PLU WANG CENTER FOR GLOBAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGED EDUCATION
PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

2027 Wang Center Photo & Video Contest



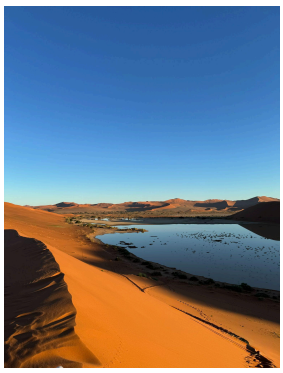
2026 Wang Center Staff Pick
"Heaven and Earth" by Pedro Call
Taken near a rest stop on our first bus trip of the semester.
Canal en route to Mycaenae
January, 2026

The 2027 Wang Center Photo & Video Contest will accept photos and videos from PLU students who participated in a study away program in **Spring 2026, Summer 2026, Fall 2026, or J-Term 2027**. The 2027 contest will open on November 16, 2026 and the submission **deadline is February 15th, 2027**. If you're submitting photos or a video for the contest, they must be ones you personally took or recorded. Submissions may not be AI generated or digitally edited.

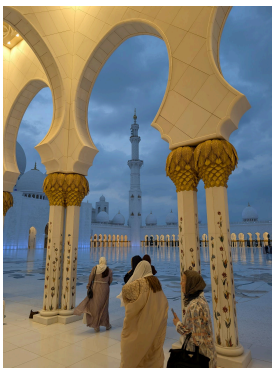
Ready to submit a photo or video? Click here!

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PHOTO SUBMISSIONS CATEGORIES



New Horizons



Everyday Abroad



Study in Action



Taste of the World

These are the first-place photos submitted by Lutes in the 2026 contest. They are provided as examples to help you determine which category best fits your photos. Below is additional information about each category.

NEW HORIZONS: Breathtaking landscapes/iconic landmarks from your host country/community

EVERYDAY ABROAD: Moments from daily life that show immersion in a new culture

STUDY IN ACTION: Learning moments, campus life, or academic experiences

TASTE OF THE WORLD: Food adventures and culinary discoveries while away

⚖️ Please adhere to the ethical guidelines.

💡 Pro Tip: Show your Lute pride! Try to include PLU gear or wear your black and gold in your photos or videos. 🖤💛

PHOTO PRIZES

Awards will be sent directly to your bank account through direct deposit as follows:

💰 1st Place	$50
💰 2nd Place	$30
💰 3rd Place	$25
💰 Wang Center Staff Pick	$75 Bonus
💰 Lutes' Choice	$25 Bonus Prize (Voted on and awarded after March Study Away Fair)

A 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winner will be selected from each of the four categories for a total of 12 selected photos. The Wang Center staff will then select one photo from the 12 winning photos to name as the "Wang Center Staff Pick." Winners will be notified of the results of the contest prior to the Spring 2027 Study Away Fair in March. The "Lutes' Choice" winner is chosen by student voters at the Study Away Fair.

The collective 12 selected photos will be on display at the Spring Study Away Fair, in the Library for a short-term exhibit, on the Wang Center's website, and in the Anderson University Center for the 2027-2028 academic year.

VIDEO SUBMISSION OVERVIEW

The Wang Center will award one grand prize of $150 for the student video that best showcases a unique PLU study away story in response to one of the following prompts.

- Share how this journey has transformed you, highlighting surprising moments and meaningful connections that have shaped your perspective.
- Explore the deeper question: "Why study away?"

Your video story can be shared in any digital format that resonates with you, whether it's a traditional YouTube video (landscape), TikTok, Instagram Reel, or another creative format. You are welcome to incorporate any audio/visual elements (video, flash, animation, cell phone footage, social media content) as long as the work is created specifically for this contest.

For traditional videos, keep the length between 30 seconds and 3 minutes. For TikToks and Reels, follow the platform's standard time limits of 15 to 60 seconds. Please ensure that your subject matter is original and appropriate for public distribution. Videos may not contain AI generated content.

Consult these resources:

- Rustin Dwyer's Video Tips for the Traveling Student
- 📹 PLU Study Away Video Guidelines

Avoid the use of copyrighted sounds/music/templates:

- Use Bensound and other related sites to access No Copyright/free music and sound. If the winning video contains copyrighted material, the videographer will submit a new version free from any copyrighted material prior to receiving their prize.

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PHOTO/VIDEO SUBMISSION PROCESS

The submission deadline is February 15th, 2027. If you're submitting photos or a video for the contest, they must be ones you personally took or recorded. The use of AI is prohibited.

There are **two** ways you can make your submission. Choose Option 1 **or** Option 2.

***Option 1* :** Submit through our Google Form. Click this link or scan the QR code to access the form!

***Option 2* :** Direct Message our Instagram [@Wang.Center] with your submissions. Please include the following information with each submission:

- Preferred Name (First & Last)
- Expected Graduation Month/Year
- Category of Submission
- Title of Photo/Video
- Tell us about this Photo/Video and why you chose to submit it. (suggested 2-4 descriptive sentences)
- Approximate Photo/Video Location

Sizing specifications for photo submissions: Minimum 3.5MB. For iPhone photos, select "Actual Size."

