

# ECO-UNESCO

Ireland's Environmental Education and Youth Organisation



**eco**

U N E S C O

conserving the environment  
empowering young people



## ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Affiliated to the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Association (WFUCA)



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# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**ECO-UNESCO endeavour to work towards the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals in every aspect of our work.**

**ECO-UNESCO is one of the National Sustainable Development Goals Champions 2019-2020**

As SDG Champions our main purpose is to primarily raise public awareness of the SDGs, and secondarily illustrate practical ways in which organisations and individuals can contribute to achieving the SDGs, using our practices as an example.

# MESSAGE FROM CHAIRPERSON & DIRECTOR



**Jamie Cudden**  
Chairperson  
ECO-UNESCO



**Elaine Nevin**  
National Director  
ECO-UNESCO

Dear friends of ECO-UNESCO,

We are delighted to present our 2018 Annual Report, highlighting our achievements through out the year.

During 2018 we have remained committed to our core work of protecting the environment and empowering young people through environmental actions and education.

Through our work we engaged with non-formal and formal education bringing a specialist environmental youth work approach as we continued to focus on youth development and youth action. Youth empowerment remains central to our work, and our Youth for Sustainable Development programme provided young people with the knowledge and skills they need to become peer educators and advocates for sustainable development as we continue to align our work to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Our flagship programme, the Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA's), continued to grow with over 318 groups engaged, over 4000 young people involved directly and indirectly and over 700 young people represented in the Annual YEA's final hosted in the Mansion House, Dublin in May 2018. We continued to upskill and train people of all ages in sustainable development, environmental education and more.

During 2018 we continued to strengthen our international links with UNESCO through the Global Action Programme (GAP) in Education for Sustainable Development. We attended the annual GAP meeting where we reviewed the GAP programme to date and fed into the development of new UNESCO ESD programme from 2020 onwards. We were delighted to attend the Youth Saves the Planet Youth forum in UNESCO HQ in May 2018. We also engaged with other international and European programmes including Youth and the Environment Europe and ran a Transnational Youth programme with young people from across Ireland and Europe. In July 2018 we formed part of the Irish delegation to attend the High Level Political Forum in the UN Headquarters in New York.

Our green employability programmes gave participants the opportunity to engage in a specialist training and development programme to lead onto further education and employment and we continued our partnership with Accenture through their Skills to Succeed programme focusing on the delivery of a Green Skills youth employability programme. We would like to acknowledge all of the people who are involved with ECO-UNESCO; our members, our young people, our board, staff, interns and volunteers who continue to support and deliver our programmes.

We hope you enjoy reading through the highlights of our work in 2018 and learning about the positive effect that our programmes are having on young people, their peers and communities both around the country and beyond. Into the future we will continue to offer our high quality, non-formal, specialist environmental youth programmes in a fun and safe environment and will continue to innovate and use our resources in the most effective and efficient ways possible. We look forward to 2019, to continuing this innovative work and making a difference in the lives of young people and in the environment.

*Jamie Cudden*

*Elaine Nevin*



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# 2018

## IN A NUTSHELL



Young people from  
**ECO-UNESCO's Youth for  
Sustainable Development  
Programme** enjoy an outdoor  
workshop in June 2018



# THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

41

No. of QQI accredited  
qualifications gained

10,000+

No. of young people we  
worked with

31

No. of countries we  
were active in

4,000+

No. of young people that  
engaged with the YEAs

8,231

No. of followers across  
social media

06

No. of countries  
engaged in our Youth  
Summit

71

No. of teachers  
trained

373

No. of ECO-Clubs and  
affiliated groups



**MAY**

Attended **UNESCO Youth Forum in Paris**. 70 youth leaders from over 60 countries came together in UNESCO's Paris headquarters to promote Education for Sustainable Development as part of the 'Youth Saves the Planet' conference.

**MARCH**

**Youth for Sustainable Development Programme** launches in Clane.



**MAY**

Over 300 projects registered for **#YEA18**. 600 young people attended the final showcase and awards ceremony in Dublin's Mansion House, with over 4,000 young people taking part overall.



**APRIL**

Attended **UNESCO GAP International meeting on ESD** in Costa Rica.



**JANUARY**

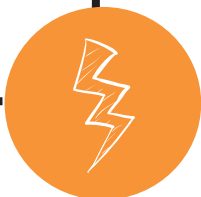
**Youth for Sustainable Development Programme** launches in Carlow, Bray & Drogheda.

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2018



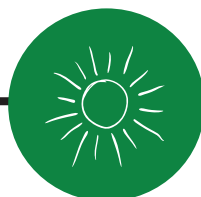
## JUNE

We celebrated the final day of the **2017-2018 Youth Summit**, hearing about the finalised action projects of groups from Ireland, Italy and Armenia



## JULY

Ran **Summer Camps for kids and teenagers** that were attended by 159 participants.



## JULY

Attended the **High Level Political Forum in New York**, which brought countries from all over the world together to review progress on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.



## NOVEMBER

Kicked off the Erasmus+ & Leargas **#NoTimeToWaste Youth Summit** with participants from across Ireland, Greece, Spain & Norway.

