



# LEAD4CHANGE COMMUNITY SERVICE CHALLENGE

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*Sponsored by Lead4Change*

**LEAD4CHANGE**

Lead4Change, the fastest-growing free leadership curriculum for middle and high school students, believes that young people aren't just leaders of tomorrow - they're change-makers today. Through proven frameworks and service-learning approaches, students can identify real problems in their communities and lead meaningful solutions that create measurable impact.

## Driving Question or Challenge:

How can your team use proven leadership frameworks to identify a pressing problem in your school or community, mobilize others around a shared vision, and execute a service project that creates documented, measurable change while developing your own leadership capabilities?

## Real-World Context:

This challenge requires DECA members to engage with the complexities of social entrepreneurship and community leadership, where problem analysis, stakeholder engagement, and impact measurement are crucial skills. Participants will navigate real-world obstacles including resource constraints, stakeholder buy-in, and timeline management while building coalitions and measuring outcomes.

Advisors who have teams participating in the challenge must register for and facilitate the free Lead4Change Core Curriculum at [Lead4Change.org](https://Lead4Change.org).

## CHALLENGE OVERVIEW

- Each entry must be composed of **three to five** members of a DECA chapter. Chapters may submit multiple entries.
- Participants must use the Lead4Change framework to identify a problem affecting their school or community; build a team and align on a shared goal; design, execute and document a service project; reflect on their leadership growth and project impact.
- Advisors can get free access to the Lead4Change framework but registering at [Lead4Change.org](https://Lead4Change.org).
- Advisors complete the "Plus Project Submission and Grant Request" entry through Lead4Change Dashboard.
- Many factors affect the length of Lead4Change Service Projects and from start to finish, they can often take at least 6 weeks to complete. This includes working through the Lead4Change Modules.
- View the Lead4Change Project Submission requirements in the Lead4Change Dashboard.
- Submissions for this challenge are due to Lead4Change by **January 12th, 2026 at 11:59 p.m.** eastern time through the Lead4Change Project Dashboard.
- Late entries and videos over **five minutes** will not be accepted.
- Lead4Change will evaluate all submitted projects and award Completion Certificates to the projects that follow the guidelines.
- DECA Inc. and Lead4Change are not responsible for lost, damaged, mislabeled, or misdirected entries.

## KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS DEVELOPED

Participants will demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to address the components of the project as described in the content outline and evaluation forms.

Participants will also develop many 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, in the following categories, desired by today's employers:

- Leadership and Teamwork
- Project Planning and Execution
- Communication and Collaboration
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Creativity and Innovation
- Initiative and Self-Direction
- Media Literacy

## PROJECT GUIDELINES

The participants will submit their project and video.

### I. Introduction

- Define the problem you chose to address.
- Explain why this issue matters in your school or community.
- Describe your team and your approach to leading the project.

### II. Planning and Execution

- Describe how you identified the root cause of the problem.
- Outline your team's plan, goals, and action steps.
- Show how you used leadership skills (delegation, vision, communication, etc.).
- Include visuals from planning, meetings, and execution phases.

### III. Impact and Reflection

- Highlight your project's outcomes and community impact.
- Share testimonials, data, or feedback that illustrates your results.
- Reflect on how each team member grew as a leader.

### IV. Presentation Delivery

- Stay within the 5-minute limit.
- Use engaging visuals, voiceovers, music, or interviews as appropriate.
- Communicate clearly, creatively, and professionally.

For evaluation details, please see the Presentation Evaluation Form.

## PROJECT JUDGING

Judges will select the top three overall teams. From the final three teams, the overall winning team will be selected.

## AWARDS

In partnership with Lead4Change the following awards will be provided:

- 1st Place Team - \$1,500
- 2nd Place Team - \$1,000
- 3rd Place Team - \$500

The top three teams will be recognized on stage during DECA's International Career Development Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Eligibility to attend DECA ICDC is determined by the chartered association advisor based on their policies. Finalists should consult with their chartered association advisor for eligibility guidelines and gain approval from their school advisor to attend the conference.

## TIMELINE

Challenge begins	September 2025
Project and Video Submission Deadline	January 12, 2026 at 11:59pm ET
Top 3 teams announced	February 3, 2026
Top 3 teams recognized at ICDC (Atlanta, GA)	April 25-28, 2026



3-5 PARTICIPANTS



PROJECT SUBMISSION



5 MINUTE  
VIDEO SUBMISSION



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## PROJECT AND VIDEO EVALUATION FORM

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Member Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Did the participating team...		Little/No Value	Below Expectation	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Judged Score
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS						
1.	Defined a meaningful problem impacting their school/community?	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10-11-12	
2.	Described clear planning and use of leadership principles?	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10-11-12	
3.	Demonstrated effective teamwork and collaboration?	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10-11-12	
4.	Presented measurable or observable impact?	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10-11-12	
PROJECT AND VIDEO						
5.	Reflected on leadership growth and challenges.	0-1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	
6.	Communicated clearly in the video and one page summary.	0-1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	
7.	Expressed creativity in video that supports the story telling.	0-1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	
8.	Provided quality photos to support the work done and the impact created.	0-1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	
9.	Provide a detailed and complete proposal.	0-1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	
10.	Overall impression of the project and presentation.	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10-11-12	
TOTAL SCORE (100 points)						