



A GUIDE TO CEI CONFERENCE PROJECTS



A GUIDE TO CARETAKERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PROJECTS

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A GUIDE TO CEI CONFERENCE PROJECTS



TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Introduction: the spirit of a CEI project

2. CEI project characteristics

3. Project development timeline

4. Steps to preparing a project for CEI

Find out & reach out

Analysis

Design and decision

Realization

Inspiration and reflection

5. How to prepare your project summary

6. Presenting your project: how to deliver an impactful presentation

6.1 Presentation Structure

6.2 Q&A and Reflection

6.3 Project Poster exhibition

In Person

Online



A GUIDE TO CEI CONFERENCE PROJECTS



Foreword

Core to any Caretakers of the Environment International (CEI) conference are the projects that students present and discuss in groups. There's a lot of work involved in moving from a project idea to presenting it at a conference, either in person or online. This guide has been developed and refined over the years by CEI teachers and alumni. It is designed to support students and educators in preparing meaningful, youth-led projects that reflect the CEI spirit and inspire global collaboration. Both educators and students can use this document as a reference during project development. We wish you success and fun doing your project!

1. INTRODUCTION: THE SPIRIT OF A CEI PROJECT

A CEI project is not just a school project — it's a call to action. It invites young people to observe, imagine, create, and act to make their communities and our planet more sustainable. At CEI, students are not passive listeners. They are caretakers, youth leaders, inspirators, shaping solutions that matter, connecting local actions with global goals. The project is a tool to act in your own school, community and/or country, as well as an invitation to others to consider doing the same. Every project plants a seed in the minds of its audience! Your CEI project is a story of how you and your team contribute to a sustainable future we all strive for.

Before you get going, some common mistakes to avoid:

- Creating projects that focus only on awareness, without (measurable) action or impact. Learning is essential, but the project should include doing as well!
- Overloading posters or presentations with text instead of visuals and key messages. Think clearly about the message you want to share.
- Forgetting to link the project clearly to theme of this year's CEI conference. The theme helps you focus.
- Not rehearsing presentation for the 10-minute limit.

2. CEI PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

Relevance:

- Make sure your project addresses a genuine environmental or sustainability issue. Explain why this issue matters (for you, your friends, your school, your community, young people, your country, ..., ...) and why action is required.
- You can pick yourself the scope of your project (local, regional, global...).



A GUIDE TO CEI CONFERENCE PROJECTS



Youth-Led:

- CEI is all about youth leadership! Also for the projects, we advocate that students take the initiative, make decisions, and drive the process. Teachers guide — but the vision belongs to the students.
- Approach the project from your own perspective. You can get advice from experts, but we want to hear your take on the issue and your suggested action or solution.

Creativity & Innovation:

- Bring new ideas, partnerships, or perspectives. Let your project surprise and inspire! By being creative and with out-of-the-box thinking (or perhaps collaborating with a school in a completely different part of the world) the most surprising ideas can be created.
- Look around in your group and see what skills and talents are present. Every project can be enriched by using a wide range of skills and techniques (e.g. scientific research, video editing, journalism, artistic skills, ...).

Feasibility & Impact:

- Environmental challenges often feel huge and too big to solve for any individual. In your project, design realistic steps and ensure that your ideas are actionable.
- You don't need to change the world; focus on the difference you can make in your own surroundings. Can you make the impact of your project in your community visible?

Collaboration:

- Involve your community! Work with local authorities, NGOs, schools, fellow students and citizens — connect people for a shared purpose, test your actions in the real world and see how much you can achieve by bringing the right people together.
- You might also be interested in collaborating with students from another school/country. Ask your teacher to reach out to CEI if you're interested and need help finding another delegation.

Sustainability:

- Think beyond one-time actions. Plan how your efforts can continue or inspire others after the annual conference. What would be next steps in your project?