# ABOUT ECO-UNESCO

ECO-UNESCO is Ireland's environmental education and youth organisation that works to empower young people and conserve the environment. ECO-UNESCO is a key partner of UNESCO's Global Action Programme on ESD and is a QQI accredited training centre.

## PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

ECO-UNESCO works with young people, educators and youth leaders on environmental projects across Ireland, helping to protect and conserve the environment. Each year our programmes, workshops, events and training programmes inspire environmental action at a local level among young people, their peer groups, communities and beyond.

## EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE

Through our innovative peer education programmes and youth led events, ECO-UNESCO continuously strives to better achieve our mission of using environmental education as a means of empowering young people and supporting positive personal development.

## ECO-UNESCO'S KEY ACTIVITIES 2018

ECO-UNESCO's programmes continue to empower and support young people to take action to protect and conserve the environment. Key highlights of our programmes in 2018 include:

### ECO-YOUTH

- Youth for Sustainable Development and Peer Education Programme
- Environmental youth events, activities and workshops
- ECO-UNESCO Clubs Programme
- ECO-Youth Choices
- Youth Summit  
- #NoTimeToWaste

### CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

- Delivered Green Youth Employment programmes
- Information and support provided to educators, youth leaders and young people
- Training including QQI accredited courses delivered to a wide audience
- Key Partner on the UNESCO Global Action Programme for Education for Sustainable Development

### AWARDS

- ECO-UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Development of environmental education resources
- ECO-Sustainability Award for organisations
- Representation and advocacy for environmental education and education for sustainable development

Participants at ECO-UNESCO's  
Youth Summit 2018



## LINK TO UNESCO

ECO-UNESCO is a Key Strategic Partner of the UNESCO Global Action Programme in Education for Sustainable Development. ECO-UNESCO is affiliated to the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA). Founded in 1981, WFUCA is responsible for informing, coordinating and mobilising its members with UNESCO's support and cooperation. ECO-UNESCO is the WFUCA affiliate in Ireland and supports and coordinates an all island network of ECO-UNESCO environmental youth clubs.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ECO-UNESCO would like to thank all those who contributed to the development of the organisation especially all of our dedicated members and funders as well as our hardworking staff, interns and volunteers.

**BOARD MEMBERS:** Jamie Cudden, Marie Collins, Christina Nolan, Daniel Dockery, Niall Jennings, Orla McGreal and Padraig Ryan

**NATIONAL DIRECTOR:** Elaine Nevin

**STAFF MEMBERS:** Dunchadh Kinane, Ji Hyun Kim, Niall Barrett, Susie Spratt, Mary Fleming, Kieran Allen, Allison Phillips, Triona Reid, Breon Timmons, Sarah McMahon, Gary Whelan, Justine Kinobe, Lucyna Bak, Sabrina Boccia, Carlos Cases, Eimear Manning, Emma Clapison, Doireann Dunbar, Dave Brooks.



After participating in this workshop I feel inspired to make positive changes within my school and community.

**-Learning 2 Change Our World Participant**

"I think that doing this course will help me to get a job that is related to the environment."


**-ECO-Choices Participant**

# THE YEAR IN QUOTES

"It was amazing! Even if we don't get any further in the competition, I'm still a young environmentalist!"

**-Eamonn Whelan, Carnaross  
National School  
Young Environmentalist  
Awards 2018  
Participant**





"I feel as though I'm capable of making a difference after participating."

**-Learning 2 Change Our World Participant**

"I have thoroughly enjoyed taking part in this project. I've learnt so much and have so many new skills that I can use in the future. I'm also very proud of the work we've done and the changes that we're making in our school to help the environment. It just shows that a lot of hard work can make a really big difference."

**-Mia Knowles, Newpark Comprehensive.  
Young Environmentalist Awards 2018  
Overall Winners**

"I've made tonnes of new friends with similar interests, it's inspired me to be more environmentally conscious in my every day life."

**-Youth for Sustainable Development Participant**

"My two girls attended the Phoenix Park Summer Camps 2018. They truly enjoyed every one they went too. The staff have been so helpful and wonderful. They all have great passion about kids, and their knowledge and feelings about the nature and animals. The summer camps are very well organised with a lot of fun and unique activities which make them busy and happy."

**-Parent of Kids Summer Camp Participant**



# YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST

## AWARDS

**Overall Winners of the Young Environmentalist Awards 2018**, Newpark Compregensive with their project 'Plastic Outta the Park'

**4,000+**

No. of young people that participated in YEA 2018 projects

**318**

No. of projects registered for the YEAs

**36**

No. of groups that received the 6 Steps to Success Training Workshops

### FUNDERS & SPONSORS

ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards 2018 was supported by Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Environmental Protection Agency, Dublin City Council, Trócaire, Concern Worldwide, Irish Aid, and Enrich. The ECO-Dens were supported by 13 local councils in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA) programme continued to grow, empowering young people to become better citizens, build awareness of environmental issues and promote simple lifestyle changes to improve the environment.

