

ECO-UNESCO

Ireland's Leading Environmental Education Youth Organisation



ECO-UNESCO's

Young Environmentalist Awards

25 YEARS

25 YEARS OF YOUTH ACTION

Finalist Booklet 2024

Marking 25 years of the
Young Environmentalist Awards



No 15 LIFE

ON LAND

No 14 LIFE

BELOW WATER

No 7 AFFORDABLE AND

CLEAN ENERGY

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Life Below Water

WELCOME ADDRESS

I'm delighted to welcome you all here today to our extra special celebration of the Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA) as we mark 25 years of the programme. Beginning in 1999, the programme was founded with a vision to honour young people's work to protect and enhance the environment. This year, with an impressive number of projects, our young environmentalists continue a tradition that has shaped the programme and positively impacted communities. From YEA's modest start with five award categories, the programme has undergone remarkable growth. Today, we proudly hold twelve award categories, each representing vital aspects of environmental stewardship.

To our Young Environmentalists, you are the heart of this programme. Your passion, creativity, and dedication have transformed the YEA and made a lasting impact on your communities. You embody the spirit of positive change, and we are honoured to celebrate your achievements.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all our sponsors, funders, judges, and supporters who have been instrumental in making this year's Young Environmentalist Awards a resounding success. Your commitment has fueled the growth and impact of the programme, and we are deeply grateful for your ongoing support.



I would like to especially thank the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, Patron of ECO-UNESCO, for his unwavering support of our organisation throughout the years. A particular thank you also to our special guests, in particular Minister Pippa Hackett and Councillor Claire Byrne for joining us today as we come together to applaud the remarkable work of our Young Environmentalists.

Here's to another 25 years of inspiring youth environmental action!

Warm regards,

Elaine Nevin
National Director
ECO-UNESCO

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ROADMAP TO YEA 2024

1

September 2023

The Young Environmentalist Awards 2024 officially launches, with registrations open to all young people aged 10-18.

2

September - November 2023

"6-Steps-to-Success" action project sessions provided to registered YEA groups.



3

November 2023

ECO-Week of the Young Environmentalist Awards takes place during Science week, with 5,500 young people taking part in our 12 sustainability workshops.



4

November - February 2023

Action took place! 271 registered groups created their youth-led action project to help improve an environmental issue of their choice in their school, youth group, or community. Groups did amazing work in completing their environmental actions, their submission form and creating their short video detailing their environmental project.

February 2024

Submission deadline for completion of environmental action projects!

5

6

March - April 2024

ECO-Den semi-finals took place across Ireland in each of the four provinces over 9 days, where groups pitched their projects to ECO-Den judging panels. 800 young people from 176 groups made it to the semi-finals, from 84 organisations.

14th March & 12th April
Online

9th April
University of Galway,
Galway

11th April
Lough Neagh Discovery
Centre, Armagh

12th & 13th March
Airfield Estate, Dublin

19th - 21st March
Old Cork Waterworks
Expearence, Cork

7

May 2024

Shortlisted finalist projects invited to the Young Environmentalist Awards finalist showcase and awards ceremony in the Dublin Royal Convention Centre.

THE IMPACT OF YEA 2024



108,935
STRONGLY
IMPACTED



30
COUNTIES
REPRESENTED



5,500
YOUNG PEOPLE
PARTICIPATED



42
AWARDS



271
REGISTERED
PROJECTS

25 YEARS OF YOUTH ECO-ACTION

Established in 1999, the Young Environmentalist Awards proudly celebrates 25 years this year. The programme evolved as a platform to recognise and reward the effort of young people engaging in environmental action, and its core principles revolve around thinking globally and acting locally, as well as learning through experience. Since its inception, the Young Environmentalist Awards has engaged and empowered 65,000 young people, extended its reach to 32 counties across Ireland, nurtured 6,000 youth-led environmental action projects, and proudly celebrated young peoples' achievements with over 600 awards. The programme looks forward to the next 25 years of empowering young people to take environmental action.

