

2022 Cover Design Challenge

Official Entry Guidelines

Challenge Overview

Every year, the NYC Department of Education (DOE) sends thousands of school admissions guides to students and their families throughout New York City. These school guides help families understand the admissions process and guide them in their search for a school. The cover of the guide is one of the first things these families see as they start the admissions process—it should reflect the importance of this resource and welcome them into the process.

For over a decade, the covers of the DOE guides have been designed by students through the Cover Design Challenge. This challenge provides participants an opportunity to reflect on their lives as public school students in New York City and creatively capture their experience visually in the format of a cover design. All students have stories to tell about their school experiences, and this challenge gives them the opportunity to share these stories with all of New York City!

The challenge also serves as a way for students to explore design as a profession. Finalists of the Cover Design Challenge have the opportunity to be “hired” by a real-world “client” (the DOE) to develop a design—practical experience that they can take with them after high school. They learn to listen to a client’s needs and take feedback from a professional designer to design a final cover. The grand prize winner’s design will be featured as the cover of the DOE’s annual *New York City Department of Education Public School Admissions Guide* and used online.

Eligibility Requirements

The challenge is open to all students currently enrolled in a New York City public high school. Students may enter on their own or through their teachers. Each student may submit only one design. By participating, students understand and will follow the guidelines listed in this document. For more information about who can participate, please see “Additional Terms and Conditions” on page 4.

Key Dates

What’s Happening	Key Dates
Challenge Open for Submissions	January 24
Submissions Due	February 18 by 11:59pm EST
Finalists Notified	March 4
Virtual Workshops for Finalists (Required)	One day a week from March 9-30
Winners Announced Publicly	April 13

Design Specifications

We recommend students download our ready-to-use [Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, or Adobe Photoshop templates](#). Templates include tips and guides for the spine, bleeds, and layers.

- **Size:** Front cover and back cover should each be 8.5" x 11" plus spine; save your files as a PDF that is 2MB or under.
- **Text:** Design must include space for the following text: *2022 NYC DOE Public School Admissions Guide*
- **Font:** Use a sans serif typeface for all cover text.
- **Format:** Designs may be created in any print media, but must be submitted in PDF format. We recommend students create or import their designs into Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, or Adobe Photoshop. Vector-based artwork is preferred – but any images are allowable as long as they are saved at 300dpi minimum.
- **Details:** Cover design must include a front and back cover, and students are encouraged to think about how their design will work with the spine. Include the NYC Department of Education logos provided in the templates.

How to Submit Your Design

Submissions are due on **February 18, 2022**. Participants may submit their cover design in one of two ways: online via email or by mail.

- DOE consent form is required to qualify for the challenge, finalists will also need to submit a Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum consent form if they are chosen as a finalist. See page 3 for more information.
- Only one design may be submitted per student.
- Design must be the original work of the student.
- Submissions will not be returned.

How to Submit by Email

- **Deadline:** **February 18, 2022** at 11:59pm EST. Entries received after this date and time will not qualify for this challenge.
- **Format:** Files must be submitted as a PDF only. Keep all original design files and images, but do not submit them. *Each finalist will be required to make edits and adjustments and submit his or her design file.* Please use our [Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, or Adobe Photoshop templates](#).
- **File Size:** File must be less than 2 MB.
- **Email Details:** Email submissions to coverdesign@schools.nyc.gov. Subject line must include "Cover Design Submission" and the first 4 digits of your birthday. For example, if your birthday is March 12, your subject line should be "Cover Design Submission 0312." You must also attach your cover design file(s) and consent form.
- **Confirmation:** Email submissions will receive a confirmation email. If you do not receive a confirmation email, the design was not received. If you have difficulty submitting your design, please call 212-374-3984 for assistance.

How to Submit by Mail

- **Deadline:** Mail-in entries must be *received* by **February 18, 2022**. Entries received after this date will not qualify for this challenge.
- **Format:** Submission must be a full-color print-out copy of the cover design. Artwork will not be returned, so keep your original design. *If you advance and become a finalist, you will have to submit a final design created in Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, or InDesign.*
- **Package Details:** In addition to including your cover design submission and consent forms, mail-in entries require a signed and dated Mail-in Submission Form. Make sure to include your contact information, including your email address, so that we can contact you if you are a finalist. You can find this form on the Cover Design Challenge website (schools.nyc.gov/coverdesign) during the submission period. If your teacher is mailing in your design as part of a class, you still have to include all of the materials listed above in your submission.
- **Mailing Address:** Mail your package to the address below:

NYC Department of Education
Office of Student Enrollment
52 Chambers Street, Room 404
New York, NY 10007
ATTN: Cover Design Challenge

Required Consent Forms

To qualify for this challenge, participants must submit a [DOE consent form](#) before the submission deadline, and will be asked to submit a Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum consent form if they are chosen as a finalist.

All students must complete the DOE form to enter, and the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum form to attend finalist virtual workshops. Students under the age of 18 are required to get their parent's or guardian's signature. Students 18 years of age or older are not required to have their parent/guardian sign the form.

The [DOE Consent form](#) can be downloaded during the submission period. The Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Consent form will be emailed to all students chosen as finalists.

Applicants can submit their [DOE consent form](#) in one of two ways by the submission deadline:

- **Scan and Email** the form as attachment with your design to coverdesign@schools.nyc.gov.
- **Mail** the form to: Department of Education, Office of Student Enrollment, 52 Chambers Street, Room 404, New York, NY 10007, ATTN: Cover Design Challenge Consent Form.

