

Registration for Elon Musk's \$100m carbon capture competition opens April

Founder of SpaceX and Tesla, Elon Musk has launched the XPrize Carbon Removal competition which aims to create "real systems" that "sequester carbon dioxide permanently" from the atmosphere to fight climate change and rebalance Earth's carbon cycle.



Image source: [Facebook/XPrize](#)

The competition invites innovators and teams from anywhere in the world to create and demonstrate solutions that can pull carbon dioxide directly from the atmosphere or oceans, ultimately scaling massively to gigatonne levels, locking away CO₂ permanently in an environmentally benign way.

"This is not a theoretical competition," said Musk. "We want teams to build real systems that can make a measurable impact at a gigatonne level."

"Whatever it takes. Time is of the essence."



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According to the competition's website, "The world's leading scientists estimate that we may need to remove as much as six gigatonnes of CO₂ per year by 2030, and 10 gigatonnes per year by 2050 to avoid the worst effects of climate change."

With the XPrize Carbon Removal competition, the organisers aim to create "bold, radical tech innovation and scale up that goes beyond limiting CO2 emissions, but actually removes CO2 already in the air and oceans", addressing the Paris Agreements' goal which set a legally binding treaty on limiting the Earth's temperature rise to no more than 1.5°C of pre-industrial levels, or even 2°C.

The competition's rules emphasised that "solutions will be scientifically evaluated across multiple criteria such as amount of CO2 removed, life cycle analysis of the removal process, energy efficiency, land footprint and sequestration capabilities".

"Any carbon negative solution is eligible: nature-based, direct air capture, oceans, mineralisation, or anything else that sequesters CO2 permanently."

XPrize Carbon Removal competition offers \$100m fund

The four-year global competition will have a \$100m prize fund which will be distributed to the selected teams. After 18 months, at the discretion of the competition judges, the jury will select the 15 top teams and they will receive \$1m each.

Milestone Awards will kickstart team fundraising for their operating budgets to achieve the full-scale demonstrations required to win the prize.

In the same timeframe, a total of 25 \$200,000 student scholarships will be distributed to student teams competing, according to the organisers.

The grand prize winner will receive \$50m, while the second winner will receive \$20m and the third winner will receive \$10m.

Registrations open in April

Team registrations will open with the announcement of the full competition guidelines on Earth Day, 22 April 2021. The competition will last for four years through Earth Day 2025. For more information, go to www.xprize.org/home.

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