Head over to our 25 years panel exhibit to learn more about our Young Environmentalist Awards journey!



TODAY'S SCHEDULE

9:30 - 10:30

GROUP ARRIVAL AND SET UP

10:30 - 12:30

FINALIST SHOWCASE

Ground Floor

Main Hall

10:30 - 10:40 Official Opening by Councillor Claire Byrne

10:30 - 12:30 Project Exhibition

First Floor

Mentor Hub

Grab a coffee and relax with other mentors

11:15 - 11:45 Teach 'n' Meet

Exhibitor Zone

Meet environmental and youth organisations and explore some interactive stands and activities

Learning Lounge

Take a break from the exhibition to expand your knowledge at one of our on-site workshop sessions

10:30 - 10:50 Exploring Ecology
Sadhbh Horan, ECO-UNESCO

11:00 - 11:20 Podcasting for Change
Ceara Carney, Book of Leaves Podcast

11:30 - 11:50 Climate Voices: Tomorrow's Generation in Today's Conversations
Jim Scheer, SEAI

12:00 - 12:20 Fashion Forward: Local Solutions, Global Impact
Mary Flemming, Change Clothes Crumlin

Quiet Space

This space is available to anyone who may be in need of a moment of peace and quiet

12:30 - 14:30

LUNCH BREAK

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

14:30-16:30

AWARDS CEREMONY

MC: *Clara Murray*

14:45 Opening Welcome from Elaine Nevin, National Director at ECO-UNESCO

14:50 Keynote Speech from Minister Pippa Hackett

15:00 **Category Awards**

Food, Climate Change, Waste, Marine Life, Biodiversity and Energy

15:25 Dance with Don King

15:30 **Category Awards**

Water, ECO-Community Development, Transport, ECO-Health & Wellbeing, ECO-Innovation, and ECO-Art & Design

16:00 Music performance by The Accoustic Duo

16:00 **Additional Awards**

Special Award, Further Growth, Local to Global, YEA Mentor of the Year, People's Choice, Special Award, and Highly Commended

16:15 Music performance by The Accoustic Duo

16:20 **Overall Super Junior, Junior & Senior Winners**

16:30 Close

MORE ON TODAY'S SESSIONS

Learning Lounge



10:30 - 10:50

Discovery Ecology

Sadhbh Horan, ECO-UNESCO

Join our Learning 2 Change team for an immersive workshop exploring the ecology of our planet. Discover Earth's ecosystems, explore connections in the web of life, and find solutions to environmental challenges. Through engaging activities and discussions, you will discover practical ways to make an impact on the planet and shape a sustainable future while looking back on how our planet has changed in the last 25 years of YEA and what solutions we can look to in the future



11:00 - 11:20

Podcasting for Change

Ceara Carney, Book of Leaves Podcast

Ceara Carney is an actor and tour guide with a passion for climate activism. With no prior podcasting experience, she began Book of Leaves 5 years ago - a podcast that inspires climate action via hopeful stories from people in Ireland. In this presentation, Ceara will share tips for communicating the climate crisis as well as highlights from the 100+ interviews she has conducted for the award-winning podcast.



11:30 - 11:50

Climate Voices: Tomorrow's Generation in Today's Conversations

Jim Scheer, SEAI

Jim, with over 20 years of experience in policy analysis and development related to environmental issues, has been a vital part of SEAI since 2007, where he currently serves as the Head of Department. Jim is dedicated to including young peoples' voice in the climate policy discussion and empowering them to become part of the solution in the green transition. In his upcoming talk, Jim will share his own climate journey and offer advice for young individuals aspiring to work in the sustainable energy and climate sector.