For the video submission, please upload your video as a file, if it fits. Otherwise, upload it to YouTube or Vimeo, and share the link through the Google Form above.

By submitting your photo(s) or video, you give PLU permission to use them for display and sharing (with credit to you as the photographer or videographer). All submissions become the property of PLU.

CONTEST RULES

- Photographers and videographers must be a PLU student who studied away during Spring 2026, Summer 2026, Fall 2026, or J-Term 2027.
- Submissions must be original photographs/videos taken by the photographer/videographer during their *academic* travels from Spring 2026, Summer 2026, Fall 2026 or J-Term 2027 (this includes PLU Gateway, Featured, Summer, J-Term Study Away, BMBA Global Business Perspectives (MBA), and SOCW Comparative Health Care (MSW), as well as educational travel for Wang

Center Research Grants, Peace Scholars, and Spring Break programs sponsored by the Wang Center).

  - ***Videographers may submit one (1) video***
  - ***Photographers may submit one (1) photograph per category***
  - ***Students may submit four (4) submissions maximum***

- AI generated, AI edited, or otherwise digitally altered photos will not be considered. Cropping, Sepia Tone and Black & White photos are the ONLY acceptable alterations.
- Videos originally submitted as part of the Study Away Storytellers Program may not be reused for this contest.
- The Wang Center reserves the right to reject photos/videos that contain inappropriate content (e.g. nudity, offensive gestures or language, culturally insensitive imagery, or depictions of unsafe or disrespectful behavior). Rejected photos/videos will be discarded without penalty to the contestant's other submissions.
- A maximum of two photos per person will be selected as winners. Winners will receive awards based on their highest placing submissions.

JUDGING & QUESTIONS

Judging will be conducted by panels of PLU faculty, staff, and/or students based on the following criteria: originality/creativity, photographic quality and visual impact, and effectiveness in conveying the study away experience.

If you have any questions please email: global.ambassadors@plu.edu

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ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR TAKING PHOTOS IN OTHER COUNTRIES AND CULTURES

1) REFLECT ON *WHY* YOU'RE TAKING A PHOTO: Is it because you want to remember something, show your family your hotel, create a record of a place or people, or because taking pictures just seems natural? Many people take photos when they travel because they need to feel busy or to put something between them and new surroundings. Take time to simply enjoy the experience and realize different types of photos require time and care to take.

2) BE INTERACTIVE: Try to take more interactive photos compared to objective

ones. Try to always ask permission when taking pictures of people. Getting people's names and stories as well as their photo can be a meaningful experience. It also will give more meaning to your photo when you bring it back and helps avoid the objectification of people that can commonly happen in photos of unfamiliar places, especially ones we think of as more "exotic".

3) WHAT'S IN AND WHAT'S OUT?: Think about what you want to include in your pictures – and then look at what you might be leaving out. Are you ignoring part of a person's life or the story of a town because you don't think it is "picturesque enough"? Realize that no photo is going to capture the reality of any place you visit, so think about how you can strive to show many different aspects of a place or culture, not just the tourist spots or well-known parts of a culture that everyone takes photos of.

4) CONSIDER AND RESPECT HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS AND LAWS: Most people know to ask permission to take photos in sacred or religious sites, but many countries also have laws against taking photos of government buildings and more. And even if there is no law against taking a photo, be respectful of the culture – a city, village, or landscape is not there for you to consume through your camera, but is part of the lives of those in your host country. Consider whether your photo is an appropriate representation of the culture or if it would reinforce negative stereotypes or aspects of a culture that the majority of the citizens would find embarrassing or shameful.

5) SHOW PEOPLE YOUR CAMERA AND PHOTOS: Digital cameras are great to interact with people you might take photos of. Kids especially like to see themselves on the camera screens. Letting people you meet play with your camera a little can be a hit too if you are spending a good amount of time with someone.

6) PHOTO EXCHANGE: When possible, try to find a way to give a copy of the photo to the people you take pictures of. Getting their address and sending them a photo is sometimes an option. If you are meeting people through an organization or traveling with a company, think about sending them the photos to distribute. You could also bring photos of yourself or your family to give out to people when you take their photo or meet them.

7) THINK ABOUT YOUR CAPTIONS: When you present a photo, be intentional about captions and how you choose to label and title a photo. When possible, give names and details and a greater context to the photo and be careful about what you are and are not comparing the people or place to. The photos should be part of a story you can share with people once you return home.

8) BE MINDFUL OF THE CONTENT OF THE PHOTO: Be respectful of the people you are photographing and their right to privacy. Are the photos of situations or circumstances someone would not want publicly shared? Especially take into consideration local citizens who may be the recipients of social and human services, such as food and supplies from local food banks, and taking photos of

local residents who may live in shelters.

9) REFLECTING OR BRAGGING?: Posting incredible images of stunning views and landscapes on social media may inspire other students to embark on their own study away journey! While your intentions may be good, be cognizant that not everyone is as privileged as you are, don't make your posts about yourself / do make your posts about the people and the place you're visiting, and be selective (i.e., don't over-share).

Created by Bryanna Plog '10. Adapted: April 2012, August 2013, September 2016.