



Sunrise on the west side of the Organ Mountains, Las Cruces, NM

WERC ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN CONTEST 2026 FACULTY ADVISOR HANDBOOK

Your source for:

- Faculty-specific WERC policies –
- The roles and expectations of faculty advisors at the contest –

This manual avoids duplication of information provided in the *Team Manual* and the *Team Success Guide*. Refer to those documents for contest guidelines, regulations, and hints to help your team be competitive at the contest.

New this year:

- The *Team Manual* (containing all policies and regulations) is printed separately from the *Team Success Guide* that contains helpful hints and contest philosophy.
- A Business Plan Checklist and Academic Integrity Statements (including the use of AI) have been added to the *Manual*.
- The WERC Team Site (for registration, submissions, and scores) has moved to: [WERC Team Site](#) (hosted by the Institute of Competition Sciences).
- 30% Project Reviews are requested in January for every project.
- Your Team Leader may reserve an Oral Presentation practice room prior to arriving at the contest.
- The Flash Pitch Presentation will identify your institution.



2026 WERC ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN CONTEST

FACULTY ADVISOR HANDBOOK

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CONTACT INFORMATION

- **werc@nmsu.edu** or **gscarbro@nmsu.edu**: Our email addresses. Please contact us if you have questions.
- **575.646.8171 (office)**: Program Manager (Ginger Scarbrough).
- **575.312.7623 (cell)**: Program Manager (Ginger Scarbrough). Call any time, including after hours.
- <https://werc.nmsu.edu>: Our website. Find FAQs, published tasks, and general information.
- The WERC Team Site is your connection to the contest for:
 - Registration and payment
 - Report submissions (Preliminary Report, ESP, Written Report)
 - Scores and judges' comments. View team scoring results after the contest.
 - <https://www.competitionsscience.org/competitions/werc-2025-26/>

CONTEST REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

- The contest will be held in Las Cruces, NM. April 12-15, 2026.
- Refer to the *Team Manual* for contest policies and regulations.
- Refer to the *Team Success Guide* for helpful hints and contest philosophy to help teams compete effectively.
- Ensure that each team reads the entire *Team Manual* aloud as a team. It is also a good idea to have them read the *Team Success Guide* as a group.
- Note that our [Guidelines](#) web page includes sample award-winning papers from previous years at the Contest.

2026 PRE-CONTEST DATES AND DEADLINES

2026 WERC Environmental Design Contest Dates and Deadlines <i>(Subject to change)</i>		
Date	Action Item	Details
This Fall, 2025	Reserve your spot	Email us to reserve a spot for your team – send the Task number!
Weekly	Check FAQs for updates:	Task-specific FAQs: 2026 Tasks/Task FAQs General FAQs: 2026 General FAQs
Nov 1, 2025 – Dec 31, 2025	Early Bird Registration	- Registration at: WERC Team Site \$100 discount/team, in addition to multiple team discounts
Upon Registration	Team Photos, W9 Form	Upload Traditional & Fun team photos to Team Site after registering. WERC uses these for: social media and contest slideshows. The US government requires the university to submit a W9 form for cash awards.
Fall 2025	Research, design, order materials, outline report.	- Prior to the contest, follow your institution's safety protocols for laboratory work. - Begin to look for auditors
Dec 1, 2025 – Jan 30, 2026	30% Project Review Due	- Submit any time within this time frame. - Teams starting their project in Spring 2026 may request an extension to submit the Project Review.
Dec 15, 2025 – Feb 20, 2026	Complete the On-Demand Course: <i>Preparing the ESP</i>	- Required of all team members. - Team Leader: Email us for the course link(s) and share with your team.
Feb 17, 2026	Final date to register a team.	Late-coming teams will be considered on a case-by-case basis. We will try to make accommodations.
Feb 27, 2026	NCEES Licensure Presentation (Optional)	NCEES staff Lehmon Dekle and Kris Goodenow have kindly offered to host a webinar to help you get started preparing for the FE Exam. Registered teams will receive a link.
March 9-13, 2026	Submit ESP	Must be submitted on time to miligh@nmsu.edu to run a bench-scale demonstration. Required of all teams. See ESP course for details.
March 12, 2026	Request Audits no later than this date	Send draft report to three separate auditors (economics, legal, and health & safety). Correct report as needed.
March 30, 2026	Submit Equipment Transportation Form (optional); Request practice room time slot.	- Submit Transport Form 10 working days before the contest if shipping items to Las Cruces. - Complete Practice Room Request Form (Rooms available Sunday 12p – 3:45p)
April 2, 2026	Submit Tech Report	Submit through Team site
April 6, 2026	Submit Flash Pitch slides and Summary	Submit through Team site
April 12-15, 2026	Contest in Las Cruces, NM	NM Farm & Ranch Museum 4100 Dripping Springs Rd. Bring: Oral presentation, poster, bench-scale apparatus.
Sunday April 12, 2026	Noon – 7:40 pm Noon – 9 pm	Check in, Meet & Greet, Flash Pitch Round I, Banquet, Safety Brief. Bench area open till 9 pm.
Monday, April 13, 2026	8 am – 4 pm 8 am – 8 pm	Oral presentations, Lunch, Poster Session. Teams may stay until 8 pm to run/test bench-scale demonstrations.
Tuesday, April 14, 2026	8 am – 5 pm	Bench-scale demos, Lunch, Bench-scale Decommissioning at 2 pm, Flash Pitch Final Round, Game Night
Wednesday, April 15, 2026	5:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Morning: Free time for teams (while judges deliberate) Evening: Awards banquet