12:00 - 12:20

Fashion Forward: Local Solutions, Global Impact

Mary Flemming, Change Clothes Crumlin

Mary Fleming is the founder of Change Clothes Crumlin, a community-based clothing reuse hub in the Crumlin area of Dublin. CCC's goal is to make sure second hand is community focused, fun, affordable, and social. They do this by providing reuse solutions for clothes at all stages of their lifecycle. During her talk, Mary will talk about the impact of fashion on people and our environment, and the steps Change Clothes Crumlin has taken to make sure local clothing waste doesn't end up becoming global problem.

11:15 - 11:45

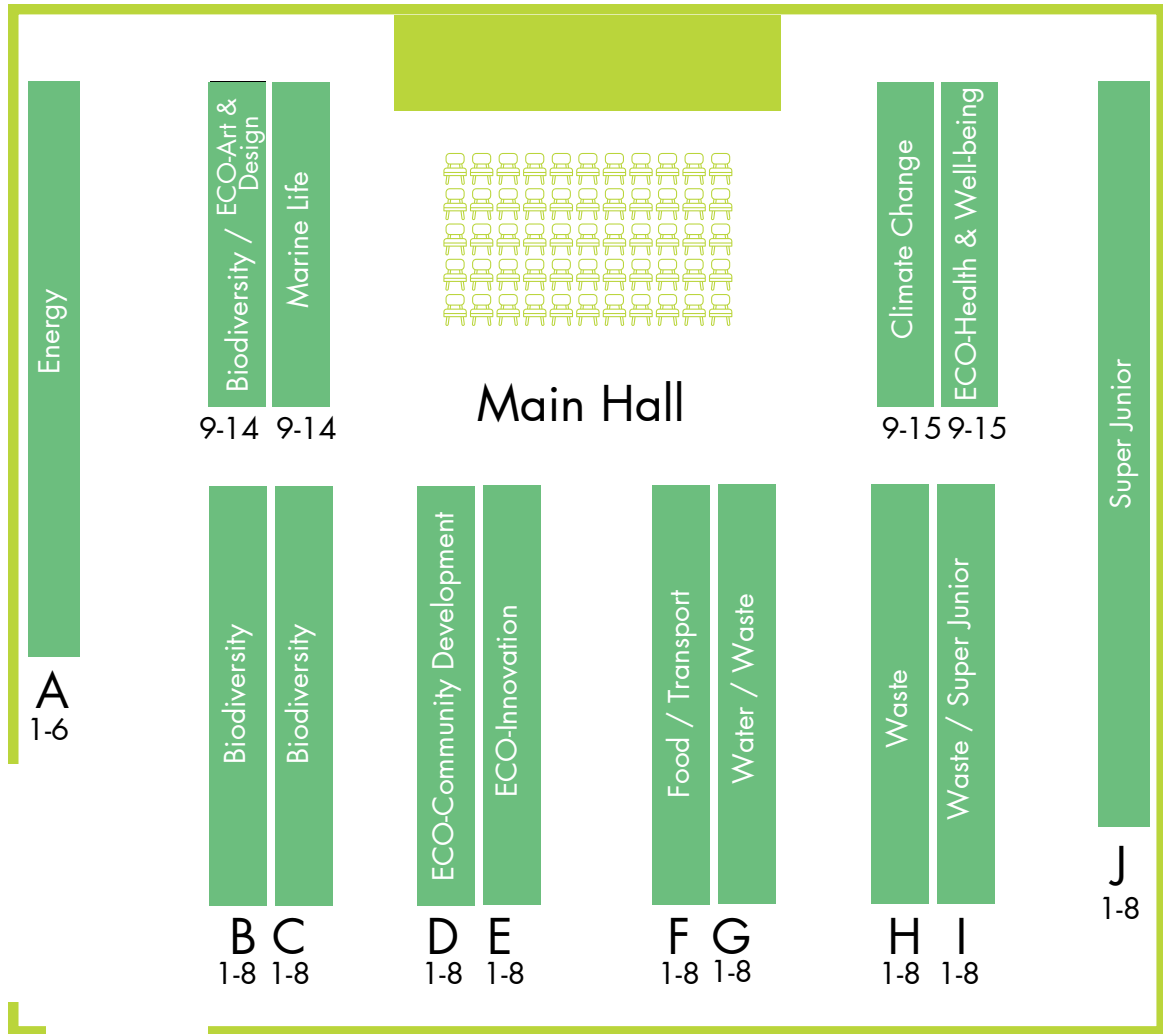
Teach 'n' Meet

Mentor Hub

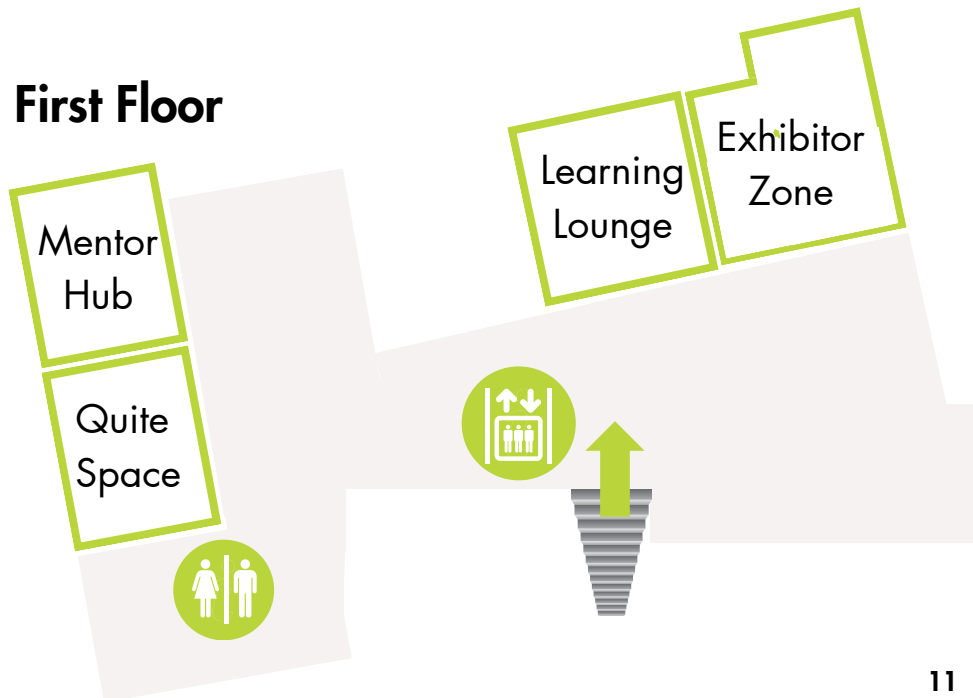
This session open to all YEA mentors, past and present, along with any teacher or youth worker who is interested in supporting young environmentalists in their school, youth group or community. The session will focus on networking with others interested in Education for Sustainable Development and how to support youth-led environmental action in the classroom and youth spaces. Grab a coffee, come along, meet other environmentalists and share your story of supporting youth-led environmental action.

GETTING AROUND

Ground Floor



First Floor



PROJECT INDEX

Energy

Project Name	Organisation	County	Display
Solar Soldiers	Meán Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh	Co Kerry	A1
Solar Panels: A Brighter Future for Our School Using Microgeneration Technology	St Paul's Community College	Co Waterford	A2
Optimizing wind turbine efficiency	Newbridge College	Co Kildare	A3
Enviro Power-charge 365	St Ciaran's College	Co Tyrone	A4
Biodiesel Bonanza: Fuelling a Greener Future	St Andrews College	Co Dublin	A5
Are Observatories Seeing as Much as They Can?	Blackwater Community School	Co Waterford	A6

