need on your side, and how will you bring them in?
- What could get in the way, and how would you handle it?
- If you won USD 10,000 what specifically would it fund? (e.g. "€3,000 for materials, USD 2,000 for a patent consultation, €5,000 for a 3-month pilot")
- How would you plan to balance your commitments like school alongside, if you were to win in April/May 2027 and implement for the following 6-12 months?

Submit:

A short task list with rough timing, and a specific, itemised financial breakdown.

The Pitch

Tell us your story. (Video)

75 words /
450 characters

Core question:

Why does this excite you, and what's next for the project?

Structure includes three sections:

- **The problem (~20-30 sec)**
 - What it is and why it matters, in your own words.
- **What you did (~20-30 sec)**
 - What you built or tested, and what you learned.
- **What's next (~20-30 sec)**
 - Why this excites you, and what it could look like in five years if it works.

Submit:

A 60-90 second video. One continuous take, unscripted, hitting the three sections above in order.

Additional Questions

Throughout your application you will be also asked a series of additional questions.

Important: The below questions do not go towards your final score but you are required to answer some of them others are optional.

1. Do you already have existing partnerships?

Yes/No

2. Have you entered other competitions before?

Yes/ No

3. Do you already have a website or socials?

Yes/No

4. Stage of Innovation

5. Link to issues

6. Project Visibility (Public, Unlisted , Private)

a. Remember: if you put your project visibility as Public it means anyone from the innovation exchange can see it, please make sure you and your team are comfortable with this before you select.

More next page >

Additional Questions

7. Timeframe & Location start & end date, if you don't have an end date that's okay you can leave it blank.
8. What sustainable development goals does your project address? Select all that apply
9. What industries does this project relate to?
10. What areas of impact does this project target?
11. Skills needed or developed
12. Target Populations (optional)

How your project will be evaluated

When we look at your project, we'll be thinking about six key areas. You don't need to be perfect in every area. We want to see that you understand the problem, have tested your ideas, and have a clear plan for what comes next.

What we're looking at	What we'll be asking
Problem Evaluation	Is this a real problem? Have you spoken to people affected by it and done some research to understand why it matters?
Proof of Concept	Have you tried your idea out? Have you built or tested something and learned from what happened? Have you spoken to potential users or thought about how you'll get your solution in front of them?
Solution Quality	Does your idea actually help solve the problem? Is it different from solutions that already exist? Have you checked whether there are any similar ideas or patents already out there?
Next Steps & Commitment	Do you know what you want to do next? Have you identified the next steps and the people, organisations, or partners who could help you move your project forward?
Feasibility & Planning	Could your idea realistically work? Do you have a clear plan for how you would use your money and resources? Have you thought about what might go wrong and what you could do about it?
Communication & Inspiration	Can you explain your idea clearly and get people excited about it? Does your pitch help others understand why your project matters and make them want to support you?

Remember: We're not just looking at the final idea. We're very interested in **what you've learned, how you've tested your thinking, and what you plan to do next.**

The Earth Prize Referencing Guide

When you're working on your Earth Prize submission, you'll probably use information, ideas, data, or opinions from other people. Referencing is how you give credit to those sources and show your readers where you found your information.

Don't worry, referencing might look complicated at first, but once you get the hang of it, it's quite simple!

The Earth Prize uses a footnote-based referencing system. This means you add a number next to the information you want to reference, and then give the details of that source at the bottom of your submission.

How does it work?

Whenever you use information from a source (such as a fact, statistic, research finding, idea, or direct quote) add a footnote number in parentheses after the relevant sentence or information.

For example:

Plastic pollution is expected to continue increasing unless significant action is taken. (1)

In the submission portal, you'll find a space to add your references. This is where you explain what each source is and where your readers can find it.

The Earth Prize Referencing Guide

What information should I include?

The information you need to include depends on the type of source you're using. A book, scientific article, website, or video, for example, will each have a slightly different format.

Tip: If you're missing some information, such as the author's name or publication date — don't panic! Include as much information as you can so that someone else can still easily identify and find the source.

All the sources in your reference list should match a footnote (e.g. (1), (2), (3), etc.) in your submission.

For more information and examples, please see [The Earth Prize Referencing Guide](#) on the Participant Submission Package.

