



**NATIONAL
COLLEGIATE
LANDSCAPE
COMPETITION**



ABOUT THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE LANDSCAPE COMPETITION

Welcome to the National Collegiate Landscape Competition (NCLC), presented by the National Association of Landscape Professionals. Whether this is your first year attending or your school's return after many years, we are thrilled to have your team join us. The event has a profound impact on everyone who participates—students, faculty, and industry leaders alike—building connections, fostering growth, and sharing the incredible opportunities within the landscape profession.

NCLC is the largest intercollegiate landscape competition in North America, bringing together talented students from across the US and Canada to test their skills in real-world landscape and horticulture challenges. From designing landscapes and building hardscapes to identifying plant specimens, NCLC is both a competition and an immersive experience that fosters learning, collaboration, and networking with industry professionals. It's a unique opportunity to build professional connections, explore career paths, and gain experiences that often lead to internships, mentorships, and employment—making NCLC a true stepping stone into the green industry.

Schedule At A Glance

Day One: Workshops, Opening Ceremony, Welcome Receptions

Day Two: Networking Breakfast, Career Fair, Event Briefings, Competitive Events

Day Three: Competitive Events

Day Four: Closing Ceremony

A full schedule for NCLC will be available on the NALP NCLC website, as well as the event app, closer to event dates.
































COMPETITIVE EVENTS

At the heart of the National Collegiate Landscape Competition are the competitive events — a dynamic showcase of skill, knowledge, and passion for the landscape industry. Students from across the country come together to put their abilities to the test in real-world challenges, from plant identification and landscape design to equipment operation and business management. Each competitor strives to perform their best, earn top scores, and secure a place among the highest-ranking students in the nation. 95% of students who attend NCLC compete in at least one competition, proving that the desire to be the “best of the best” is a main driver of the event.

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COMPETITIVE EVENT

Here is a list of the current competitions:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  3D Exterior Landscape Design |  Interior Plant Identification |  Plant Problem Diagnosis |
|  Annual & Perennial Identification |  Interior Landscape Design |  Robotics and Technology in Landscape Design and Maintenance |
|  Arboriculture Techniques |  Irrigation Assembly |  Safety First |
|  Business Management |  Irrigation Design |  Sales Presentation |
|  Compact Excavator Operation |  Irrigation Troubleshooting |  Small Engine Repair |
|  Compact Track/Skid Steer Loader Operation |  Landscape Lighting |  Truck & Trailer Operation |
|  Computer Aided Landscape Design |  Landscape Maintenance Operations |  Turf & Weed Identification |
|  Construction Cost Estimating |  Landscape Plant Installation |  Woody Ornamental Plant Identification |
|  Employee Development |  Lawn Care Spreader Sprayer Operation | |
|  Exterior Landscape Design |  Maintenance Cost Estimating | |
|  Hardscape Installation |  Mini Track Loader Operation | |

 You can find a description for each competitive event at landscapeprofessionals.org/nclc. 

NETWORKING

NCLC offers countless opportunities to learn, grow, and build meaningful industry connections. At the **Career Fair**, students meet representatives from **more than 100 companies**, participate in **on-site interviews**, and even secure **internships or full-time job offers**.

The **Networking Breakfast and Receptions**

provide direct interaction with seasoned **industry professionals and peers**, while the

Faculty Luncheon helps educators **build or strengthen**

connections with peers from across the country. **Student**

Workshops foster **professional development** and **peer**

engagement, and the **competitions** themselves encourage

teamwork, sponsor interaction, and real-world

exposure that bring classroom learning to life.



STUDENT WORKSHOPS

Workshops are provided as an additional educational experience for students and faculty. Workshops run independently of the competitive events, and participation in these workshops is not required to compete in the events. Participation in some workshops is limited due to space constraints, please register early.

A few examples of the workshops provided at NCLC are 3D Exterior Landscape Design, Arboriculture (lecture and hands-on), Construction Cost Estimating, Hardscape Installation, Irrigation, Lighting, and more. To view a full list of available workshops, visit landscapeprofessionals.org/nclc.