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ON-SITE CONTEST SCHEDULE OF EVENTS – APRIL 12-15, 2026

(Schedule subject to change)

Sunday, April 12: *Casual attire all day, except as noted*

- 1:00 – 4:00 PM: Check in; bench-scale setup; presentation rooms open for practice
- 4:00 – 5:00 PM: WERC Welcome and Team Meet & Greet
- 5:00 – 6:15 PM: Flash Pitch, Round I (*Business attire for presenters*)
- 6:15 – 7:15 PM: Dinner and Keynote Speaker
- 7:20 – 7:40 PM: Mandatory Safety Meeting for all faculty and teams
- 7:40 – 9:00 PM: Bench-scale setup and commissioning
- 9:00 PM: Bench-scale area closes

Monday, April 13: *Business attire for Oral and Poster presenters.*

Laboratory attire required all day in bench-scale area: goggles, long pants, close-toed shoes.

- 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM: Bench-scale area open for equipment setup and operation
- 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Final commissioning; synthetic solutions distributed
- 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM: Oral Presentations
- 1:00 – 1:45 PM: Lunch Served
- 2:00 – 4:00 PM: Poster Session
- 8:00 PM: Bench-scale area closes

Tuesday, April 14: *Laboratory attire required all day in the bench-scale area: goggles, long pants, closed-toe shoes.*

Business Attire for Flash Pitch presenters, Casual attire at Game Night

- 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM: Submit bench-scale sample results when ready.
- 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM: Bench-scale Demonstrations: Judges visit booths
- 12:00 – 12:45 PM: Peer Judging Session
- 12:45 – 1:30 PM: Lunch Served (Faculty Advisors Lunch Meeting)
- 1:30 – 3:00 PM: Bench-scale area decommissioning and waste disposal;
Advisors must be present for their team's decommissioning
- 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Flash Pitch, Final Round (*Business attire for presenters*)
- 4:00 – 5:30 PM: Reception: Music and games in the courtyard. Taco bar. (*Casual attire*)

Wednesday, April 15:

- Morning and afternoon: Teams have free time while judges deliberate
- 5:30 – 8:30 PM: Awards Banquet and Ceremony. Dinner served.
- Thank you for joining us! Keep in touch.

CONTEST PHILOSOPHY AND STRUCTURE

WERC Contest events are modeled after an engineering Request for Proposals.

The WERC Environmental Design Contest simulates the problem-solving process an engineer might encounter on the job. It follows the Request for Proposal (RFP), a format that companies often use to solicit new engineering designs. When responding to the contest (or any) RFP, teams should consider opportunities to add value to the client.

