



## April E-BULLETIN 2017

# ECO-UNESCO

Ireland's Environmental Education  
and Youth Organisation



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Dear friends of ECO-UNESCO,

### Director's Message



I hope you have a restful and peaceful Easter break. We've had a busy few weeks with lots of exciting events and activities taking place, with much more to look forward to over the coming months.

The Young Environmentalist Awards ECO-Dens took place across the country in March, which was a fantastic experience to judge. I met so many inspiring and determined young environmentalists who have made fantastic contributions to their local environment. We are looking forward to meeting the young environmentalists once again at our Young Environmentalist Awards Final Showcase and Awards Ceremony on May 23rd.

Young people from our Youth for Sustainable Development and ECO-Choices programmes were busy in March pitching their action projects at the Leinster ECO-Den. They also organised workshops for World Water Day and are busy planning Earth Day on April 22nd.

We were delighted to welcome a new group of young people who started the Green Skills course at the end of March. We wish all the participants an enjoyable and rewarding experience! There are still places available on our next course starting on May 8<sup>th</sup>. You can find out more information and how to sign up in this update.

Until next month be sure to keep up to date on our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [website](#).

Until next time,  
Elaine Nevin  
National Director

## The YEA ECO-Dens wrap up

The [Young Environmentalist Awards](#) (YEA) ECO-Dens took place all over the country this March. Teams of young people from schools and youth-groups from Connaught, Ulster, Leinster and Munster entered the ECO-Dens to pitch their projects to expert judges for a place in the Final.



*Picture: Milverton National Schools at the Leinster ECO-Den and their project 'There is Hope if we Act Together'*

Before entering the ECO-Den the groups met with our YEA Coordinator Ji in order to ensure they were ready to give it their all for the presentation. The Judges, who came from all over the country, were thoroughly impressed by the amazing work that was completed by these groups. We had Judge representatives from Local County Councils, the Environmental Protection Agency, NUI Galway, and many more, who were ready to use their experience for the scrupulous judging process.

The projects covered a wide range of themes and topics, from biodiversity, climate change and water and some really creative ECO- Design projects! The tough job has now begun of shortlisting the projects for the Final Showcase and Awards Ceremony on 23<sup>rd</sup> of May at the Mansion House.

*Best of luck to all teams!*

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## Green Skills spring to a green start

We would like to welcome our new [Green Skills](#) participants who started the programme on the 27th of March. They are two weeks into the course and already been out on a Green Business Trail of Dublin, hiking in Howth and a trip to the Rediscovery Centre and Ballymun Community Gardens. For now, it is back to the ECO-UNESCO offices where they are about to begin QQI Level 5 training in Sustainable Development. We wish them every success on the course and we look forward to working with them over the coming months.



*Picture: Participants visit Ballymun Community Garden in April*

## **Now enrolling for next Green Skills course**

We are now enrolling for the next Green Skills, which starts on May 8<sup>th</sup> in Dublin. Green Skills, supported by Accenture, is a full-time 10 week training course that aims to provide young people with the skills, experience and support they need to progress onto paid employment or education. The course is open to all young people aged between 18 - 25 years old who are not in employment, education or training.

To enrol online or for more information [click here](#) or contact Triona on yei@ecunesco.ie or 01 6625491.

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## **Youth for Sustainable Development**



*Picture: young people facilitate workshop on World Water Day in Europe House*

After a busy few months of Young Environmentalist Award preparation, young people on the [Youth for Sustainable Development programme](#) were delighted to attend the Leinster ECO-Den. A total of 5 group projects were submitted and focused on a range of interesting topics such as improving biodiversity in Dublin parks, reducing the use of plastic water bottles and our Conference of Youth delegates on their year of action. Throughout April our weekly workshops are now focusing on debating current environmental issues in the news and some movie nights.

On March 22<sup>nd</sup>, young people from the YSD programme ran a workshop to celebrate World Water Day in Europe House. This was a youth run event organised by our older youth leaders. They delivered 3 workshops to other young people focusing on 3 water related Sustainable Development Goals, Life below water, access to clean water and sanitation, and Sustainable Cities and Communities. Be sure to read in next month's update what they get up to World Earth Day on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

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## **ECO-Watchers training for teachers and youth leaders**

**Thursday 27th April, Temple Gate Hotel, Ennis, Co. Clare**

ECO-UNESCO will be delivering this training session for teachers and youth leaders who are interested in Education for Sustainable Development, and who may be exploring themes such as waste, water, biodiversity, pollution, energy, climate change and more with their classes

and groups.