Applicants can submit their Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Consent form in one of two ways if chosen as a finalist:

- **Scan and Email** the form as attachment with your design to coverdesign@schools.nyc.gov.
- **Mail** the form to: Department of Education, Office of Student Enrollment, 52 Chambers Street, Room 404, New York, NY 10007, ATTN: Cover Design Challenge Consent Form.

Design Tips

Consider some of the following tips and suggestions as you're designing:

- **Inspiration:** We encourage you to draw inspiration from your time as a New York City student. While brainstorming, think about how your unique experience will help you create a meaningful design. Why are you proud to be a New York City student? What makes your experience as a New York City student special and exciting? How has growing up in New York City had an impact on your life? What was your experience like when changing from middle school to high school?
- **Audience:** The Directory is used by students and families, so think about how your cover will be meaningful to them.
- **Design Principles:** Create a design that supports your message with **image, color, typography, and layout**. Also consider how your cover will work when marketed online. (Read Craig Mod's "Hack the Cover"—https://craigmod.com/journal/hack_the_cover/)
- **Appropriateness:** Keep in mind that you are designing for a client (the DOE). The winning design needs to reflect appropriate messaging for a government-issued publication; designs will be judged in part on their appropriateness. Please do not use profanity and slang.
- **Adaptability:** In addition to the Guide cover, the winning design will also be used online, so think about how your design can be used for these mediums.
- **Guidelines for Images:** With respect to the images in your design, the more creative and unique they are, the better. Here are some things to keep in mind:
 - a. **Copyrighted images:** We cannot use any previously copyrighted images on our Guide covers. The use of previously copyrighted materials automatically disqualifies the applicant. Please review "Additional Terms and Conditions" on page 4 for more information. Many New York City icons are already copyrighted; this includes most identifiable buildings in the Manhattan skyline, the major bridges, the Statue of Liberty, "I ♥ NY," etc.
 - b. **Faces:** Designs that use real human faces (as opposed to cartoon or representational figures), should include more than a single person. Any group of faces should be diverse and age-appropriate for fifth through eighth graders. Keep in mind anyone you use must be able to sign a release form if your cover is chosen as a finalist.
- **Final Design Format:** Finalists will be asked to submit final designs to the DOE as **Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, or Adobe Photoshop** files. Cooper Hewitt will provide support to all students who do not have access to Illustrator, InDesign, or Photoshop; finalists without access to these programs should let workshop leaders know at the first workshop.

Judging Criteria

All designs will be judged on the following four criteria:

1. Originality
2. Adaptability of the design to different media
3. Appropriateness of design for a NYC DOE-issued publication
4. Application of the principles of design

How Winners Are Selected

- **Finalists:** 10 finalists will be selected by a panel of DOE and Cooper Hewitt judges from the pool of submissions, based on the criteria listed above. The 10 finalists will be required to attend four virtual design workshops with Cooper Hewitt; see “Required Design Workshops for Finalists” below for more information.
- **Winners:** Winners are determined by a panel of judges. One grand prize winner and three runners-up are selected. At the final workshop session the week of March 28, finalists will formally present their designs to the judging panel. The DOE and Cooper Hewitt will select the grand prize winner and runner-ups based on the presentation and the judging criteria listed above.

Required Design Workshops for Finalists

Finalists will be expected to attend all four virtual design workshops. Finalists that do not attend at least three of the virtual workshops, or are more than 30 minutes late for two or more sessions, will be disqualified. These workshops will be held online by Cooper Hewitt from 4:30–6:30pm on the following one day a week between March 9 – March 30. Exact dates will be communicated to the finalists.

At the first three sessions, finalists will work with a professional graphic designer to refine their designs. At the final session the week of March 28, finalists will present their designs to the panel of judges.

Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum is located at 2 East 91st Street. Before you submit your design, please consider how you will be able to attend the virtual sessions if you are chosen as a finalist.

How Winners Are Notified

The grand prize winner and runner-ups will be announced online at schools.nyc.gov/coverdesign and will also receive an email confirmation.

Prizes

The Cover Design Challenge grand prize winner’s design will be featured as the cover of the *2023 New York City Department of Education Public School Admission Guide*. This design may also be used online.

Other finalist designs may be used for other printed and electronic publications at the discretion of the DOE.

Glossary

Applicants should learn visual design terms, which they may hear during workshops or from the client (DOE): <http://www.usability.gov/what-and-why/glossary/tag/visual-design/index.html>

Additional Terms and Conditions

Disqualification: Applicants will be disqualified if they:

- Do not include a signed DOE consent form with their submission by February 18, 2022.
- Do not follow all of the above entry guidelines.
- Use any offensive language within their submission or during the process of this challenge.
- Plagiarize or submit someone else's copyrighted material.
- Are chosen as finalists do not returned a signed Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Consent form.
- Are chosen as finalists and cannot attend at least 3 out of the 4 virtual workshops, including the final presentation.
- Are chosen as finalists and are more than 30 minutes late for 2 or more sessions.

Privacy: Information collected is subject to the DOE's Privacy Policy. Please visit: www.nyc.gov/schools/AboutThisSite.

Ineligibility: Only full-time NYC public high school students in New York City can participate in the challenge.

Anonymity: During the vote to select the 10 finalists, the judges (representatives from Cooper Hewitt and the DOE) will not know the names of the students or their schools. Student names and schools will be kept completely anonymous for the first round of judging for the 10 finalists. The schools, names, and submissions of the grand prize winner and runners-up will be formally and publicly announced at the end of the challenge.

Other Conditions: There is no cost to enter this challenge. Mail-in submissions will not be returned. Students shall retain ownership of their submissions, subject to the DOE's right to use the submission as granted in the signed consent.

Questions?

Email coverdesign@schools.nyc.gov or call 212-374-3984.