Biodiversity

Flora & Fauna LK	Loreto Secondary School Letterkenny	Co Donegal	B1
The Bomb Bakers	St Jarlath's College	Co Galway	B2
Air Quality - Lichen as Bio Indicators	St Mary's Academy CBS	Co Carlow	B3
Gáirdín na Beatha (Garden of Life)	Tullamore College	Co Offaly	B4
Trees for Tomorrow	Presentation Secondary School	Co Wexford	B5
The Bee Believers	Loreto Secondary School Bray	Co Wicklow	B6
BioGuardians	Patrician Academy Mallow	Co Cork	B7
DGS Young Environmentalists	Dundalk Grammar School	Co Louth	B8
The Langan Trail	St Catherine's College Armagh	Co Armagh	B9
National Peatlands Park Campaign	No Planet B club	Co Kildare	B10
The Nature Buddies	Youth for Sustainable Development	Co Dublin	C1
Pollinator Garden	Moate Community School	Co Westmeath	C2
Flying High	Ardscoil na Mara	Co Waterford	C3
Habitat Heroes	Goatstown ETSS	Co Dublin	C4
The Bio-Nerds Biodiversity Trail	Loreto College Mullingar	Co Westmeath	C5
Creating A Welcome Home For Bats	Rockbrook Park School	Co Dublin	C6
Oak Tree & Wildflower Project	St Marys Secondary School	Co Wexford	C7
Rockbrook Biodiversity Festival 2024	Rockbrook Park School	Co Dublin	C8
Wild at Heart	Thornhill College	Co Derry	NA

ECO-Art & Design

VapeCycle Solutions	Drimnagh Castle Secondary School	Co Dublin	B11
SDG Courtyard Project	St MacDara's Community College	Co Dublin	B12
Adonis ECO-Artistry	Drimnagh Castle Secondary School	Co Dublin	B13
We Only Want The Earth	Loreto High School Beaufort	Co Dublin	B14

Marine Life

The Impact of Unsustainable Pair Trawling in Kenmare Bay	Pobalscoil Inbhear Sceine	Co Kerry	C9
Life below the surface	Glanmire Community College	Co Cork	C10
Lough Corrib Incoming Crisis	Coláiste Iognáid S.J.	Co Galway	C11
Seal Protection 101	St Colman's Community College Secondary School	Co Cork	C12
Threats to Marine Life in South Dublin	Mount Anville Secondary School	Co Dublin	C13
Maraam Grass Restoration Project	Scoil Mhuire	Co Tipperary	C14

PROJECT INDEX

ECO-Community Development

Project Name	Organisation	County	Display
Newbridge - Leaders in Sustainability	Newbridge College	Co Kildare	D1
Eco-Empire Expanded!!	Meán Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh	Co Kerry	D2
Safety Streets	Kinsale Community School	Co Cork	D3
De-influencing Sustainability to Save Humanity	Ursulines College Blackrock	Co Cork	D4
What's Up With The Single Use Cups?	Kinsale Community School	Co Cork	D5
Composting in School at PSN	Pobalscoil Neasáin	Co Dublin	D6
Hostile Architecture	ECO-UNESCO	Co Dublin	D7
COP Castlegregory	Meán Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh	Co Kerry	D8
Sustainable Eco Action in Schools (SEAS)	Skerries Community College	Co Dublin	E8

ECO-Innovation

A Smart & Sustainable Irrigation System	St Ciaran's College	Co Tyrone	E1
Revived Wardrobe	Kinsale Community School	Co Cork	E2
To design and develop a filter for household chimneys composed of minerals to reduce carbon dioxide emissions	St Aloysius' College	Co Cork	E3
Climate Policies: A Mission or a Minefield?	Gaelcholáiste Luimnigh	Co Limerick	E4
Optimised biodegradable plastic	Gonzaga College SJ	Co Dublin	E5
Bin Your Vape	Youth Work Ireland Cavan Monaghan	Co Monaghan	E6
Reclaiming Lithium from Used Batteries	St Mary's College	Co Derry	E7