CAREER FAIR

The NCLC Career Fair is the premier networking event for landscape and horticulture programs. It connects your students with leading companies across the industry and gives them access to real-world career opportunities, internships, and professional relationships that reinforce classroom learning.

On-site interviews and job/internship recruitment:

With over 100 companies attending—including national, regional and local front-runners in the professional landscape industry—students engage directly with recruiters, often landing interviews and offers on the spot.



GETTING STARTED – PLANNING TO ATTEND NCLC

Fundraising

The estimated cost per student to attend NCLC is \$1,500-\$2,000.

The estimated student out-of-pocket expense varies based on fundraising efforts and results, sponsorships, and allocation from school funds.

Most schools that attend NCLC do significant fundraising to help ease or eliminate the financial burden on students. A few fundraising ideas:

- Seasonal plant sales
- Outreach to local landscape contractors for sponsorship
- Stadium or other campus area clean up
- Friends and family network sponsorship

NALP is happy to assist where we can in brainstorming fundraising ideas, assisting with sponsorship letter templates, and more!

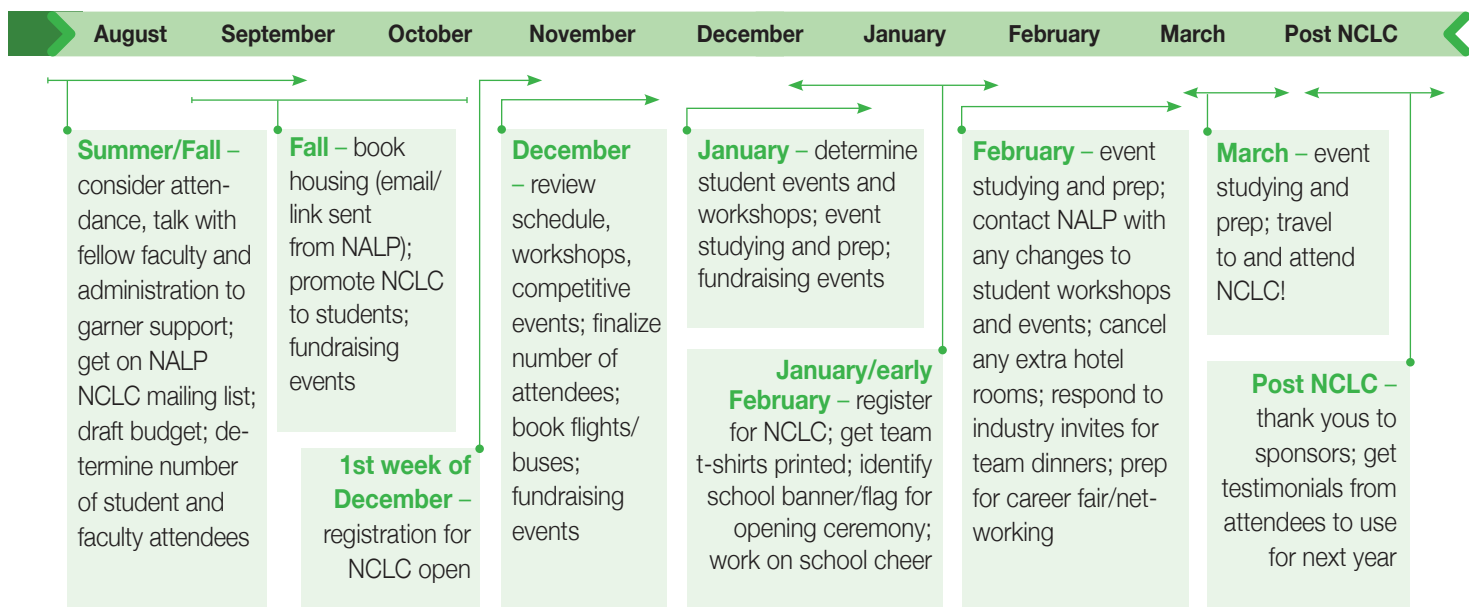
Housing and Registration

All schools participating in NCLC must have an NALP membership. Contact: careers@landscapeprofessionals.org to claim your free membership.