RFPs vary from company to company. We have selected elements of RFPs that provide effective ways for students to learn about the engineering design process. At the contest, teams select from among the RFPs, submit a technical report, give an oral presentation, attend a poster session, and build a bench-scale system to demonstrate the feasibility and efficacy of their design. Winning a cash prize at the contest is analogous to winning an engineering contract. See the Team Manual for more details about how each event in the design contest is modeled after the engineering RFP

Contest entries go beyond a simple science-fair-type display. Teams demonstrate their working bench-scale process and plan for full-scale implementation, considering factors such as cost, waste, schedule, feasibility, safety, regulations, and public acceptance. WERC analytically tests the teams' processes/designs in our own independent labs.

Scoring for the main contest is in four stages:

1. Technical report
2. Oral presentation
3. Bench-scale-process demonstration
4. Poster session

The Flash Talks are scored independently.

CONTEST OVERVIEW

1. **Assign a Team Leader and have that person be the primary contact between WERC and your team.**
 - a. *The projects should be student-run*—entirely organized, designed, and built by students, with faculty serving as mentors for the teams.
 - b. *Faculty advisors are expected to take a “hands-off” approach*, serving only as advisors and not taking over the design and implementation.
 - c. *The contest should take very little time from your schedule.* The burden should be on the Team Leader and the team.
2. **Specified Task vs the Open Task.** The five specified tasks are designed by engineering professionals to meet an immediate environmental need. The Open Task allows teams to choose their own topic; teams are responsible for setting all parameters for designing and testing their solution for the Open Task.
If a team wants to work on the Open Task, we recommend that you have them send us their idea early to get feedback from the judges and to ensure that the task is set up to be competitive. Most teams do not fully understand the rigor expected at the contest and tend to propose overly simplified Open Task problems.
3. **Questions about the contest or about a specific task.** The student Team Leader should contact us directly. Teams should also check our FAQs on a weekly basis. We have two FAQ locations:
 - [General FAQs](#)
 - [Task-specific FAQs](#)

The Program Manager is also happy to answer questions at ANY TIME, even middle of the night, as the contest grows nearer and submissions are due.

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4. **Project Start Dates – Fall vs. Spring.** Some teams start their research in the fall semester and build their bench-scale models in early Spring, but many teams wait until Spring to begin. Both models have been equally successful. The true key to success lies in the organization and dedication of team members.
5. **Advisor's Pre-contest actions and submissions** (in order of due date)
 1. **Register your team.**
 2. **Submit your institution's W9.** In anticipation of your team winning a cash award, upload your institution's W9 during registration (or soon thereafter). The US federal government requires that we submit a W9 for each institution that wins a cash award to demonstrate that the award is not taxable. Obtain the W-9 through your business office. If your W9 is already on file with the contest, there is no need to upload it again.
 3. **Help teams find auditors:** Help the teams identify good auditors early—hopefully outside of your school. Teams should send their draft report to 3 separate auditors (economics, legal, and health & safety) at least 3 weeks before the paper is due. (See *Team Manual*). After receiving audits, the team corrects their report, as needed. This is scored: Judges will compare the auditor review with the finished paper.
 4. **Submit the Intel's Terry McManus Outstanding Student Award nomination letter, if desired.**
As outlined in the *Team Manual*, in 2006, Intel established the Terry McManus Memorial Award to recognize students who demonstrate Terry's passion for environmental excellence. This memorial award is presented to up to three students per year who demonstrate a passion for environmental conservation.
 - Hold a vote of all of your students to determine your school's nominee. We found it best to involve the students in the nomination process, rather than leaving the selection solely to the Advisor.
 - The advisor writes a one-page nomination letter. The letter should demonstrate the student's exemplary actions during the contest, their ongoing commitment to environmental excellence, community projects, environmental research, or similar contributions. Outstanding performance at the design contest will be considered, but it is not the sole criterion for this award.
 - Submit your nomination letter to the WERC team site by 10:00 PM, Tuesday, April 14, 2026. Letters will be distributed to the judges on Wednesday for the final decision.
6. **Team Pre-contest actions and submissions** (in order of due date)
 - **Team Photos:** Submit at least one photo immediately after registering. We request both a "traditional" and a "fun" photo, but a team may opt to submit only one photo of their choice. The photos will be used for social media and during contest slideshows. Consider taking this photo for the team.
 - **Mandatory on-demand course for all team members:**
Team Leader: Email us to request a link to the course, 'Developing the Experiment Safety Plan'. Course opens in mid-December. Deadline for attending: February 20, 2026.
 - **30% Project Review:** Required for every Task, including the Open Task. Due in late January.
 - Technical experts (contest judges) review the report and suggest any modifications. Submitting earlier will be advantageous because the reviewer may suggest important course corrections.
 - The *Team Success Guide* recommends courses of action to students in case reviewers' comments call for major design changes.
 - See the [30% Project Review Form](#) and the Task Problem Statement for specific requirements.
 - **Experimental Safety Plan:** Due March 13, 2026. Required for ALL teams operating a bench-scale apparatus. Teams must submit the ESP by the deadline to qualify to run their apparatus at the contest. Before the contest, your teams should follow your institution's safety protocols for laboratory work.
 - **Equipment Transportation Form:** If shipping equipment to Las Cruces, submit the Equipment Transportation Form 10 working days before the contest. Allow time for packages to arrive here by Sunday, as that is the primary day for setting up the team's bench-scale demonstration.
 - **Technical Report.** Requirements are outlined in the Task Problem Statement.