A GUIDE TO CEI CONFERENCE PROJECTS



3. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Planning your time is key to a successful CEI project. Below is a general timeline that can help your team to stay on track. You can adjust this based on your school calendar or local context. However, remember that project summaries must be submitted in early May.

Month	Key Activities
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form your team and choose your topic.• Research local environmental issues and align with relevant SDGs.
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalize your project idea and objectives.• Define your methods, expected outcomes, and partners.• Begin early-stage activities or fieldwork.
December – January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement your project actions.• Collect data, engage your community, and document progress.
February – March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue implementation and start evaluating results.• Reflect on what's working and make improvements if needed.
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare your final report and presentation materials.• Summarize findings and visuals clearly.
Early May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit your project summary.
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on poster design, visual storytelling, and finalizing data and results.• Begin rehearsing your presentation.
June/July (Conference Month)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final rehearsals, poster printing, and presentation at the CEI Conference.• Celebrate your achievements, share ideas, and connect with caretakers from around the world!



A GUIDE TO CEI CONFERENCE PROJECTS



4. STEPS TO PREPARING A PROJECT FOR CEI

- To attend CEI you will need a delegation. You and some of your peers can join and find a teacher or youth leader who is willing to help you. Or teachers can work with their class on one or multiple projects.
- Once you have your delegation you need to brainstorm what your project should be. Make sure to check:
 - Does it fit in with the **CONFERENCE THEME** for the upcoming conference? Every conference focuses on a theme, so there is some focus and it becomes easier to learn and exchange ideas. Usually the theme is broad enough to allow a diverse range of projects.
 - Does it pursue a solution to an **ENVIRONMENTAL** or **SUSTAINABILITY ISSUE** in your local environment or country?
- Next you need to develop your idea and undertake your project. We can recommend the **FADRI** system as an easy tool to help you in this:
 - **Find out & reach out**
 - **Analysis**
 - **Design and decision**
 - **Realization**
 - **Inspiration and reflection**

FIND OUT & REACH OUT

- Find out what environmental issues are important in your area or country. Start with yourself. Is there something that you noticed, are interested in or have always wanted to change?
- Talk to local people, local organisations, authorities, experts, friends and family and see what issues they think are important.
- Do some research about these issues and think about what you can do. Remember that your project should be feasible.
- Once you have done this, consider reaching out to local politicians, organisations or other CEI delegations who can help you.

ANALYSIS

- What is causing the issues? Is the issue well known or is more research needed? Is it a local, regional or global issue?
- Can you connect it to one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?
- How does it affect the environment (nature, wildlife, atmosphere...)?
- What is the effect on individuals/society?
- What is needed to solve the problem? What can be done locally or how can action be taken at small scale?
- Who are stakeholders? Who could help you?
- How could a solution be scaled up?



A GUIDE TO CEI CONFERENCE PROJECTS



DESIGN AND DECISION

- What will you do to solve the project? What is your action?
- Name your project and make steps of how to accomplish it (remember creativity, feasibility, etc.).
- Design your idea and determine your focus with as much input from stakeholders as possible.
- Make a timeline for implementation of your plan and divide tasks within your delegation.

REALIZATION

- Undertake your plan and have fun!
- Remember you are doing a great thing for yourself, your environment and for the planet!
- Keep an eye on your timeline.
- Take photos and videos, record your activities and results.
- Are your results as expected? What lessons are you learning?
- Think about what results you want to present. What are the key messages that you want to share based on the work you have done?

INSPIRATION AND REFLECTION

- Share your project with your community: social media, presentations, artwork, posters, videos, word of mouth, ... these are all good ways to spread your message! The more people you can inspire, the better!
- Reflect on your project. What did you learn? What is the effect on your daily life? What can you do next or what could be a next phase in your project?

5. *HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PROJECT SUMMARY*

- To continue the tradition of recording CEI projects since 1987, we ask you to prepare a short summary for the Global Forum on Environmental Education (the annually produced CEI magazine)
- Write your project summary (200-250 words) - this is a summary of your project and ideally includes your topic, your project/actions and your main result(s) and lessons.
- Alongside the written summary, choose 2-3 photos that support the text and help visualize for the reader what your group did.
- This summary and these photos will be shared on the conference website, in the annual Global Forum and may be used for promotion of CEI.
- A project summary template can be found on the CEI website.



