

AMPLIFY COMPETITION

There's never been a better time to have your voice heard

The Amplify Competition is an opportunity for Smith College students to share their knowledge, stories, and perspectives in a public forum and an event to honor their efforts towards raising their voices to bring about positive change.

The Amplify Competition specifically seeks to amplify students' voices as they speak out about the issues that matter to them. The competition is open to all Smith students, and entries can be drawn from assignments completed for a course taken for credit, or a piece developed outside of a student's coursework.

Students may enter submissions in three categories: Public Speaking, Public Writing, and Public Art. In the 2020-2021 academic year, all submissions will be published on a consolidated Amplify website, which will be accessible only within the Smith College community. Submissions will be entered to compete for prizes in each of the three categories, plus a "People's Choice" Award. Prize winners will be announced in March in a virtual announcement event.

PRIZES:

NOTE: Depending on the number and quality of submissions in each category, judges may choose not to award all prizes for all three categories.



CRITERIA:

In each of the three categories, judges will evaluate submissions on the following criteria:

Depth of Discourse:

Does the submission build connections between areas of knowledge and a public audience? Does it translate outside of an academic or classroom context? Does the piece remain rooted in a larger understanding of fields of knowledge or social systems, yet convey those learnings to a public audience? Does it show a sophisticated understanding of its audience?

Seeks to Make Positive Change in the World:

In keeping with Smith's mission to develop "engaged global citizens and leaders to address society's challenges," judges will evaluate submissions on the degree to which they tackle a pressing social, economic, political, or cultural issue. Issues can range from local to global in scale.

Promise:

While submissions do not need to have been accepted for publication or installed in a public space, judges will be looking for pieces that hold considerable promise to be able to enter the public conversation in a meaningful and impactful way around the issue the piece seeks to tackle. Does the piece assert an original idea or offer new perspectives on the issue? Is it likely to draw readers' or viewers' attention and influence the debate?

Quality of Submission:

How well-crafted is the piece? Is it well-polished or carefully made? Is the piece complete and does it stand as a whole on its own?

SUBMISSION CATEGORIES:

The following are the three categories we will accept submissions in, along with some possible submission formats. (Please note: these formats are possibilities but not limitations.)

Public Speaking

- A video recording of you delivering a 5-10-minute "TED" style talk (the Wurtele Center can help coach and arrange recording for students interested in this option)
- An episode of a podcast that you wrote, produced, and delivered
- A video of you delivering a spoken word poem or poems

Public Writing

- An op-ed or letter to the editor (no more than 1000 words) you have written either as part of a Smith College course assignment or as an independent submission to a publication
- An online blog or zine article you have created either as part of a Smith College course assignment or as an independent project

Public Art

- A piece of art you have created and have installed or published or plan to install or publish in a public setting or periodical
- A series of photographs or other images that you have created and shared in a public forum
- A film
- A short dramatic piece

Submission instructions will be shared midway through the fall semester.

How can I get inspired around developing a public voice?

Attend the Amplify virtual public events this fall! These will include an open informational session in the early fall where we'll share some details about the program and be available for questions, as well as three speaker/panel events that will engage journalists, scholars, writers, podcasters, and other practitioners in the field on topics including "Finding and Owning Your Public Voice," "Speaking from the Margins: The Public Voice Tax," and "Public Voice Across Media." Click [here](#) for more on this fall's lineup.

What if my submission is multimedia or I'm not sure which category I should submit it within?

We welcome multimedia submissions as well as those that defy genre conventions. We would encourage you to submit your piece to the category that most closely fits, recognizing that the judges will consider submissions broadly to allow for creativity. If you want some help determining which category to submit under, reach out to Erin Cohn (ecohn@smith.edu).

Will you accept submissions that were co-created by more than one author or artist?

Yes, we will accept collaborative submissions. Should those pieces be selected for a prize, the prize will be split among the creators of the winning submission.

Will you accept submissions in languages other than English?

Yes. When submitting the piece for consideration, please submit both the original and an English translation.

I want to participate but I'm not currently in a class that has a public voice-oriented assignment. Can I still submit something?

Yes, the competition is open to all currently enrolled Smith students. If you would like to work on a piece this fall outside of your coursework and are interested in some advising and feedback, reach out to Erin Cohn (ecohn@smith.edu).

I want to submit a piece that advances a controversial idea but I'm concerned about it going public on the competition website. Will people outside of the Smith community be able to see the site?

No, outside viewers will not be able to access the Amplify competition website. We will ensure that the site requires a Smith College login and Duo authentication to be able to access it. If you need your entry to be published anonymously beyond this level of security for reasons of safety, please contact Erin Cohn. In addition, controversial ideas are acceptable, however we will not accept and publish submissions that advance hateful or discriminatory opinions. The Amplify competition's purpose is to provide space for Smithies to speak for positive change, not challenge the humanity of others.

I created a piece for a course I took at Smith last year. Can I submit it to this year's competition?

Yes. We would encourage you to take advantage of opportunities to continue to revise and work on it before submitting this year. Watch for workshops and other feedback opportunities, or reach out to us directly to get some support.

I'm working on an art piece and need help with getting the appropriate supplies and materials. Are there any funds available to help?

Yes. The Wurtele Center has set aside a small amount of funds to help students working on art projects for the Amplify competition. Please email Erin Cohn (ecohn@smith.edu) for more information.

Where can I find help and support as I work on my submission?

The Wurtele Center for Leadership will offer open office hours every Friday from 1–2:30pm ET—If you want to drop in with questions, needs, etc., please reach out to Erin Cohn for the Zoom link. If we aren't the right people to assist you, we'll help you find someone who can. If the timing doesn't work for your schedule, let us know and we'll schedule an alternative appointment. In addition, the Jacobson Center can provide coaching and support for writing projects.

SEPTEMBER

WED SEPT **16** 5-6 PM ET

Amplify Information Session:
Come and learn about our events and competition. A brief presentation followed by Q&A.

THUR SEPT **24** 8-9 PM ET

Amplify Panel: "Developing and Owning Your Public Voice"

With Tanisha C. Ford and Tuck Woodstock

9-9:30 PM ET

Amplify Lounge:

Join Tuck Woodstock for an informal Q&A

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

THUR OCT **29** 8-8:45 PM ET

Amplify Speaker: "The Public Voice Tax: An Evening with Shereen Marisol Meraji"

NPR journalist, co-host and executive producer of Code Switch podcast

8:45-9:15 PM ET

Amplify Lounge:

Join Shereen Marisol Meraji for an informal Q&A

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

THUR NOV **19** 7:30-9 PM ET

Amplify Panel: "Public Voice Across Media: Speaking Out Against Climate Change"

With Audrea Lim, Eve Mosher and Leah Stokes

9-9:30 PM ET

Amplify Lounge:

Join panelists for an informal Q&A

NOVEMBER

JANUARY

MON **04** JAN

Competition opens for submissions

Keep your eyes peeled for

SESSIONS

and

EVENTS

during these months where you can workshop your piece and get feedback.

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

FRI **12** FEB

Submissions due by midnight, ET

FEBRUARY

MARCH

MON **01** MAR

People's Choice Award
Website open for voting

WED MAR **17** 7-8 PM ET

Amplify Award Ceremony

MARCH