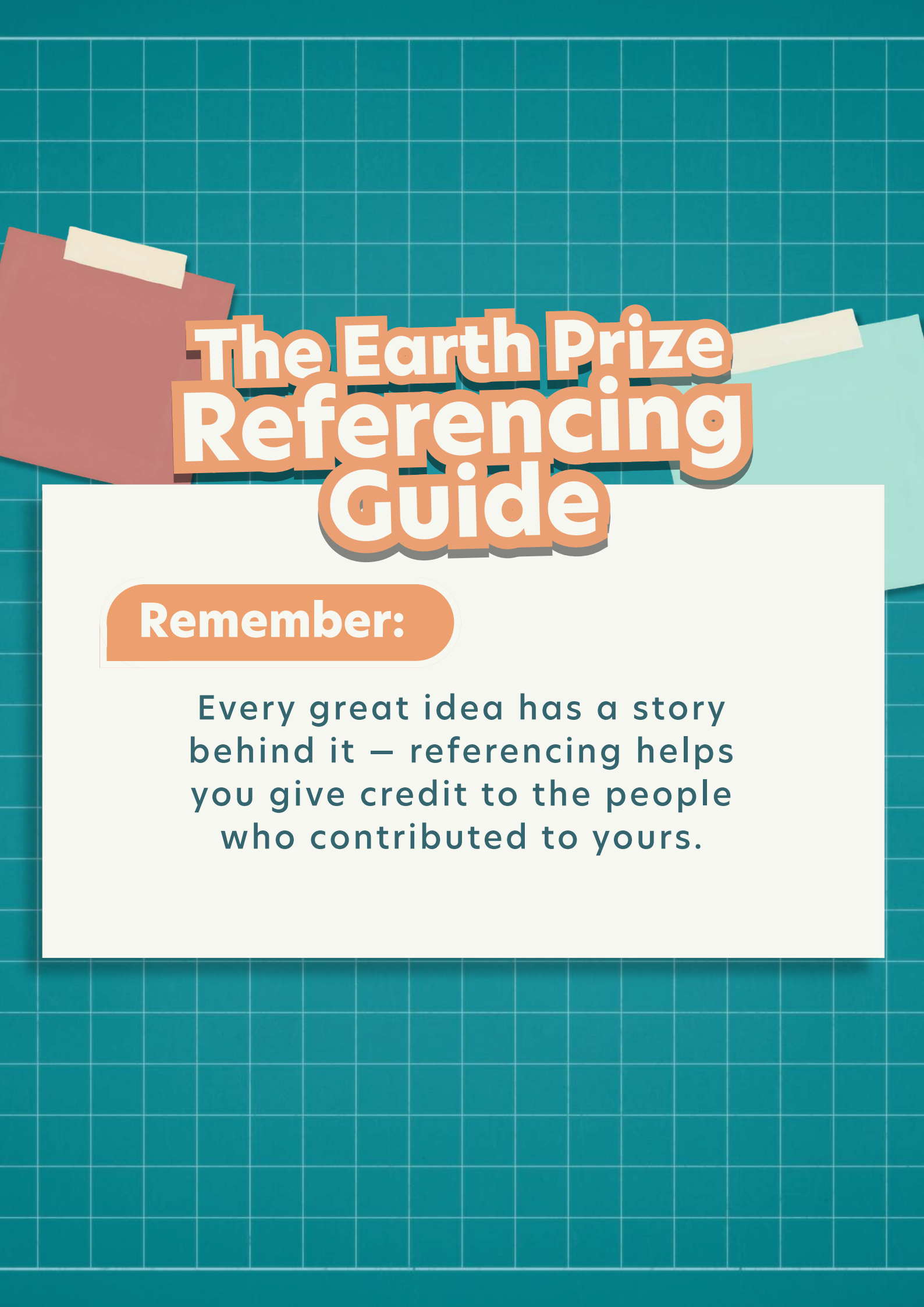
Here are some examples:

Book:

(1) David Attenborough and Jonathan Hughes. (2020). A Life on Our Planet: My Witness Statement and a Vision for the Future. New York: Grand Central Publishing.

Peer-reviewed article:

(2) Matthews, C., Moran, F., and Jaiwal, A.K. (2021) A review on European Union's strategy for plastics in a circular economy and its impact on food safety, Journal of Cleaner Production, Volume 283.



The Earth Prize Referencing Guide

Remember:

Every great idea has a story behind it – referencing helps you give credit to the people who contributed to yours.