

ice
Institution of Civil Engineers

Bett, Learning
Technologies
and Memcom
Award Winners



& CREST accredited



CITYZEN

BUILD YOUR WORLD

2026 Award
Student Guide



For pupils aged 16-18



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Introduction

A little bit about us to begin with...

The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) is a professional organisation that promotes and supports civil engineering. It's where engineers come together to create solutions that enable our planet and our people to thrive.

The ICE CityZen Award

Get ready to take part in the ICE CityZen Award. It's a fun, rewarding and unforgettable journey. Plus, it could pave the way for a fulfilling career in civil engineering. There are two ways to get involved – just pick the one that works best for you!

The CityZen Challenge

Your first option is our award-winning CityZen Challenge. Four engrossing weeks of gaming with your teammates. Simple, fun and great for your future career options.

The Project Pitch

To achieve the full CityZen Award, your team can take things a step further. It's your chance to use your CityZen Challenge learnings to improve your community. Get creative and pitch your idea to help improve people's lives and where you live.

Our winners receive generous cash prizes and exclusive access to the ICE headquarters.



Two thirds of CityZen participants have told us they are interested or very interested in civil engineering after taking part in the award.

So grab your team and get started!



CityZen Student Soapbox

Nobody can explain what it's like to take part quite like our previous participants...

SUBJECT INSIGHTS
IMPROVE SKILLS
HAVE FUN
UNDERSTAND CIVIL ENGINEERING
ACHIEVEMENT RECORD
COMMUNICATION SKILLS

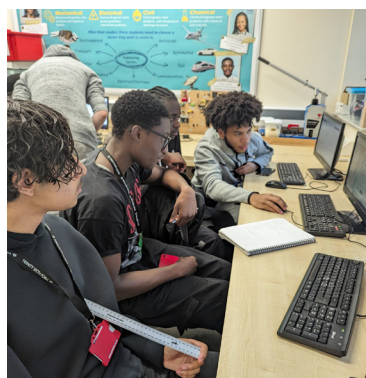
PRIZES
RECOGNITION

What did you think of the CityZen Award?



Taking part in the competition was very fun. I'm happy to have had the opportunity to compete.
Year 13 Student, Comberton Sixth Form

CityZen is a unique and enjoyable competition. It helped me to expand my communication and leadership skills.
Year 12 student Barton Peverill College



Thank you very much for this wonderful opportunity to experience a replica of real-world engineering. I really enjoyed it.
Year 12 Student, Dulwich College



Award timeline

You can take part flexibly throughout the autumn term to fit in with your school timetable. As long as the game and video project are completed by the submission date below it's entirely up to you when you do them!

2026 Award submission date: 18 December 2026





Prizes

No competition is complete without great prizes. Our winning students receive a fantastic haul of goodies. And so do their schools – because improving your community is what future civil engineers do! There are two ways to take part, so there are also two sets of prizes.

The CityZen Challenge prizes

For the three highest scoring teams who complete the CityZen Challenge

Each student receives:

- 1st Place:** £50 Waterstones voucher
- 2nd Place:** £35 Waterstones voucher
- 3rd Place:** £20 Waterstones voucher



Every team who completes the CityZen Challenge receives a certificate



2025 CityZen Award winners on their VIP visit to ICE Headquarters

The ICE CityZen Award

Our top three teams will enjoy a tour of ICE's headquarters, including lunch with the ICE president or vice president.

The architecture and history of the building were really impressive and it was great to meet the other winning teams and hear their ideas.
Lara McDonald, Highly Commended 2023

Thanks for the amazing hospitality at the winner's dinner. We felt well rewarded for our hard work!
Team Canon Slayer, Silver Award Winners 2023



£2,000*
PRIZE MONEY



£1,000*
PRIZE MONEY



£500*
PRIZE MONEY

There are more special prizes on the next page too!

*Shared equally between students and school



Additional prizes

The following special prizes may be awarded by the final CityZen judging panel - alongside those for the Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards (whose winners are ineligible for these additional prizes).