In 2018, over 4,000 young people from across Ireland engaged in taking action for the Young Environmentalist Awards Programme, with 318 groups from primary, secondary schools and youth/community groups entering their innovative, passionate, and inspiring projects to improve their environment and raise awareness about local and global environmental issues.

Of the 318 registrations, 161 of the entrants were new to the programme, and there was good participation from the non-formal youth sector (27 registered groups).

## 6 STEPS TO SUCCESS TRAINING

ECO-UNESCO delivered 36 free '6 Steps to Success' training to young people, teachers, and youth leaders. The training is designed to help young people become well-equipped to carry out their very own environmental action project and to provide support and advice in developing project ideas, exploring what is involved in project management.

In 2018 training was delivered to approximately 600 young people nationally. This year, we saw high quality projects (especially high quality project reports) coming from the groups who took part in the YEA training sessions.

## ECO-DENS

The ECO-Dens are regional 'Dragon's Den' style judging events where YEA groups are given the opportunity to pitch their project to a panel of expert regional judges. The ECO-Dens were a great success with 105 groups attending one of the 6 regional ECO-Dens. They took place in March 2018 at key regional hubs within each province in Ireland: Ulster (Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Armagh); Connaught (The Institute for Lifecourse and Society of NUI Galway, Galway); Munster (University College Cork, Cork); and Leinster (European Commission Representation in Ireland, Dublin). The ECO-Dens also received support from 13 different local authorities.

## SHOWCASE AND AWARDS CEREMONY

The YEA Showcase and Ceremony was held on 22 May 2018 in the Round Room of the Mansion House, Dublin. It was the largest YEA Showcase and Awards Ceremony to date with 84 quality finalist projects on display.

This was a high-profile youth focused event. In attendance were over 600 young people, teachers, youth leaders and members of the public as well as high profile guests including Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone and UNESCO's Chief of the Section of Education for Sustainable Development, Alexander Leicht. RTE Presenters Ande Gray and Clara Murray served as Masters of Ceremonies

During the Showcase, the 84 finalist groups exhibited their action projects, which range from exploring the linkages between climate change and gender to creating vibrant bio-diverse habitats for bees. An expert panel of judges visited each group and discussed their project. With an opportunity to voice their achievements and concerns with regards to their environmental projects, young people gained confidence and furthered various skills such as communication skills, planning and project management skills. In addition to the exhibition of the projects, there were several Sustainable Development Goal zones where young people could engage in fun and interactive SDG activities. The zones covered SDG's 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15. At the Awards Ceremony, 2 Overall Awards, 22 Category Awards, and 11 Special Awards were presented to celebrate young people's achievements in their environmental endeavours.

**Learn more at [www.yea.ie](http://www.yea.ie).**



# YOUTH PROGRAMMES

10-18



ECO-UNESCO's **Youth for Sustainable Development Programme** participants taking part in the Youth Summit



# YOUTH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Youth for Sustainable Development (YSD) programme provides opportunities for young people to engage in quality development education/education for sustainable development activities, and strengthen their capacity to take action on global justice issues by empowering them to act as youth leaders and peer development educators. The weekly meet ups drew both new recruits and participants in their second and third year of engagement. The YSD programme continued to operate in Dublin, and had continued success with its regional groups in Drogheda, Carlow, Bray and Clane.



## 12 WEEK 'YOUTH FOR THE FUTURE' PROGRAMME

A 12 week Youth for the Future Programme took place between October and December 2017 and consisted of 12 x 2 hour workshops on Wednesday evenings. This programme acts as the initial training phase for the YSD programme by introducing participants to Peer Education for Sustainable Development, and aims to build participants communications, teamwork, and project planning skills.

A number of different methods were employed to engage the young people in a fun and educational environment, including role play activities, film nights, and outdoor excursions. Events external to the weekly meet ups led to increased engagement and empowerment.

### Examples of activities:

**1. World Wise Global Schools Conference:** 6 YSD participants attended the WWGS conference in Galway in April 2018.

**2. One World Week:** 3 YSD participants attended the NYCI One World Week event in the Aviva Stadium in November 2018.

**3. World Water Day:** 10 participants attended an awareness raising event in Saint Stephen's Green Park for World Water Day 2018. The 10 YSD participants organised games to highlight water waste.

**4. Earth Day:** On the 22nd April 2018 22 participants engaged in Earth day. This was a full day event in which participants were required to attend talks on ocean plastics and to undertake a social media shout in order to launch a campaign.

**4. ECO-STEP, Brussels:** 8 YSD participants were invited to Brussels by MEP Lynn Boylan to meet the Climate Action Network. The young people were invited due to winning the European ECO-STEP Design competition.

**5. World Environment Day:** 20 Dublin and regional YSD participants celebrated World Environment Day by taking a day trip to Bull Island. There participants held an outdoor event involving activities, discussions and games.

**6. Visit to Áras an Uachtaráin:** 6 YSD participants were invited to Áras an Uachtaráin by President Michael D. Higgins to celebrate youth work in Ireland.

**7. Engaging with Policy Makers:** On Wednesday, November 21st, twelve young people involved in the Youth for Sustainable Development programme took part in a dialogue with international climate change policy makers and experts that was held in the Irish Royal Academy.