Food

Roots Cafe	Knockevin Special School	Co Down	F1
SustainApple Future	Scoil Ruain	Co Tipperary	F2
Veggie Venture	Kinsale Community School	Co Cork	F3
Food irradiation will save our nation!	Coláiste Treasa Kanturk	Co Cork	F4
Be Impactors! Consider Sustainable Food FACTORS!	Schull Community College	Co Cork	F5
Food Waste Management in GETSS	Goatstown ETSS	Co Dublin	F6

Transport

Cycle Hawks	Mercy Secondary School Mounthawk	Co Kerry	F7
Wheel for the Road	Loreto Secondary School Letterkenny	Co Donegal	F8
Greener Transport Ideas for the Garden of Ireland	Marino Community Special School	Co Wicklow	NA

Water

H2O Heroes	Kinsale Community School	Co Cork	G1
Water Conservation and Pollution	Glanmire Community College	Co Cork	G2
Fast Fashion: its Effect on Water Pollution	Our Lady of Mercy College Beaumont	Co Dublin	G3
Don't E.co-lie to us	ECO-UNESCO	Co Dublin	G4
Hydro Heroes	Mercy College Sligo	Co Sligo	G5
The Large Scale Application of Solar Stills	Salesian Secondary College	Co Limerick	NA

PROJECT INDEX

Waste

Project Name	Organisation	County	Display
Swap with Style	St Cecilians' College, Derry	Co Derry	G6
Fixing Fashion	Meán Scoil Nua an Leigh Trúigh	Co Kerry	G7
HURRY UP AND LEAF	Cashel Community School	Co Tipperary	G8
Mother Natures Minions	Mountmellick Community School	Co Laois	H1
School Wide Recycling and Upcycling Project	Ballyclare High School	Co Antrim	H2
TRENDY THRIFTING	Terence MacSwiney Community College	Co Cork	H3
Guardians of the Owendoher	Rockbrook Park School	Co Dublin	H4
Green Clean	St John Bosco Community College	Co Clare	H5
Gaia	Youth Climate Justice Programme	Co Dublin	H6
Paper Pioneers	St Mary's Academy CBS	Co Carlow	H7
Fantastic Fashion	Loreto Secondary School Letterkenny	Co Donegal	H8
Deadly effects of vapes but what about the environment	Marist College	Co Westmeath	I1
The Waste Bankers	Patrician Academy Mallow	Co Cork	I2
NotSoFrankAndHonest	Kinsale Community School	Co Cork	I3
Vape Vanquishers; The New Era of Smoking Litter	Glanmire Community College	Co Cork	I4
MyGug: Our School's Food Waste Cycle	Kinsale Community School	Co Cork	I5
Reduce Litter in SJBC	St John the Baptist's College	Co Armagh	I6
Eco-Education	Coláiste Chiaráin	Co Roscommon	NA
Fashion Going Green	Thornhill College	Co Derry	NA

Climate Change

Pit or Bales... Which is more sustainable?	Millstreet Community School	Co Cork	H9
How green are the local GAA clubs? Comparing the carbon footprints of our rural GAA clubs	Presentation College Headford	Co Galway	H10
Eco-friendly adventures	Eureka Secondary School	Co Meath	H11
Cois Fharráige to COP28	Coláiste Chroí Mhuire AND Coláiste Cholmcille	Co Galway	H12
Climate Change is NOW, so Climate Action is NOW	The Institute of Education	Co Dublin	H13
An Environmental Performance Index for Counties of Ireland	Millstreet Community School	Co Cork	H14

ECO-Health & Well-being

Benefits of nature and gardening on mental health and wellbeing	Mercy College Coolock	Co Dublin	H15
Making Mercy Marvellous	Mercy College Coolock	Co Dublin	I10
Raising Awareness of PM2.5 - It Affects Us All	St Finian's College	Co Westmeath	I11
Deodorant 101- A Solution to Pollution	St Mary's College, Arklow	Co Wicklow	I12
A campaign to Reduce Nitrous Gases in our School Community	St Brigid's College	Co Galway	I13
The Scenic Sensory Garden	Kinsale Community School	Co Cork	I14
Project Air	Ronanstown Youth Service & ECO-UNESCO	Co Dublin	I15

