



10 Tips for Young Filmmakers Entering the “Speak Up for MK Community Solar” competition

Whether you dream of working behind the camera, want to grow your creative skills, or simply care about making a difference in your community, this is your chance to get your voice heard.

A well-made short film can raise awareness about the climate crisis, promote positive solutions like renewable energy, and inspire action. It can also boost your confidence, help kickstart your creative career, and show the world what matters to you.





We’ve pulled together our top tips to help you make a standout short film for the [Speak Up for MK Community Solar](#) competition, and beyond.

Figure 1: A group of friends making a video on their mobile phone - Pexels image by Ivan Samkov

1. Know Your Message

Before you plan your shots, take time to understand the issue. Your film is your chance to inspire others, so get the facts right. Explore how renewable energy works, why it matters, and how communities like Milton Keynes are leading the way with projects like their **1MW Solar for MK Schools** and **Home Energy MK**.

Before you hit record, it’s a good idea to do some research so your message is clear, inspiring, and accurate. These resources are a great place to start:

-  [What renewable energy is and why we need it](#)
-  [What is community energy?](#)
-  [All about MK Community Energy and their work locally](#)
-  [How MK Community Energy helps local schools with free solar panels and more](#)

2. Show Your Personality

Everyone sees the world differently – use your unique angle! You don’t need expensive equipment – creativity beats kit. You just need to show your personality, ideas, and passion for renewable energy.

Whether you're passionate about solutions for protecting the planet and tackling climate change, or love the idea of keeping local money invested in the MK community and supporting your school, your unique voice matters. Use your filming style, music, or storytelling to let your personality shine through.

3. Keep It Short and Sharp

Short films can be just as powerful as longer ones. Your film should be no more than 2 minutes long, but shorter is fine. The best films get their message across quickly and clearly – perfect for social media. 💡 *Remember: Judges are busy; make every second count.*

4. Stay Focused on Your Theme

Make sure your film links back to the theme of the [Speak Up for MK Community Solar](#) competition. Think about how renewable energy, especially community solar, can create positive change in Milton Keynes. You can be creative with your approach, but your message needs to connect to the brief.



Figure 2: Young climate change activists - Fridays for Future and the Importance of Young Climate Change Activists, kids.earth.org

5. Mix Up Your Shots

Vary your footage to keep your film visually interesting. Try wide shots to show the big picture (like solar panels on rooftops) and close-ups to capture personal stories or reactions. If you can, film at different times of day or in different locations around Milton Keynes to add variety.

Try different angles, close-ups, wide shots, or creative perspectives but try to keep the transitions smooth so your film feels like one complete piece, not just random clips. Show your skill in how you can tell your story in different ways.

6. Include Yourself (if you want to)

It's your story too! Whether you film yourself talking to the camera, add a voiceover, or include behind-the-scenes clips, let people see who's behind the camera. This helps your film feel personal and authentic. Remember: The judges want to see YOU. Let your energy and passion for renewable energy and MK city shine through.

7. Use Music and Content Responsibly


Make sure your film is appropriate for all audiences. Be aware of the [competition rules](#) and avoid offensive language and risky behaviour.

Sound is just as important as your visuals. When adding music:

- ✓ Use copyright-free music (try sites like Incompetech, AudioMicro or Free Music Archive).
- ✓ You can also record your own sounds or ask a musical friend to help.
- ✓ Avoid branded logos or products in your shots.

 *Pro Tip: Use headphones when filming to check your sound quality.*

8. Plan Your Story

Good films start with good planning. Brainstorm ideas, talk to friends, and sketch out a simple storyboard. Think about your beginning, middle, and end. What do you want viewers to feel or do after watching?  *Top Tip: Less is more – a focused message is powerful.*

9. Don't Forget About Sound

Clear audio makes your film feel professional. If you have access to a microphone, use it. Avoid filming in noisy places and test your sound as you go. Remember, your message matters, so help people to hear it clearly.

10. Keep It Steady

Shaky footage can distract from your message. If you don't have a tripod, lean against a wall or place your camera on a steady surface. Smooth shots help your film look polished.

Final Reminder: Be Bold, Be Clear, Be You

You don't need fancy equipment. Smartphones or tablets can do the job. What matters most is your passion, your creativity, and your story. Show the judges your ideas for a greener, more sustainable Milton Keynes.

Good luck! We can't wait to see what you create before the 30 September deadline.

For more information, visit: <https://mkcommunityenergy.co.uk/speak-up-video-comp>