**8. ECO-UNESCO Youth Summit:** In November 2018, YSD participants from all over Ireland took part in the first #NoTimeToWaste Youth Summit event, engaging with environmental experts of waste issues and seeing how they could work together going forward.

## YEA 2018

The Young Environmentalist Awards showcase took place in May 2018 and featured 8 projects submitted from the YSD groups, focusing on a range of different topics. The projects were entered into a number of different award categories including climate change, Water, Eco-Community Development, Eco-Enterprise and Transport.

One action project titled 'Education's Lacking, Let's Get Cracking' won the Local to Global SDG Award. The group made great efforts to bring about more awareness on the lack of education for sustainable development in Irish secondary schools.

## QQI ACCREDITED TRAINING

We delivered QQI Level 5 accredited training to Peer Educators. The participants attended an intensive training at ECO-UNESCO HQ. Those who have been trained this year have begun their year of action and will continue to act as peer mentors for the remainder of time as participants of the YSD programme.

## YSD PROGRAMME EXPANSION

In 2018 the YSD programme was built partnerships across the country to support the establishment of YSD youth groups in various areas around Ireland including Drogheda and Carlow, Bray and Clane.

ECO-UNESCO's **Youth for Sustainable Development Programme** is supported by **Irish Aid**





ECO-UNESCO's **Youth for Sustainable Development Programme** participants taking part in a promotional photo shoot on Sandymount Strand



Young people from Armenia taking part in  
the final event of ECO-UNESCO's  
2017/2018 Environmental Youth Summit  
#YouthForTheFuture





# ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH SUMMIT

ECO-UNESCO's Youth Summit is a 10-month long 'Structured-Dialogue' initiative that comprises of a series of events, trainings and action projects for Irish and European young people.

The aim of this project is to equip young people with the knowledge they need to recognise and harness their power to influence the achievement of the SDGs. Through the programme, young people gain the confidence to voice their opinions to decision-makers on how Ireland (and their respective countries of origin) can respond to present and future challenges.

## YOUTH SUMMIT 2017/2018 'YOUTH FOR THE FUTURE'

In 2018, 'Youth for the Future' brought over 50 young people from across Ireland, Italy and Armenia together and provided a space for them to meet and engage with politicians, policy makers and experts in the fields of environmental policy and sustainable development. Through a structured dialogue format, young people had the opportunity to learn from, challenge, and make recommendations to these high-level actors in the field.

Following the three day environmental summit, each group of young people carried out a local action project that put into practice the skills and knowledge they acquired during the summit - bringing environmental benefits to their home communities.

**The summit focused on three sustainable development goals:**



## YOUTH SUMMIT 2018/2019 'NO TIME TO WASTE'

In Autumn 2018, ECO-UNESCO launched its Environmental Youth Programme 'No Time to Waste', **supported by Leargas and Erasmus +.**

Throughout this project, 50 young environmentalists from Ireland, Greece, Norway and Spain participated in a series of events where they will explore the environmental issues associated with waste.

The centre-piece of this programme was the three day Youth Summit which was held in February 2019 in Dublin. It is here that participants had the opportunity to engage with policy makers, TD's and MEP's through structured dialogue. They will also be encouraged to work on environmental action projects that will be presented at the Young Environmentalist Awards 2019.

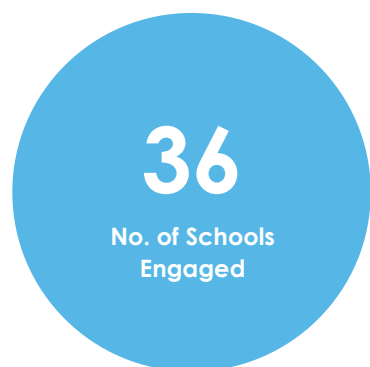
**This summit focuses on three sustainable development goals:**



Erasmus+



# LEARNING 2 CHANGE OUR WORLD



The 'Learning 2 Change Our World' Programme works with secondary schools throughout Ireland to encourage principals, teachers and young people to engage with a Whole School approach to Development Education/Education for Sustainable Development (DE/ ESD). In 2018/2019, the Learning 2 Change programme achieved its objectives through teacher training, regional teacher & student training, in-school workshops, student council training and regional networking all of which were delivered using active learning methodologies and which promoted action project work.

In workshops delivered throughout 2018/2019, teachers and young people explored DE/ESD focusing on themes of sustainable development, sustainable development goals local and global connections and strengthening peer to peer learning techniques. Following the Learning 2 Change programme, teachers and young people went on to develop possible ways to integrate DE/ESD into their schools and to take action in a meaningful way including raising awareness in their broader communities.

**The Learning 2 Change Our World Programme is supported by World Wise Global Schools.**





## YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

Young people from Our Lady's Bower, Athlone taking part in ECO-UNESCO's Learning 2 Change Our World programme.

# YOUTH EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

ECO-UNESCO's wide range of workshops and programmes for young people continued to be delivered across Ireland throughout 2018. A number of workshops were delivered in conjunction with Local Authorities under Local Agenda 21, and Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Awareness grants.