Participants will gain:

- Knowledge about sustainable development
- Knowledge about Education for Sustainable Development
- A toolkit of activities, games and learning methodologies to use with young people
- Curriculum links for Junior and Senior cycle teachers, and links to the National Quality Standards Framework for Youth Work
- Ideas for further action including project work and examples of successful projects
- Confidence to empower young people to take action on environmental and sustainability issues

The training is free of charge and will be particularly useful for any teachers working towards Green Schools flags, interested in taking part in the Young Environmentalist Awards, Young Social Innovators or Young Scientists next year, for youth leaders; for community leaders involving young people in Fairtrade or Tidy Towns committees.

Email [training@ecounesco.ie](mailto:training@ecounesco.ie) or call Evanna on 01 662 5491 to book a place or for more information.

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## Learning2Change Our World

Learning2Change has been busy at the ECO-Dens meeting teachers and students, all sporting fantastic projects, and signing up schools for next year's exciting Learning2Change Programme.

Susie and Operations Manager, Evanna, ran a successful teacher training programme in Galway in March which focused on the educational context and learning methodologies for Education for Sustainable Development.

The team have been delivering the ever popular Sustainable Development workshop in schools around the country, visiting a range of schools new to the programme including St Augustine's in Dungarvan, Colaiste Eoin in Finglas and Colaiste Choilm in Swords where we were charmed and challenged by a group of extraordinary autistic young people who participated so enthusiastically in the workshop.

If you have any questions about this programme please contact Susie at [youth@ecounesco.ie](mailto:youth@ecounesco.ie).

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## ECO-Choices budding with enthusiasm



*Picture: Drimnagh Castle group delivers their environmental workshop to young people*

Months of hard work paid off for two [ECO-Choices](#) groups as groups from Stoneybatter Youth Service and Stanhope Street Secondary School presented their work at the ECO-Dens. We would like to congratulate them on their projects and wish them the best of luck with the rest of the competition!

A new group from Stoneybatter Youth Services recently started the ECO-Choices 10 week programme. They are a very energetic group with lots of fantastic ideas about how to connect with and take better care of the environment around them. Dave, our ECO-Choices Coordinator, is looking forward to challenging them and having lots of fun in the process!

With the coming of Spring, it means that groups participating in the Eco-Choices programme enjoy more outdoor education days. We're planning trips to places such as Barnaslingan woods and Howth head with youth groups over the coming weeks. Watch out nature!

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## Global Action Programme youth leaders in full swing

ECO-UNESCO was delighted to run a flagship training in conjunction with UNESCO to train youth leaders in Education for Sustainable Development in February as part of UNESCO's Global Action Programme of which we are a key partner.



Twenty seven young people from across Europe took part in the two day training, honing their knowledge of sustainable development, their skills in leading and facilitating, and will join the ESD Young leaders Network coordinated by UNESCO and the GAP

As part of the follow on from the workshop all the young people are themselves delivering training sessions or workshops in the universities and organisations where they work or volunteer.

Here Maaïke Pyck and Femke Lootens, students at Wageningen University in the Netherlands reflect on their workshop: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hX-KByO34AQ>

You can read more about the workshop, and similar ones that were held around the world on the UNESCO website here: <https://en.unesco.org/news/esd-youth-leaders-train-become-change-agents>

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## ECO-Clubs exciting workshops

This month on the clubs programme we visited St. Joseph's National School in Monaghan to deliver 2 workshops on waste to the junior and senior classes. The children learned all about waste, recycling, and litter. They were very knowledgeable and told us about litter issues in their area. They created posters with an anti-litter message to encourage others to be responsible with their waste.

We also visited Coláiste Eoin in Booterstown, Dublin, where we carried out two workshops on Climate Change. The school's Green Committee will be exploring energy use in the school and the ideas from the workshops will feed in to their efforts to make the school more energy efficient.

## Do you want your organisation to be more sustainable?



We work with organisations who want to improve their green practices to become more sustainable, by supporting them to achieve an [ECO-Sustainability Award](#). This is a whole organisation approach to sustainability which recognises organisations for the work that they are doing towards sustainability.

If you or your organisation is interested in taking part in the ECO-Sustainability Award, please contact Niall at (01) 662 5491 or [ysd@ecounesco.ie](mailto:ysd@ecounesco.ie).

**Ends**

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