JBA Trust Special Award for Nature and People Positive Innovation

JBA Trust sponsors this special prize for the project pitch which suggests highly creative and practical ways to support nature and the environment, as well as considering how the project can have inclusive positive impacts on society. This could include, for example, nature-based and/or community based initiatives to strengthen resilience or deliver environmental benefits.

The winning team will receive £500 – split equally between students and school.

The winners of this prize will also be invited to the VIP CityZen winners lunch at ICE Headquarters (see main prize page for more info!).



It will be awarded for a project pitch that strongly demonstrates at least one of the following:

- A positive impact on nature and/or biodiversity.
- An innovative/original solution that will positively impact the environment for both people and nature.
- A solution that uses natural processes or materials in an impactful and/or original way.

For more information on JBA Trust, visit: www.jbatrust.org



Loud Speaker Prize for Communication Skills

One team will be awarded this special prize which celebrates excellence in communication skills (demonstrated in their project pitch).

It will be awarded for a project pitch that demonstrates at least one of the following:

- Has an outstanding presenter(s).
- Uses a highly original and effective communication style.

That also demonstrates a genuine passion for the project – showing how much you care about making a difference.



The winners of this prize will be invited to the VIP CityZen winners lunch at ICE Headquarters (see main prize page for more info!). There will be a prize for the winning students which is to be confirmed for 2026. For more information on Loud Speaker visit: www.loudspeaker.org.uk



Your data and registering for the competition

If your school registers you to take part in the Competition we will collect, use, store and share, the following items of personal data about you:

- Name.
- Date of birth.
- Name and address of your school.
- The year in which you entered the Competition and your school-year at the time of participation.
- Your project pitch video (if you choose to submit one).
- (If you are selected as a winner.) Your preferences about taking part in publicity, sharing of your project pitch and any data collected to enable you to attend and enjoy the winner's lunch.

How is your personal data collected?

If you decide to take part in an ICE activity, your school will register you as a participant using our online portal. We also ask your school to complete a parent/guardian permission form. This form indicates you have consented to take part and agree to share your personal details with ICE.

For award winners, we will also ask for parent/guardian consent for you to take part in event publicity, and about any accessibility requirements or dietary needs before you attend the winners' lunch. Winners' bank details will be shared (by your teacher) with ICE, and the JBA Trust (for the team who wins that specific prize), so they can award monetary prizes. Winners of the Loud Speaker Special Prize may be offered the opportunity to get involved in this organisation's activities and asked for consent to be contacted by email.

After the competition, we share your name and date of birth with UCAS who will conduct research to track students through the UCAS application process (results are anonymised in the report UCAS will provide so we can't identify individuals from this). UCAS delete your details when the research has been completed. We do this research to better understand the education journeys taken by people who go on to pursue a career in engineering.

For more information on data use in the competition please read the full **Competition Terms and Conditions** which can be found at:

ice.org.uk/CityZen



The CityZen Challenge

Our award-winning CityZen Challenge spans four weeks. Your team navigates a virtual city, tackling engineering challenges. There's a different theme every week to keep it fresh. You'll get to explore STEM subjects. And, you'll learn how civil engineering can create change in your community. What's not to love?

Here's why you shouldn't miss the CityZen experience:

3D action

Web-based 3D gameplay. It's like stepping into your own virtual city!

Be the boss

Your choices matter here, and every decision affects your citizens' lives. Work effectively as a team and you're on to a winner.

Loads of challenges

CityZen throws all sorts of scenarios your way, so you won't get bored! You'll build bridges, renovate parks, and consider sustainable housing and crisis management.

You can find more detailed advice for playing the CityZen game in the separate Game Guide found at ice.org.uk/CityZen

I really enjoyed the game. It was fun and informative, and it was satisfying being able to use knowledge that you had learnt in previous lessons.
Year 12 Student,
Guildford High School




Student Rating: ★★★★★



Award winning

CityZen is the winner of not one, not two, but three international awards. Because, quite frankly, it's worthy!