**486**

No. of young people  
who took part in 22  
Creative Recycling  
Workshops

**131**

No. of young people  
who took part in 8  
Food Waste & Home  
Economics Workshops

**386**

No. of young people  
who took part in 15  
Fashion Focus  
Workshops

**170**

No. of young people  
who took part in 8  
Zero Waste  
Workshops

**77**

No. of young people  
who took part in 3  
Youth Media &  
Sus. Dev. Workshops

**52**

No. of young people  
who took part in  
Nature Trails at Body &  
Soul Festival

## TEEN SUMMER CAMPS

Between June 18th-22nd 2018, ECO-UNESCO hosted a Green Teen Summer Camp. 17 people registered for the 5-day Summer camp and were joined by YSD Youth Leaders who facilitated a number of workshops and lead a number of hikes and visits to nature. A different location was visited each day and participants explored a broad range on environmental and sustainable development issues throughout the week. The teen camp visited Howth Head, Bull Island, Phoenix Park, Barnaslingan Wood, and a number of city parks throughout the 5 days.

## KIDS SUMMER CAMPS

In July 2018, ECO-UNESCO ran a Kids Summer Camp in conjunction with the Office of Public Works, with 142 children between the ages of 5-12 taking part. The aim of the programme was to encourage children to learn about the natural and built heritage of the Phoenix Park as well as some topical environmental issues through a series of interactive educational and fun themed days. During each week of the camp a separate theme was covered, these themes include: Trees and Flowers, Recycling, Deer and Animals, and Heritage of the Park.

## YOUTH SUMMIT: 'NO TIME TO WASTE'

In Autumn 2018, ECO-UNESCO launched its Environmental Youth Programme 'No Time to Waste', supported by Leargas and Erasmus +. Throughout this project, 50 young environmentalists from Ireland, Greece, Norway and Spain participated in a series of events where they explored the environmental issues associated with waste.



## BIODIVERSITY WEEK 2018: GREEN TRAILS

During Biodiversity Week 2018, ECO-UNESCO organised two Green Trails of Dublin City. The Green Trail explored the cultural heritage and biodiversity of St. Stephens Green, the Iveagh Gardens and Merrion Square. During the Trail areas explored included: the spread of invasive species both plant and animals examples included Giant Hogweed and the Grey Squirrel; tree identification and the use of tree identification keys and native and non-native trees.

Young people taking part in our **Teen Summer Camp 2018**



# ECO-CHOICES

The ECO-Choices programme is an innovative health and well-being programme that utilises environmental education, education for sustainable development and peer education methods as a resource for positive personal development in at-risk young people to prevent the misuse of drugs. In 2018, 244 young people participated directly in the programme through outdoor education workshops, trainings & events delivered by the ECO-Choices team.

## ECO-YOUTH CHOICES FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

The participating groups in 2018 were primarily from Drimnagh Castle Secondary School, Stoneybatter Youth Service, and Stanhope Street Secondary School in Dublin.

Part of the programme involves carrying out local action projects. Young people from Drimnagh Castle Secondary School delivered interactive workshops to first year young people in their school on a number of environmental issues, setting a great example of active citizenship to these younger students.

Young people from Drimnagh Castle also entered several submissions into the Young Environmentalist Awards on topics such as maintaining the school pond and improving the local ecosystem by introducing more plants, tackling the issue of food waste in their school, and creating a video game to spread awareness on Climate Change.

Young people from Stanhope Street Secondary School decided to take action on one of the biggest environmental issues that they are passionate about – ocean pollution. They decided that they would carry out a beach clean and make a sculpture out of what they have collected to be displayed in their school to highlight the huge problem of marine pollution and educate their fellow pupils on this topic.

## ACCREDITED TRAINING

39 young people took part in accredited QQI Level 3 training in Eco-Community Development.

## OUTDOOR EDUCATION

A central aspect of the ECO-Choices programme involves outdoor learning in natural areas accessible from Dublin City, due to the proven mental and physical health benefits. We incorporate physical exercise, through hikes and games, and also give the young people an opportunity to connect with nature through activities that allow them to experience wild places in new ways. In 2018, 12 different trips were carried out with a total of 141 young people. Trips included going to Barnaslingan Woods in the Dublin Mountains, Howth head and a number of parks in Dublin City Centre such as Marley Park, and Dartry Park. This included a Green Teen Camp in various locations around Dublin and an Urban Green Trail which was held during Biodiversity Week.

**Eco-Choices is supported by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, under the YPFSF. The funding is distributed by City of Dublin Youth Service Board (CDYSB).**







39

No. of Young People  
Who Received  
QQI Training

244

No. of  
Overall Programme  
Participants

03

No. of  
Organisation that  
Took Part

Young people from Stoneybatter Youth Service on a hike as part of the **ECO-Choices Programme**



# TRAINING & UPSKILLING

## PROGRAMMES 18-25

Young people from Drimnagh Castle take part in outdoor education as part of their **QQI Level 3 Qualification in Community Development**



# EDUCATION & TRAINING

ECO-UNESCO is a QQI Accredited Training provider, running a range of courses as part of our Youth Employment, Youth for Sustainable Development and ECO-Choices programmes. We run our accredited courses in-house and also on a consultancy basis for other training providers.