Your NCLC Registration includes: student workshops, competitive events, career fair access, daily networking, opening and closing ceremony, industry/faculty OR student reception, breakfast on Thursday and lunch on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

NALP negotiates hotel rates for attendees. An email with detailed instructions for making reservations will be sent to you. Please follow instructions and pay close attention to booking deadlines. Reservations are taken on a first-come, first-served, space available basis. Submit your reservation request as soon as possible upon receiving information to guarantee your hotel choice.

TIMING SUGGESTIONS



PLAN FOR FUN!

Student T-Shirt Design Contest

Each year, students from NCLC-participating schools eagerly anticipate the release of the official event t-shirt. This is your chance to be a part of that tradition!

We invite all students to submit their original designs for a chance to have it featured as this year's official NCLC t-shirt. The winning design will be selected ahead of the event and showcased throughout the competition.

As a bonus, the student behind the winning design will receive a **\$500 prize!**

Unleash your creativity—your design could be worn by students across the country!

School Cheer Competition

During the Opening Ceremony, each school will be announced in a “roll call” style. When your school's name is called, you'll have **20 seconds** to show your spirit with a school cheer. Bring the energy, enthusiasm, and creativity—the school with the most impressive cheer will win the **Best Cheer Award** which includes a cash prize!

Guidelines: To be eligible for the Best Cheer Award presented during the opening Ceremony at NCLC, please abide by the following guidelines:

- 1) 20 Second Time Limit
- 2) No Projectiles
- 3) Feet Must Remain on the Floor (OK to jump up and down, but no gymnastics). This includes no standing on chairs.

The sponsor has the right to disqualify any school based upon the guidelines presented above. We still encourage you to have fun and be creative, just keep it safe.



Social Media Contest

Share your experience at NCLC and you could win \$\$\$! We want to see the event from your point of view, so show off your photos and videos that speak to the energy felt at NCLC and don't forget to be creative! Our judges will be looking for well-thought-out posts that highlight what NCLC is all about. *Think quality over quantity.*

Use Instagram and TikTok posts to share your photos and videos and be sure to use the hashtags **#NALPNCLC** and **#REALSTIHL** and tag NALP social media pages.

Official instructions on how to enter the social media contest will be communicated before and during the event.



#NALPNCLC **#REALSTIHL**



@landscape_assoc



@the_nalp

NCLC GENERAL RULES

Any school that has a landscape contracting, management or related degree program, i.e., landscape architecture, horticulture, turf management, irrigation, etc., qualifies to participate.

Only one “team” per school may compete for that school. However, students from different degree plans or majors may make up that team.

Any student enrolled in a qualified program may participate as long as he/she has a current degree plan on file and has not completed that plan of study. Graduate students from a four-year school may not compete if they have completed an undergraduate degree in the horticulture field or are acting as graduate teaching assistants. Even though no specific limit has been set, it is suggested that students from a two-year school be limited to four years of competition, and students from a four-year school be limited to six years of competition. These suggested limitations on the number of years an individual participated in the competition will be on an honor system administered by each institution.

Events

It is anticipated that the events at a given NCLC will be the same as the previous year. However, it is understood that local logistics, industry sponsors, and upgrading to keep abreast of the industry will also be important factors in determining the actual events held in any given year. Any changes in the list of events will be approved the summer prior to the next year’s event. Normally, the number of events will be limited to 30. However, this number can be changed as needed based on the host school’s requirements and capabilities. Because of time restraints during the event, it is not suggested that any school plan more than 30 events. Changes in number and composition of events will be approved as previously stated.

Judges

Event sponsors will be responsible for the actual event planning, implementation and scoring, using guidelines generated by NALP. It is expected that event rules remain virtually unchanged from year to year, however, a certain

flexibility must be accepted to accommodate the logistics and capabilities of the host school. No changes will be accepted that will cause the event to create unsafe conditions for any participant or sponsor.