- Best Learning Game, Learning Technologies Awards
- Best Secondary Free Digital Content App or Open Educational Resource, Bett Award
- Best Education Initiative at the 2024 Memcom Excellence Awards



The CityZen Award – Project Pitch

Use your knowledge

For your project pitch, you will present an original idea to effect change in your community. Think about the unique needs and challenges faced by people where you live. Is there an issue related to infrastructure, transportation, environmental sustainability or public amenities? Can you find an innovative and sustainable solution to address it?

Show us:

- the problem your team wants to solve
- your solution
- how it will benefit your community



Pro Tip: Draw on what you learnt in the CityZen Challenge

Get creative

As a team/on your own, you'll craft a compelling project pitch video. Be as creative as you can. Use visuals, animations, voiceovers or testimonials if you like. Or maybe you'll do something we haven't seen before!

Your Project Pitch needs to be between 2 and 4 minutes long, in MP4 format. Please follow our guidelines for filming safely – and you'll also find great advice for making your film from communications skills experts **Loud Speaker** in the Project Pitch Guide.

Be realistic

Remember, this is all about civil engineering in the real world. So think about how much it will cost to deliver your idea, versus the impact it will have. Look at the possible challenges you'll face, and what you could do to overcome them.

Pro Tip: Seeking advice from teachers, mentor and local businesses could be really helpful.

We're looking for:

- original and practical ideas
- a really clear explanation
- creative presentation and design skills
- ideas that will have a BIG impact on the problem you're trying to solve
- a clear demonstration of your learnings from the ICE CityZen Challenge

Each of these criteria is marked out of a score of five, with equal weighting.

You can find more detailed advice for creating your video in the separate Project Pitch Guide found at ice.org.uk/CityZen



Could you be a civil engineer?

If you like designing or building, solving problems or improving people's lives then you'd enjoy a career in civil engineering!

To become a civil engineer you'll need to choose the right subjects at school or college. It's a good idea to check the requirements for any courses you're interested in, as they can vary a lot. Maths at A level or Scottish Highers is needed to get onto nearly all civil engineering degree courses. A good grade at GCSE or equivalent will help you secure an apprenticeship. Physics at A level or Scottish Highers is also asked for by many universities.

Other useful subjects for civil engineering include Geography, Art and Design, Design Technology, Computing, English and some specialist courses such as the Design Engineer Construct! programme.

Top career facts



SALARY The average starting salary for UK civil engineers is around £28,000 rising to £60,000 for experienced engineers. Professional qualification with an institution like ICE can help you earn more and those at the top of the profession earn well over £100,000.



INTERNATIONAL Civil engineers' skills are also in demand across the world and many get the chance to travel to and work in exciting places.



OPPORTUNITIES Studying to become an engineer can open doors to other careers: it keeps your options open!



WELLBEING Civil engineering regularly features in polls of the top happiest jobs!



DEVELOPMENT It's a career which has clear routes through study and qualification.



STATUS Qualified engineers have a high status similar to doctors and lawyers.



EMPLOYMENT The UK needs lots more civil engineers in the near future.

Find out more: [ice.org.uk/wice](https://www.ice.org.uk/wice)



Meet the professionals

If you're wondering who can become a civil engineer, the short answer is everyone. They can also look just like you!

The Institution of Civil Engineers, as the oldest membership organisation for the profession, is working hard to ensure that the everyone feels welcome and can succeed in their career.