## ACCREDITED TRAINING IN 2018

**45** people completed QQI training in 2018

**10** certified in Work Experience Level 5 (5N1356)

**35** certified in Community Participation Level 3 (3N2908)

## NON-ACCREDITED TRAINING

We also run non-accredited training on a range of environmental and sustainable development topics, particularly aimed at teachers and youth leaders.

## ECO-SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

The ECO-Sustainability Award aims to encourage youth and community organisations to become more sustainable by providing organisations with training, ongoing support and a practical toolkit based on the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2018, Sunbeam House Bray received the Silver ECO-Sustainability Award at the Young Environmentalist Awards 2018 after engaging in a huge amount of work to make their facilities more environmentally friendly.

## UNESCO GLOBAL ACTION PROGRAMME (GAP)

During 2018 the UNESCO GAP programme continued its review process with a view to implementing a new programme from 2020 to 2030. The GAP Key Partners met in Costa Rica to review the GAP and feed into the new global programme. During 2018 ECO-UNESCO was involved in the UNESCO Youth Forum Youth Saves the Planet in which 70 young leaders from 60 countries came together to carry forward the leadership skills they had gained during the GAP Youth Leadership training. ECO-UNESCO continued to liaise with the Youth Leaders it had trained in 2017 as part of the European Regions training.

# GREEN YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME

241

No. of young people we  
worked with directly

100%

Rate of satisfaction  
and enjoyment of the  
course

94%

Rate of participants that  
have progressed on to  
further education

ECO-UNESCO's Green Youth Employability programmes upskill young people aged 16-25 years and equips them with the skills and techniques which open doors to employment and economic opportunity in the green sector from economically or socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

To tackle youth unemployment, ECO-UNESCO, through its youth employment programme has used its specialised expertise in the Environment, Youth, Community Development, Sustainable Development and green economy sectors to provide a practical and realistic stepping stone to employment in the diverse parts of the green sector and 'greening' the economy in general.

In 2018, ECO-UNESCO's experience of employability programmes combined with its specialist expertise was utilised to equip young people with the skills to get a job in the green economy as well as giving participants transferable skills that they can adapt to any work place. The programme catered for a range young people from diverse backgrounds and skill-sets, it was tailored to provide a broad base of generic and specific competencies to assist participant's progress in their chosen field.

ECO-UNESCO worked intensively with 85 young people through it's Youth Employability Programmes. The programme was delivered with three partner organisations, RASP (Laneview Learning Centre) Coolock, Leader Project Kildare and Ballymun Youthreach reaching a total of 45 young people. A further 40 young people in Dublin, Kildare and Carlow were engaged with through our Youth for Sustainable Development programmes. In addition, ECO-UNESCO has successfully upskilled 156 young people across multiple programmes through the delivery of Accenture's Skills to Succeed Academy learning platform.

**The Green Skills Programme is Supported by Accenture**





**ECO-UNESCO's Youth Employability Programme participants** taking part in a beach clean on Bray seafront





# HOW WE

# OPERATE



ECO-UNESCO's National Director Elaine Nevin pictured alongside interns on Dublin's Sandymount Strand.



# COMMUNICATIONS & REPRESENTATION

## MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS

ECO-UNESCO events received substantial coverage in both regional and national media, including print, TV and radio. ECO-UNESCO's work was promoted through magazines, e-newsletters, external websites and event guides throughout the year, with a focus on the environmental, youth and education sectors. We put a lot of work into growing our social media following, and got the following results:

**3,382**

Facebook  
page likes in  
2018

**3,797**

Twitter  
followers in  
2018

**1,132**

Instagram  
followers in  
2018

**160**

No. of mentions in  
local and national  
media in 2018

## NEWSLETTER AND E-MAGAZINE

ECO-UNESCO has kept our members, programme users, schools, funders, volunteers, clubs, among other external stakeholders up to date with key events and activities through our Annual Newsletter 2018-19, disseminated in the annual direct mail campaign to over 1500 secondary schools, libraries, ETBs, and at all external events. We also produce a monthly E-Magazine for our supporters.

## PUBLICATIONS

In 2018, ECO-UNESCO continued to develop its range of resources and publications. Some of the published highlights from 2017 include:

- YEA 2018 Finalist booklet
- YEA Programme Manual
- ECO-UNESCO Annual Newsletter 2018-19
- A wide range of informational and marketing material to promote our programmes and educational resources for key environmental days

# REPRESENTATION & ADVOCACY



**The Advisory Group  
for the National  
Strategy on Education  
for Sustainable  
Development**



**Coalition 2030 -  
a coalition of civil  
society organisations  
promoting the  
SDG's**



**The Advisory  
Committee  
of the Environmental  
Protection  
Agency**



**The National Youth  
Council of Ireland**



**Chair of the National  
Dialogue on Climate  
Action Advisory Group**



**Youth and the  
Environment Europe**



**Key partner of  
UNESCO under the  
Global Action  
Programme on ESD  
and continued to be  
represented  
internationally at Key  
Partner meetings**



UNESCO Global Action Programme on  
Education for Sustainable Development

## COLLABOARTIVE WORKING

We partnered with the IEN, World Vision and Social Justice Ireland on a successful European wide DEAR funded project to promote and build awareness of the SDG's in Ireland. In particular ECO-UNESCO is working to promote awareness of and action for the SDG's in young people, through our Young Environmentalist Awards and Youth for Sustainable Development programmes.