THE ROLE OF ADVISORS AT THE CONTEST

This section addresses as “advisor” any faculty member who interacts with the team on an advisory basis as they prepare for the April contest.

Faculty advisors should adopt a “hands-off” approach when advising their students, serving primarily as coaches for their teams. Allow your students to grow as engineers, design their own solutions, and make all final decisions about their designs. Give them the opportunity to make mistakes along the way, but feel free to advise them to make course corrections if needed.

Advisors should feel free to review the team’s technical report before it is submitted and critique their oral and poster presentations, their bench-scale demonstration, and their Flash Pitch.

Faculty advisors will be responsible for:

1. Registering and paying for their teams prior to the contest.
2. Submitting their school’s W9, if not submitted in a previous year.
3. Appointing a Team Leader—a student on the team who will be responsible and assume most organizational duties at the contest.
4. Helping the team identify potential auditors who are outside the school system.
5. Advising their teams, as needed, as they prepare to attend the contest.
6. Ensuring safety for all: guiding their teams’ experimental safety protocols in the home lab and supporting WERC’s ESP protocols at the contest.
7. Teaching their teams to be autonomous and ensuring that the Team Leader is an effective leader.
8. Bringing their teams to the contest.
9. Nominating a student for the Intel Terry McManus Outstanding Student Award (*Optional*).

Most faculty advisors choose to take on these additional responsibilities, but they can be put on the teams:

1. Making arrangements for shipping equipment to the contest, if needed. (See Team Manual)
2. Helping teams find auditors for their technical report. (See Team Manual)
3. Arranging fun outings for the teams during contest breaks (Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning). One university makes WERC a particularly fun adventure to see the western US by taking their teams on a trip to the Grand Canyon following the contest. It is amazing how little extra cost it adds.

Faculty advisors should not:

1. Dominate their team’s projects.
2. Spend too much time organizing the team: give the team responsibility for organizing themselves.
3. Hover over their teams at the April contest. Let them be independent. Some judges advise that the advisor go play golf while their teams are competing, though most advisors find this very difficult to do.

ADVISORS VS. CO-ADVISORS

At your home institution, we encourage you to establish any advisor/team relationship that works for you. You may have chosen to assign only one advisor to each team, or you may have multiple advisors per team. We support any arrangement you make at your home institution.

However, when registering for the contest, faculty will be assigned either the role of Advisor or Co-Advisor. The distinction between the two roles is purely administrative. It helps WERC identify your institution's primary faculty point of contact and helps your institution avoid duplicate registrations and payments.

