

# Help US cope with climate change: Enter NASA-USGS data app challenge

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More than \$35,000 in prizes are available to the innovation community to create apps that use federal climate data to help local communities prepare for the effects of climate change and protect our ecosystems. Credit: NASA

NASA in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is offering more than \$35,000 in prizes to citizen scientists for ideas that make use of climate data to address vulnerabilities faced by the United States in coping with climate change.

The Climate Resilience Data Challenge, conducted through the NASA

Tournament Lab, a partnership with Harvard University hosted on Appirio/Topcoder, kicks off Monday, Dec 15 and runs through March 2015.

The challenge supports the efforts of the White House Climate Data Initiative, a broad effort to leverage the federal government's extensive, freely available [climate](#)-relevant data resources to spur innovation and private-sector entrepreneurship in order to advance awareness of and preparedness for the impacts of [climate change](#). The challenge was announced by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Dec. 9.

According to the recent National Climate Assessment produced by more than 300 experts across government and academia, the United States faces a number of current and future challenges as the result of climate change. Vulnerabilities include coastal flooding and weather-related hazards that threaten lives and property, increased disruptions to agriculture, prolonged drought that adversely affects food security and water availability, and ocean acidification capable of damaging ecosystems and biodiversity. The challenge seeks to unlock the potential of [climate data](#) to address these and other climate risks.

"Federal agencies, such as NASA and the USGS, traditionally focus on developing world-class science data to support scientific research, but the rapid growth in the innovation community presents new opportunities to encourage wider usage and application of science data to benefit society," said Kevin Murphy, NASA program executive for Earth Science Data Systems in Washington. "We need tools that utilize federal data to help our local communities improve climate resilience, protect our ecosystems, and prepare for the effects of climate change."

"Government science follows the strictest professional protocols because scientific objectivity is what the American people expect from us," said

Virginia Burkett, acting USGS associate director for Climate Change and Land Use. "That systematic approach is fundamental to our mission. With this challenge, however, we are intentionally looking outside the box for transformational ways to apply the data that we have already carefully assembled for the benefit of communities across the nation."

The challenge begins with an ideation stage for data-driven application pitches, followed by storyboarding and, finally, prototyping of concepts with the greatest potential.

The ideation stage challenges competitors to imagine new applications of climate data to address climate vulnerabilities. This stage is divided into three competitive classes based on data sources: NASA data, federal data from agencies such as the USGS, and any open data. The storyboarding stage allows competitors to conceptualize and design the best ideas, followed by the prototyping stage, which carry the best ideas into implementation.

**More information:** For additional information on the Climate Resilience Data Challenge and to register beginning Dec. 15, visit: [www.topcoder.com/earthscience/crdc](http://www.topcoder.com/earthscience/crdc)

Provided by NASA

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