Our campaigns and activities are driven by our members and include:

- Supporting Pride activities
- Working with the Women in STEM campaign



Ellie Thomas

Assistant civil engineer, AtkinsRéalis

I wanted my work to be meaningful and to help improve lives. Studying geography at school, I learned about how civil engineers help to connect communities, provide access to safe drinking water and contribute to a sustainable future. This really inspired me to pursue a career in civil engineering. It's inspiring seeing how passionate civil engineers are about their work and how willing people are to help others develop! I've had the opportunity to learn and get advice from lots of great engineers that will benefit my career.

ice.org.uk/ellie-thomas



Yoosuf Khan

Civil engineering degree apprentice, National Highways

I originally thought that civil engineering was just about buildings and doing. When I was younger, I held a lot of self-doubt around my future. I believed that an individual like me from a diverse background did not belong in a STEM career. However, since finding civil engineering, I've discovered that it's a career that's open to all, regardless of your background. Since starting my apprenticeship, I have become a much more confident and sociable individual!

ice.org.uk/yoosuf-khan



Vanessa Quansah

Head of construction engineering, Bovis Construction

I actually wanted to be a hairdresser, and my mum asked me to just think about all the options available to me. Not long after that chat, I had a chance discussion with another student in high school that changed my mind. She wanted to go to Oxford to study civil engineering. I didn't know what it was, so I looked it up and was instantly interested. The rest is history. On top of that I still love to do hair and experiment a lot, so I get the best of both worlds!

ice.org.uk/vanessa-quansah



Jacob Bates

Engineering apprentice at JBA Consulting

My interest in civil engineering was sparked as a kid when I visited the London 2012 Olympic Games stadium. I was amazed by how easily one giant structure could turn thousands of individuals into a vast sea of noise - I was in awe of the scale and complexity of it all! I would recommend a career in civil or infrastructure engineering because it offers the chance to shape the world around you in meaningful, lasting ways.

ice.org.uk/jacob-bates



How to become a civil engineer

There are many different routes you can take.

A vocational course (such as BTEC or HND) combines study with 'hands on' experience and can give you a fast-track to qualified Engineering Technician status. If you get taken on as an apprentice by a company you'll get paid as well as be given time off each week to learn. It's possible to progress from this role to become a Civil Engineer with enough job experience.

Studying at university can give you a fast-track route to Chartered Engineer status and the top jobs in the profession.

There are more ways to study and enter industry than ever before – including starting while still at school (foundation apprenticeships) and working and getting a degree at the same time (degree or graduate apprenticeships).

Find out more: [ice.org.uk/wice](https://www.ice.org.uk/wice)



Financial support

Apply for funding to help you study civil engineering at either university or a vocational course through the ICE QUEST fund.

QUEST Undergraduate Scholarships ≤£8,000
QUEST Technician Scholarships ≤ £1,000

Find out more: [ice.org.uk/quest](https://www.ice.org.uk/quest)

Free student membership

When you begin studying civil engineering you can sign up for free student membership of ICE. You get lots of great benefits like career advice and resources to help you learn about the industry.

Find out more: [ice.org.uk/student](https://www.ice.org.uk/student)



Careers support resources

If you're looking for more information and support to explore careers in civil engineering we've got it here!

Virtual work experience

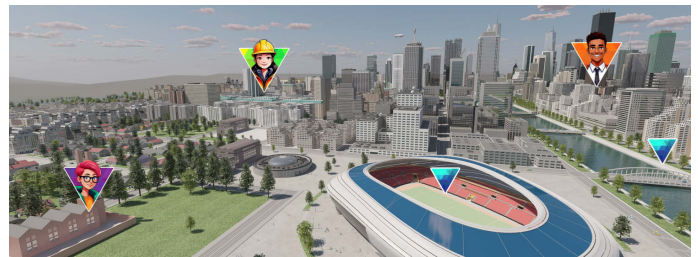
Take part in our on-demand civil engineering virtual work experience to learn why civil engineering is such an exciting and rewarding career. **The Civil Engineers Shaping the World programme** is free and available to all young people via the Springpod platform.

bit.ly/ICE-virtworkexp

ICE Futures

Explore civil engineering with ICE Futures – a gamified platform where students follow Mae, Omar, and Robyn as they tackle real-world challenges and shape an evolving 3D city. By providing clear, bite-sized insights, it helps students understand the tangible impact of civil engineering and the role they can play in shaping the future.

ICE-Futures.com





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