Both roles are assumed to be faculty at your institution, but any responsible party selected by your institution can register as an Advisor or Co-Advisor. In fact, one California team assigns a senior or first-year grad student to serve as the team's Advisor. The faculty still attends with the team at the contest, but their job is extremely easy, since theirs is truly a student-run team.

The Advisor

One Advisor is required because the Advisor is the only person who can register and pay for teams. If the institution is registering multiple teams, there is a discount for the second, third, etc., teams registered under the same Advisor. Therefore, to qualify for the discount, most schools will use the same Advisor to register all of the teams.

Advisor Duties:

- Usually advises the teams in technical matters.
- Initiates team registration for all teams from an institution
- Pays for registration
- Has access to upload submissions to the WERC Team Site (as emergency back-up for the Team Leader)
- Accompanies the teams to the contest
- Has access to final scores after the contest.

Co-Advisors

Co-Advisors are additional faculty/staff from your institution who officially register for the contest because of one or more reasons:

- They plan to attend the contest,
- They would like access to the team's online submissions and final scores, and/or
- They would like to receive contest SWAG (t-shirt, advisor jacket, etc.).

An institution may register as many Co-Advisors as it wishes. A registered Co-Advisor will be included in the team count when computing registration fees, as we assume they will be attending the contest, dining with us, and receiving SWAG, among other activities.

If your school has multiple advisors who will not attend the contest with the team, they can be omitted from registration. If you are in doubt about assigning Co-Advisors during registration, please contact us, and we can discuss your specific needs.

Registered Co-Advisor Duties may include one or more:

- Advises the teams in technical matters,
- Accompanies the teams to the contest,
- Has access to upload submissions to the WERC Team Site for all teams registered under the Advisor,
- Has access to final scores on the WERC Team Site after the contest for all teams registered under the Advisor.

REGISTRATION FEES AND POLICIES

Teams can be of any size. Fees are based on the date of registration, the number of teams registered under the same advisor, and the number of people per team (Advisors + Co-Advisors + Team Leaders + Students).

- Refer to the table below for team fees, discounts for early registration, discounts, and fees for additional members per team.
- Payment. The Advisor will pay by credit card through the [WERC Team Site](#). Contact us to make other payment arrangements (werc@nmsu.edu)
- Registration fees will not be refunded, except for unavoidable circumstances. In that case, the team will be reimbursed for the fees paid minus the team's portion of expenses incurred at the point they exit the contest, including the cost of materials ordered for your team and the cost to ship items to your team, if applicable.
- More details are on the [registration fee page](#) of our website.

Registration Date	First Team Fee (base fee for up to 6 people on the team)	Additional teams under same Advisor (base fee for up to 5 people per team)	Fee per additional person on the team (above the base number)
Nov 1 – Dec 31, 2025	\$980	\$880	\$170
Jan 1 – Jan 31, 2026	\$1080	\$980	\$170
Feb 1 – Feb 15, 2026	\$1200	\$1100	\$170
IEEE Discount*	\$50		

*If at least one member of a team is an IEEE member, that team will receive a \$50 discount. We encourage you to join IEEE. Please encourage your students to join as well, since IEEE sponsors the WERC IEEE Conference and publication in *Xplore*. A student membership is only \$32. [Join IEEE](#).

- Meals
 - WERC provides to all teams, advisors, and judges a Welcome Dinner on Sunday evening, lunch on Monday and Tuesday, a Taco Bar on Tuesday evening, and an Awards Banquet on Wednesday.
 - In your profile, please help us plan and reduce food waste by indicating which meals you plan to attend.
 - Dietary preferences: When completing your profile, you and your students will indicate dietary preferences. Please note that our caterer serves only chicken, beef, cheese, and vegan dishes at the contest. We never serve pork.
 - ✦ If we are able to accommodate your needs, we will email the person requesting accommodations to give instructions for working with our caterers during the contest.
 - ✦ If restrictions cannot be accommodated, the person with restrictions will need to arrange their own meals while in Las Cruces. We will email those who need to make their own accommodations. We apologize for any inconvenience, but your safety and your standards are of the highest priority to us, and we have learned over the years that some restrictions (such as Halal and Kosher and severe allergies, including black pepper) cannot be safely accommodated, due to our caterer's limitations.
- Emergency contact information: Make sure this is up to date when you arrive at the contest.