## ECO-UNESCO MADE SUBMISSIONS TO THE FOLLOWING:

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Irish Aid) White Paper
- The Department of Children and Youth Affairs Measuring Effectiveness



# UNESCO & INTERNATIONAL WORK

## YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENT EUROPE (YEE)

YEE are a Europe wide network of over 40 environmental youth organisations across 26 countries. ECO-UNESCO has been a full member of the network for over 20 years and has played a very active role in the last year. ECO-UNESCO attended the YEE annual meeting in Olomouc, Czech Republic in July 2018. Young people took part in 'Youth Participation in Decision Making Training', brainstormed on future strategy for YEE and most importantly - made valuable connections. ECO-UNESCO's YSD intern was also elected to the board of YEE in the capacity of their External Relations Officer.

## UNESCO GAP INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON ESD

UNESCO GAP (Global Action Programme) Key Partners, including ECO-UNESCO's National Director Elaine Nevin came together in April 2018 for the third key partner meeting in San Jose, Costa Rica to review the GAP to date and to discuss the future priorities for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), post-GAP implementation mechanisms and to take part in site visits to ESD projects around the region,

## UNESCO YOUTH FORUM IN PARIS

As part of UNESCO's Global Action Programme, 70 young leaders from over 60 countries came together to promote Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at the ESD Youth Conference 'Youth Saves the Planet' in UNESCO's Paris Headquarters during May 2018.

Having run the European regional training in conjunction with UNESCO, ECO-UNESCO nominated 10 youth leaders to attend the conference. These chosen youth leaders has worked with over 1000 young people throughout the course of the year, educating them on matters of sustainable development.

The event took place over 3 days and included opportunities for the young people to voice their views, share best practice, develop joint projects, and network.

## HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM IN NEW YORK

In July 2018, the UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) brought countries from all over the world together to review progress on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Ireland's official delegation to the HLPF came from Irish Civil Society Organisations through Coalition 2030 and included:

- ECO-UNESCO
- The Irish Environmental Network
- The National Youth Council of Ireland
- + Others

# COLLABORATIVE WORK

Throughout 2018, ECO-UNESCO continued to develop links and partnerships with agencies, organisations and businesses to provide environmental education, youth programmes and teacher and leader trainings in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. ECO-UNESCO actively engaged on an ongoing basis with young people, youth leaders, educators, external organisations and other key target groups. This engagement included collaborative work, focus groups and surveys to ensure that all ECO-UNESCO programmes remained responsive to the needs of young people in particular, as well as the general environmental, educational and youth sectors.

## **A sample of our collaborative work from 2018 includes:**

- ECO-UNESCO continued to collaborate with the Irish Environmental Network, Social Justice Ireland and World Vision in the roll out of 'Making Ireland Sustainable for All' an EU funded project to run over three years.
- ECO-UNESCO continued to collaborate with a range of institutions through our programmes including Local Authorities, Secondary Schools, Youthreach Centres, Youth Groups and Education and Training Board Youth officers.

## UNESCO

In 2018, ECO-UNESCO attended the GAP Meeting on Education for Sustainable Development in San Jose, Costa Rica where we met with GAP Key Partners from around the world and fed into a consultation process for the post GAP in ESD programme which aims to support the Sustainable Development Goals up to 2030.

## GAISCE

We remained an official challenge partner of Gaisce, the President's Award.

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES

ECO-UNESCO works with Local Authorities nationwide through funding from the Environmental Partnership Fund. The fund allows ECO-UNESCO to work with communities, fulfilling important aspects of the Local Agenda 21 remit. ECO-UNESCO builds the capacity of young people, teachers and leaders to address environmental issues. In addition, through the ECO-UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards, a number of Local Authorities supported the regional ECO-Dens through sponsorship, venue sponsorship as well as representation on the judging panels.

## NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL IRELAND

ECO-UNESCO proactively engages with the National Youth Council of Ireland. We are represented on the National Youth Council of Ireland Board and chair their Specialist Organisation Network.

## YOUTH WORK IRELAND

ECO-UNESCO worked with Youth Work Ireland regional youth services on the expansion of its YSD regional youth programme in 2018.



