



CALIFORNIA'S CLIMATE CHALLENGE

2026

REGIONAL PLATFORM FOR YOUTH INNOVATION

Call to applications

Californias' Climate Challenge 2026

Overview

The Californias' Climate Challenge is a **binational youth innovation platform** that brings together 60 young people from Baja California Sur, Baja California, and California to develop practical climate solutions for one of North America's most interconnected regions.

The initiative is organized through a collaboration of universities, government agencies, and civil society organizations from Mexico and the United States. It seeks to empower emerging leaders to address shared regional challenges related to climate change, energy, water, sustainability, environmental justice, and community resilience.

Through training, mentorship, multidisciplinary collaboration, and project development support, participants will design solutions with measurable impact and pathways toward piloting, incubation, implementation, or further research.

Who Can Apply?

Applicants must:

- Be between 18 and 30 years old.
- Reside in California (USA), Baja California, or Baja California Sur (Mexico).
- Have an interest in climate, sustainability, energy, water, environmental justice, technology, public policy, entrepreneurship, design, community development, or related fields.
- Be available to actively participate throughout the program.

The Challenge welcomes participants from diverse backgrounds, including:

- Undergraduate and graduate students
- Early-career professionals
- Entrepreneurs
- Researchers
- Community leaders
- Activists
- Creatives and designers
- Members of rural and Indigenous communities



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Program Structure

Selected participants will take part in four phases:

1. Climate Innovation Academy (Virtual)

Specialized training led by experts from California and Mexico covering topics such as climate innovation, renewable energy, just energy transition, climate justice, decarbonization, entrepreneurship, systems thinking, and impact measurement.

2. Concept Development & Team Formation

Participants identify climate challenges, propose ideas, and are matched into multidisciplinary teams.

3. Regional Innovation Sprint (In Person – Tijuana, Mexico)

A three-day intensive design sprint where teams develop and pitch climate solutions with support from mentors and sector experts.

4. Implementation Pipeline

Selected projects receive continued support, mentorship, networking opportunities, and connections to potential pilot, incubation, funding, and implementation pathways.

Four Action Tracks

Participants will work within one of four tracks:

1. Public Innovation
2. Community Development
3. Sustainable Entrepreneurship
4. Research & Technology Development

Participant Benefits

Participants will:

- Receive training on climate innovation and the systems that shape the region.
- Join a regional network of young leaders from California, Baja California, and Baja California Sur.
- Collaborate with peers from multiple disciplines and sectors.
- Engage with experts from academia, government, civil society, and industry.
- Develop real-world climate solutions with measurable impact.



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- Gain access to mentorship and implementation opportunities beyond the Challenge.

Key Dates

- Application deadline: June 29, 2026
- Participant notification: July 13, 2026
- Welcome session: July 14, 2026
- Climate Innovation Academy: July–August 2026
- Regional Sprint (Tijuana): September 15–17, 2026

Support for Participants

Subject to program guidelines and available funding, support may be provided for selected participants who require assistance with:

- Travel to and from Tijuana
- Accommodation during the sprint
- Meals during in-person activities

Application

Interested applicants must complete the online application form and submit a short video (maximum 5 minutes) introducing themselves, explaining their motivation, and describing their areas of interest and/or project ideas.

Application form: <https://forms.gle/Zg46wesx6ZzVcbe47>

Full program guidelines: <https://rcc26.my.canva.site/cc26>

For more questions: retoclima@gmail.com

Instagram: [@retoclima](https://www.instagram.com/retoclima)