DAY-BY-DAY ADVISOR GUIDE TO THE ONSITE CONTEST IN LAS CRUCES

Sunday:

1. Check in at the Registration booth.
2. Help the teams set up their equipment in the bench-scale area.
3. Be available to run to the store for missing components.
4. Be aware that teams can sign up for a brief practice session in their assigned Oral Presentation room
5. Attend the one-hour Meet & Greet (New this year!)
6. Attend your teams' Flash Pitch(es) – if you have multiple teams, we try to schedule presentations to allow you to attend all of them.
7. Attend the Welcome banquet with the team
8. Attend the mandatory safety meeting and ensure that all students are present.
9. Accompany the team (if desired) back to the bench-scale area after dinner for any setup needs
10. As teams are setting up and operating their equipment, serve as a second set of eyes to ensure that your team(s) are adhering to WERC's safety protocols.

Monday:

1. Oral Presentations:
 - a. Should you attend? Maybe. There are differing opinions on this. Some experienced judges think that a faculty advisor's presence at the Oral Presentation results in poorer performance because they feel less confident in the presence of their advisor. However, some advisors want to attend. We leave the decision up to you.
 - b. Scheduling. We schedule the Orals to allow you to attend all of your teams' presentations, should you wish. If you attend your team's Oral Presentation, sit in the back to avoid distracting your team from their interactions with the judges. Try to look relaxed and smile confidently at your team, no matter what they say or do.
 - c. Advisors may help students with technical difficulties during the presentation, but should let the students take the lead in solving problems, if possible.
 - d. Advisors should not, under any circumstances, answer judges' questions about the project or try to clarify any issues brought up by the team. There is a significant penalty for a faculty advisor becoming involved in discussions about the team's design.
 - e. After the team and advisor leave the Oral Presentation room, advisors are allowed to give coaching instructions to their team. It is likely that judges asked questions that the team could not answer. This is a good time to remind the team to look up the answers in preparation for the bench-scale demonstration.
2. Poster Session:
 - a. Should you attend? Probably not. Space is limited in the banquet hall; it is best for you to wait outside and query the students about their experience after the session is over.
 - b. If you wish to be in the same room as your team, station yourself at a table in the center of the banquet hall, leaving room near the posters for the team and the judges. Posters will be displayed around the perimeter of the banquet hall.
3. Bench-scale Demonstration area on Monday:
 - a. There is no judging on Monday in the bench-scale area, but teams will be running their equipment when they are not involved in their oral or poster sessions.
 - b. The minimum PPE required in the bench-scale area on Monday and Tuesday is: long pants, close-toed shoes, and safety glasses, and more if required by your team's ESP.

- c. Teams may need a change of clothing as they move from the presentations to the bench-scale demonstration area.
- d. Feel free to leave your team alone to run their devices, or chat with them, or go visit other booths to learn something new!

Tuesday:

1. Bench-scale Demonstrations:
 - a. Should you attend? No. Do not be within earshot while the judges are visiting with your students. You can wait in the Break Area, located at the far side of the room, until your students have finished speaking with the set of judges.
 - b. Three sets of judges will visit each of your teams' booths. Judges' visits are scheduled in ½ hour increments, but they sometimes get off schedule. If you are speaking with your team when a set of judges approaches, quickly excuse yourself and wait in the Break Area, or visit a team that is not currently speaking with a judge.
 - c. After judges leave, you may approach your students to learn what was asked/answered and give your students tips, if desired. Be sure to walk away if another set of judges approaches your team.
 - d. Help your teams prepare for Decommissioning. All teams are embarking on the same adventure simultaneously. Encourage your teams to be civil and patient! They will be decommissioned sooner that way.
2. Flash Pitch Final Round. Should you attend? Yes! After the bench-scale teardown, join us in the Ventanas Ballrooms for the Flash Pitch Final Round. We hope your team was invited to compete!
3. Game Night. Should you attend? Yes! It is a great way to build camaraderie among your teams and with other teams.
 - a. Game night is a chance for teams to relax and have some fun. We will have:
 - i. An assortment of giant games (tumble tower, ladder ball, 4-in-a-Row, corn cob toss, etc.).
 - ii. Mixer games
 - iii. Southwestern entertainment
 - iv. Taco Bar or other refreshments
 - b. The event is 4:00 – 5:30 PM. Some teams choose to eat lightly because they want to go out afterwards to enjoy some local cuisine.

