



GUIDELINES FOR PORTFOLIO ELIGIBILITY FOR THE NATIONAL SHOWCASE

To be eligible to represent a state in the **Project Citizen** National Showcase, July 21-25, 2008, in New Orleans, Louisiana an entry must meet the following criteria.

1) **Portfolios must address a public policy issue**

The following elements must be present in the problem statement and the proposed class policy, as well be reflected in the action plan.

- A government entity must be involved in carrying out its responsibilities; e.g., the local school board votes to install metal detectors in the district's schools.
- Public policy commitments are made and carried out by people who have been authorized to act in accordance with established norms and procedures; e.g., the state legislature is empowered to make laws governing the registration of motor vehicles; they in turn authorize the state department of motor vehicles to establish and carry out policies and procedures for auto registration.
- Public policies reflect the commitment of public assets and direct the flow of resources that affect the public. These may be defined in terms of
 - economic advantage (the city council votes to grant volunteer fire fighters a property tax exemption);
 - individual or group rights (if the school board opens school facilities for use by some outside groups, it may not arbitrarily deny that same right to others);
 - shifts in political power (state legislatures are empowered to use official census data to redraw congressional districts).

For example, if the city council approves a program to feed the homeless and authorizes the department of social services to use city resources to do so, it is public policy. When a local church conducts a food drive and distributes the food to indigent members in the same community, it is not public policy.

2) **Eligibility**

A. For portfolios originating in an **academic setting**, the class must

- be from a 5th – 8th grade class (the majority of students must be in the age range of 10–14 years)
- be constituted according to the school's normal programming procedures;

- be part of the school’s regular curriculum such as history/social science, language arts or other appropriate programmatic areas including, for example, special education and gifted and talented education;
- be designated on the school’s master program (schedule of class offerings);
- meet during regular hours;
- have all enrollees listed in the teacher’s record book.

It is understood that many schools employ flexible scheduling methods, including the use of “advisory periods.” The criteria listed above do **not** restrict participation by such classes.

B. For portfolios originating in **extracurricular or youth organization settings**, the group must

- include a majority of students in the age range of 10–14 years;
- be affiliated with a sanctioned school-based program (i.e., after school clubs, organizations, or child care programs);
- be from a nonprofit community-based youth program (i.e., 4-H, Boys and Girls Schools, YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.).

C. Additional considerations

Portfolios developed by a group of students that does not fall into either of the two categories above are not eligible to represent the state in the **Project Citizen** National Showcase event.

Portfolios developed by an individual student are never eligible to represent the state in the **Project Citizen** National Showcase event.

The criteria do not restrict participation of students working in a home school consortium recognized by the local education agency.

3) **Portfolio components and size**

Portfolios must include both a display and documentation component and meet the prescribed size regulations.

A. **Display component** consists of:

- four (4) panels of poster board, foam-core board, or the equivalent with **each** panel being **no larger than 32” wide x 40” high**; each of the four groups in the class will have one panel to display their work; each panel should include
- a written summary of the required topics for the group’s section
- graphic illustrations for the section

- identification of the sources used for the information in this section

B. Documentation component consists of:

- five (5) sections contained in a single **three-ring binder** no larger than **2” thick**, each section separated by a divider
- an overall table of contents as well as tables of contents for each section
- copies of the most important information each group has gathered which best documents or gives evidence of their research
- a final section that contains the class’s evaluation and reflection on their experience

C. Other dimensional specifications

- Items projecting from the panel surface are not permissible; panels must be one-dimensional and allow for flat folding (e.g., a soda can attached to the panel is **not** allowable, but the typed two-page summary may be affixed to the panel with one sheet on top of the other)
- Content material must be confined to the inner dimensions of the four panels (items may not extend beyond the edge of the board). All material **must** be securely attached to the panels: if an item detaches from the panel it may be impossible to replace it in the proper position
- Each sheet in the documentation folder **must** be numbered at the bottom center to enable staff to replace it in the appropriate section should it come loose from the binder

4) Labeling and submission of portfolios

- Each of the four panels and the documentation binder must be clearly marked to identify the teacher, school, and contact information. Center-provided labels should be affixed to the back of each panel and to the inside cover of the documentation binder
- All portfolios must arrive at the Center for Civic Education no later than June 16, 2008.