It is anticipated that event sponsors will recruit additional assistance from other industry members to administer the event and grade the tests. The host school may also need to assist in securing judges. If the host school does assist with acquisition of judges, these individuals should not be associated with the host school (i.e. faculty, staff, etc).

Participants

Any student may enter as many as five events if time permits. The time slots are not flexible and allowances will not be made for extra time for late entrants.

- Each contestant must be registered and paid in advance.
- Substitutions of entrants may be made up until 5pm local time on the Wednesday of NCLC week. No exceptions.
- The event sponsors and judges will determine the order of the contestants. It is anticipated that the sponsors will be as flexible as possible with contestants based on schedule conflicts.
- If a student is found to be competing under another student’s name, both students will be disqualified and the total school points will not be counted for that event.



Equipment

Contestants will be expected to furnish the equipment noted in the event description sheets. All other equipment will be provided. All contestants must use the equipment provided in order to standardize the competition. No personal tools or equipment will be allowed except as noted in the event description.

Competition

Each event will be scored on a 100 point scale (100 maximum score) per person. In the case of the normal 30 events, each school will receive a possible 6,000 points, or the equivalent of a possible 200 points for each event. Individual events will be scored as follows:

- For two person team events, the school team will receive a possible 200 points toward the cumulative school score total and each team member will receive a possible 100 points or one half of the team score. For example, in the Hardscape Installation event, if the team score is 180, then each of the two team members will receive a total individual score of 90 points.
- For events which allow two competitors from each school that do not work as a team, each individual will receive a possible 100 points, with the school total being a possible 200 points.
- For events which allow only one competitor, the individual has the possibility of 100 total points. An individual's actual score will then be doubled to acquire the school score for that event. For example, if a student in the Skid-Steer competition makes a total score of 80 points, the school will then receive a score of 160 for that event.

- Event judges will score each contestant on the basis of 100 possible points. All scores for each contestant will be recorded and submitted by the judges to the proper authorities.
- The school whose participants earn the greatest number of points will be declared the National Collegiate Landscape Competition champion. The Robert Calloway traveling trophy will be awarded to the winning school.
- The three students competitors earning the greatest number of points will be declared Super Stars.
- Before each event, the judges for the event will review the rules and amount of time allowed for the event with the contestants.
- Judges are to follow the event description and judging criteria as closely as possible.
- No ties will be submitted by the judges to the scoring office. In case of a tie, judges will use suitable criteria to determine placing in the event. It is suggested that time of completion of the event be used as the first criteria for breaking a tie with safety and professionalism as additional factors. The event sponsors judges will make the determination as to how ties will be determined and ranked.

Timed Events

In all events, knowledge, skill and safety will be used as a basis for winner determination. Time will only be used as a tie breaker.

Time Allowed for Each Event

All events will begin with approximately 10 minutes of explanation and handing out of materials. The remainder of the allotted time will be devoted to the actual competition.

Sales Presentation will follow the schedule outlined in the event description.

It is expected that event sponsors will design their event to allow for completion using industry standards for time and difficulty as it pertains to each event.

General Safety

Any student demonstrating a lack of knowledge and skill in a way that jeopardizes his/her own safety or group safety will be stopped from event participation and scored accordingly. This decision will be at the discretion of the judges. No student should enter a competition unless he or she has full knowledge of all safety procedures required for successful performance.

Conflict Settlement

The NALP NCLC appointed staff person will be "Arbitrator" in the occurrence of a difference of opinion in event operation and/or scoring and has ultimate authority in all scoring matters.

Code of Conduct

NALP is committed to providing a safe environment for all attendees. All students and faculty members attending NCLC are required to sign the NALP Code of Conduct during registration. You can view the Code of Conduct on the NCLC website.

On behalf of the National Association of Landscape Professionals, thank you for participating in this event. We're excited for the connections you'll make, the skills you'll gain, and the ways this experience will shape your and your students' futures. Our team is here to support you.

Questions about the event? Reach out to our team at

events@landscapeprofessionals.org

SCHOOL + FACULTY CONTACT:



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Landscapecompetition.org