Wednesday:

1. Morning: Free time for teams while the judges deliberate. Teams use this time to explore local sites. White Sands National Monument is a favorite spot. Some go to Truth or Consequences for the Hot Springs. Others go hiking or exploring the many wonders of Las Cruces and the Mesilla Valley. (See website: [Explore Las Cruces](#)). Please let your teams know that the judges are hard at work during this time.
2. Evening: Awards Banquet
 - a. 5:30 – 8:00 PM
 - b. Should you attend? Absolutely! If your team wins a prize, they will need your support, and **WERC will need you to sign a Payment Request Form.**
 - c. If your team does not win a prize, they will need your support even more.

CASH AWARD PAYMENTS AND TROPHIES

Cash Awards. A team has the potential to win over \$4800 in cash if they place first in all possible categories (Task Award (\$2500), Bench-scale Competition (\$1000), Flash Talks (\$1000), Peer Award (\$300).

Award Checks. WERC will issue a single check to each institution for the school's total amount of winnings for all teams. It is the institution's responsibility to determine how the winnings will be used and distributed. If money is to be distributed among the team members, it is the institution's responsibility to do this.

Many schools choose to start a WERC Environmental Design Contest fund and use the prize money to fund future contest participation.

The Terry McManus prize is awarded to individual students; therefore, a check will be sent directly to each winner.

Trophies. At the Awards Ceremony, WERC awards trophies in addition to cash prizes. The trophies are fragile. They are boxed with padding—make sure you take the box with you! Pack them securely for the trip home.

Forms. The NMSU Business Office requires that you complete two forms before we can send a check to you.

1. **W-9:** This should be on file soon after you register your team. (See [Institution's W9](#), above.)
2. **Payment Request Form:** Immediately after the Awards Ceremony, the Advisor will be asked to sign an NMSU Payment Request Form (PRF). On this form, you will find an itemization of all award winnings for your teams, along with the total amount that all of your teams collectively won.

Before signing the Payment Request Form (PRF):

- a. Ensure that the address on the form is the one to which you want the check sent. When we pre-fill the form, we use the address that the Advisor lists in their profile during registration.
- b. Verify the total cash awards listed on the PRF. Ensure that these match your records. During the awards ceremony, record down the description and amount for each award your teams receive. Sum these for all teams to determine the expected payout, and confirm that it matches our records before signing the form.

WERC - IEEE CONFERENCE INVITATION

During the contest, judges will evaluate your team's technical report, oral presentation, poster discussion, and bench-scale demonstration to recommend the teams who will be invited to submit a paper to WERC's IEEE Conference, The *Waste-Management and Education Research Conference*.

Your role: If your team is selected to submit a paper for further review, please read their 12-page paper to ensure that the report is of a purely technical nature and that they have updated their paper to reflect new insights they gained during the contest. Publication decisions will be made late in the semester, when your teams are likely preparing for summer internships or graduation. We appreciate your help in ensuring that your teams' papers are accepted. You are welcome to include your name on the author list of the paper.

A team that is invited to submit a paper will be asked to:

1. Put the paper in IEEE publication format (templates provided on [WERC's website](#)).
2. Reduce the paper to 12 pages after being transferred to IEEE's format.
3. Ensure that the paper contains only the technical aspects of the report (omitting items such as the business plan, regulations, community involvement, and audits)
4. Update their findings and conclusions, based on what they learned during the contest.
5. The paper will be sent to their judges to confirm that appropriate changes were made, then sent to blind reviewers for a final decision.