## Young people at Young Environmentalist Awards 'ECO-Dens'



PUPILS:  
Aoihe Brisco  
Ellie Concannon  
Kate Owens

### LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORT

The following local authorities supported our Young Environmentalist Award ECO-Dens in 2018:

- Monaghan County Council
- Clare County Council
- Wexford County Council
- Kildare County Council
- Westmeath County Council
- Meath County Council
- Mayo County Council
- Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
- Kerry County Council
- Roscommon County Council



#### DIFFERENTIATE

- Natural fibres break when poked by a tweezers while plastic fibres do not.
- Plastics are shiny along the edges.
- When using rose bengal dye natural fibres turn pink while plastic fibres remain their colour.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Our results from our study shows that 96.9% of tested Galway county primary schools, showed the presence of microplastics in their drinking water supply. Only one school out of 23 schools did not demonstrate the presence of microplastics. In fact, the % of microplastics in the water supply is the highest in the world (according to Orbis 2017). We have discovered that the tested Galway schools, have an average of microplastic level 2.05 MPS than the European average of 1.9 MPS. The data from our investigation has revealed that the drinking water supply contamination level is 5.5% higher in classroom than staff rooms. In fact, we discovered that the classroom average is above EU level (1.9) while staffroom average (1.6) is below EU level. Results show students in Galway & county are drinking microplastic contaminated water. This may have adverse effects on health. Microplastics are a health hazard. Ingestion and absorption of microplastics, is in food chains from low level to higher organisms. Ecosystems being affected. The absence of legislation and regulation of microplastics in Ireland has a negative impact on the quality of drinking water contributing to the bioaccumulation of microplastics in our bodies. We conclude from our in depth research, that yes, YOU should THINK BEFORE YOU DRINK!

#### Can we remove microplastics?

Findings of this study show that filtration contributes to reduce microplastics levels but may not completely remove them from drinking water. Personal and corporate responsibility, as well as legislative change to reduce output and use of plastics, as alternatives can be used. Our strongest weapon against microplastics.

# FUNDING

ECO-UNESCO is funded by a variety of national and European Government and agencies contributing to both the overall development of the organisation and project specific work. ECO-UNESCO also receives funding from corporate sources, consultancy and membership and programme fees.

## IN 2018 ECO-UNESCO'S MAIN CORE FUNDING CAME FROM:

Department of Children and Youth Affairs

Irish Environmental Network Core Funding

Department of Rural and Community Development under SSNO

Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment

Department of Foreign Affairs – Irish Aid

## ECO-UNESCO RECEIVED FUNDING FROM:

The Environmental Protection Agency

DCYA administered through City of Dublin Youth Service Board

Local Authorities nationwide under the Environmental Partnership Fund and Anti-Litter fund

Erasmus+

DEAR

## ECO-UNESCO RECEIVED A RANGE OF FUNDING RELATED TO SPECIFIC PROJECTS INCLUDING:

Worldwise Global Schools from Irish Aid

Phoenix Park Summer Programme: Office of Public Works

Accenture

Marks and Spencer

Trocaire

Concern

UNESCO

UNIDO

Our Audited Accounts for 2018 are available to download from our website [www.ecounesco.ie](http://www.ecounesco.ie)



# GOVERNANCE

ECO-UNESCO is governed by a voluntary board of Directors made up of members. In 2018 there was a 45/55 gender split amongst Board Members, with a diversity of appropriate skills in place, ensuring that the board can meet its aims in oversight and policy development.

## LIST OF BOARD MEMBERS IN 2018 INCLUDE:

**Jamie Cudden** (Chairperson) - [100% attendance - 6 attended - 6 eligible]

**Marie Collins** (Treasurer - Chair - Audit Risk - Finance Committee) - [100% attendance - 6 attended - 6 eligible]

**Christina Nolan** (Chair - HR Committee) - [100% attendance - 6 attended - 6 eligible]

**Daniel Dockery** (Secretary) - [66.67% attendance - 4 attended - 6 eligible]

**Niall Jennings** (Chair - Building Committee) - [83.33% attendance - 5 attended - 6 eligible]

**Orla McGreal** - [100% attendance - 5 attended - 5 eligible]

**Padraig Ryan** - [80% attendance - 4 attended - 5 eligible]

Board Meeting attendance for 2018 was 90%

In 2018 there were 6 Board meetings held. Additionally, the Board has created 3 Committee to oversee specific areas of the organisation, Audit, Risk & Finance; Human Resources; Building. There were 4 meetings of the Audit, Risk and Finance sub-committee, 3 meetings of the HR Committee and 4 meetings of the Building Committee. The AGM took place in June 2018.

Appropriate financial policies and procedures are in place, complying with statutory requirements and ECO-UNESCO's audited accounts are available on our website.

## GOVERNANCE CODES

ECO-UNESCO is a signatory of the Dochas code of images and messages; is signed up to the Governance Code; began work to map our compliance standards to the new Charities Regulator's Code; complies with Quality Assurance from the Quality and Qualifications Ireland and works within the National Quality Standards Framework for Youth Work.

## NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH WORK (NQSF)

ECO-UNESCO works to the National Quality Standards for Youth Work and has completed a 3-year cycle and maintain a continuous improvement plan, liaising with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs Standards Officers.

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2021

ECO-UNESCO has completed the development of a new three-year Strategic Plan running from 2018 to 2021.

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**eco**

U N E S C O

conserving the environment  
empowering young people



ECO-UNESCO is supported by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs with support from the National Lottery Fund.



ECO-UNESCO is part-funded by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment through the Irish Environmental Network



ECO-UNESCO is a registered Irish Charity no. 20015145  
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Companies Registration Office Number 106860