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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Young Filmmakers Contest receives a record number of submissions

*Judges will have more than 100 films to review in four categories*

**OAK PARK**—One Earth Film Festival is pleased to announce that submissions to its six-year-old Young Filmmakers Contest (YFC) jumped more than 500 percent this year, with 115 submissions from students, grade school through college, coming in from all around the country. Leading up to the deadline, visits to One Earth's website spiked, with 7,300 hits on its Contest Details page alone over 30 days, indicating dramatically more interest this year than in past years.

"This interest just shows that there are lots of talented, environment-minded students out there, and we are only scraping the surface of what we can achieve through this contest," said Sue Crothers, who conceived of the contest as part of the annual environmental film festival. "We are thrilled that the contest continues to attract more entries and to provide a platform for creative young people."

To help promote this year's contest, the YFC team invited former winner Léa Kichler to produce a [short animated film](#) with music composed by Abby Lyons. This was the first time the contest created a promotional video. "Climate change is so big, and we're so small, so what can we do to make a difference?" asks the narrator of the film, before explaining the contest.

Contest backers also increased the cash prize for high school seniors and college students to \$1,000, and promoted it to national scholarship websites. Most of the growth in submissions came in that age category.

The YFC has been a part of the [One Earth Film Festival](#) since 2013. Its purpose is to engage youth in the national conversation about climate change and consider actions to reverse the trend. Students are asked to research one of six sustainability topics: energy, food, transportation, waste, water or open space/ecosystems and then create a 3 to 8 minute film (45 seconds for animation). Cash prizes (or a scholarship) are awarded at the elementary school, middle school, high school (grades 9-11) and senior year to college levels.

A group of 20 judges is now busy evaluating the entries. The top films will be screened during a reception and awards program on Saturday, March 3 at Columbia College Music Center, 1014 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago. In addition to the cash prize, winners are awarded an equivalent matching grant that will be donated to a non-profit organization or community sustainability project that the winner chooses, subject to sponsor's approval.

[One Earth Film Festival](#) is the Midwest's Premier Environmental Film Festival.

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