A GUIDE TO CEI CONFERENCE PROJECTS



6. PRESENTING YOUR PROJECT: HOW TO DELIVER AN IMPACTFUL PRESENTATION

At the CEI Conference, each team will have 10 minutes to present their project. After the presentation, there is a discussion where students and teachers can ask you questions and feedback about your project and presentation. There is usually someone from the CEI Board and Alumni Team facilitating this discussion. The presentation is your moment to share your journey, inspire others, and celebrate your impact!

6.1 PRESENTATION STRUCTURE

Every project is different, and the same goes for every presentation. But the below structure might help you in your preparations:

- Opening (1 minute): Greet the audience, introduce your team and country, and start with a fun fact, surprising element or different 'hook'.
- The issue (2 minutes): Explain the problem, its importance, and the analysis you have done.
- Your project timeline & actions (3 minutes): Explain what you have done, what steps you have taken and the actions you undertook. What was your project? What were challenges and how did you overcome these?
- Results & impact (2 minutes): Present were the results of your work? What has changed, what is the impact and what are your main lessons?
- Future steps & message (2 minutes): End with your key takeaway or message for the audience. You can also suggest future steps, or end with a discussion question or statement.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS: Use visuals (wisely), show your timeline clearly, speak naturally, divide speaking roles fairly, practice together, considering bringing something for your audience to touch/see, and most of all: enjoy sharing your story. Remember: you are the expert in the room on your own project!

6.2 DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

After your talk, participants will ask questions and provide feedback. Listen carefully, answer honestly, and reflect on what you learned. CEI values authenticity, learning, acting and collaboration more than perfection!

6.3 PROJECT POSTER EXHIBITION

IN PERSON:

- All delegations must prepare a poster (exact size and instructions will be communicated), containing information and pictures of the project. Use your creativity when you design the poster! Remember though, it should mainly



A GUIDE TO CEI CONFERENCE PROJECTS

contain visuals and not too much text, and the poster should be a good summary of your project (what you did, why you did it, what you learned, what the results were, what your main message is). If you need help, below you can find a suggestion for an outline of a poster.

- Make sure to only use your first names (e.g. 'Sam' not 'Sam Thelaus') for privacy and safety reasons
- During the conference, every delegation has time to present their project using the poster. You will present for other students, teachers and often the public. Your poster presentation should not be longer than a few minutes.

ONLINE:

- The same as above applies for the content, design and presentation of online project posters.
- Online posters are also being presented to other students and teachers.
- Make sure you can read everything easily on a computer screen!
- Please save your poster in PDF format and submit it in advance of the conference (precise deadline will be communicated by the host).

<h1>YOUR TITLE</h1> <div>  <div> Delegation name First names of team members School name Caretakers of the Environment International <year> </div>  </div>	
<div>Picture of the team during project</div> <div>Very short text with visual (max 20 words)</div>	<div>Project summary</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Max 100 words • Bullet points • Key words • Simple English • What did you do? • What was the result? • Who did you work with?
<div>Project related visual</div> <div>Very short text with visual (max 20 words)</div>	<div>  Link to conference theme / SDGs </div>
<div>Project related visual</div> <div>Very short text with visual (max 20 words)</div>	
<div>Project related visual</div> <div>Very short text with visual (max 20 words)</div>	
<div>Key message you want everyone to remember</div> <div>Thank you for your attention!</div> <div>     </div>	

Final Checklist Before the Conference

- ✓ Project summary (200–250 words) ready and submitted
- ✓ Poster designed (enough visuals and not too much text) and submitted in the right way
- ✓ Presentation structured well and rehearsed and within 10 minutes
- ✓ Team roles confirmed and Q&A prepared