PROJECT INDEX

Super Junior

Project Name	Organisation	County	Display
Beach Clean	Mahoney Family	Co Galway	17
Embracing the Dark	Nature Inspires	Co Sligo	18
Save Our Environment from Early Retirement	Ardnagrath National School	Co Westmeath	19
Sustainable Travel for the Future	Scoil Mhuire, Monivea	Co Galway	J1
Lifting the Liberties	Francis Street School	Co Dublin	J2
Upcycling Our Sensory Garden	Ballybay Youth Club YWICM	Co Monaghan	J3
Water Quality in our Community	St Raphael's NS	Co Dublin	J4
Creating a Biodiversity Garden	Kinaffe National School	Co Mayo	J5
Cool biodiverse school!	Gaelscoil Iarfhilatha	Co Galway	J6
What role do plants play in sustainability?	Dublin 7 ETNS	Co Dublin	J7
Biodiversity Champions	Dunboyne Senior Primary School	Co Meath	J8
Combatting Environmental Issues in Our Local Area	Firies Mxd. National School	Co Kerry	NA



FINALIST PROJECT INDEX





ENERGY

Projects which look at how to reduce the environmental impacts of our energy use

Solar Soldiers 2024-0139

A1

Meán Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh

Our project is called Solar Soldiers. We are a team of seven students from Meán Scoil Nua An Leith Triúigh who are looking to get solar panels for our school so that we can help save the environment along with saving the schools money and helping run it off renewable energy. We have put several posters around the school to raise awareness, emailed TD's and the Dingle Hub for advice on solar panels. We raised awareness as we set up social media accounts on Instagram and TikTok called "solar.soldiers". Our impact was that we finally managed to get solar panels for our school.

Solar Panels: A Brighter Future for Our School Using Microgeneration

A2

Technology 2024-0259

St Paul's Community College

We wanted to investigate how solar panels could reduce energy costs for our school and by how much, as well as the attitudes and perceptions of parents and teachers to installing solar panels in their home. We investigated how much our school spends on electricity bills and showed the difference solar panels could make. We conducted a survey of all the classrooms and offices in our school to calculate electricity usage. Through experiments we investigated the effects of temperature and light wavelength on energy production by solar cells. We made a questionnaire to send to parents and teachers to get their attitudes and views to installing solar panels outside of school in their home environments. We are interested in stopping climate change and in renewable energy.

Optimizing wind turbine efficiency 2024-0282

A3

Newbridge College

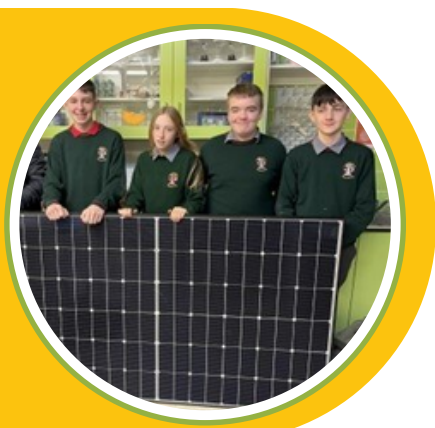
This project was an investigation into various blade orientations on a handmade wind turbine to discover the optimal design of the blades and to see how the assorted designs affected the finished electrical output. During this project we sought out to investigate varying blade orientations for optimal performance using a consistent flow rate of air. Another aim of ours was to aid against the global climate crisis and ease the pressures on our national energy system and contribute to the growing energy crisis. We tested six different blade configurations adding slight alterations for each design. We used a multi-meter to measure the electrical output in the form of voltage (volts), current (amps) and we multiplied these two to get the power (watts). For a consistent air-flow rate we used a household fan. This project has heightened all our awareness and knowledge on sustainability and wind turbines, this is crucial knowledge for our future as wind turbines are becoming more mainstream and will begin to be a main source of electricity in the future.

Enviro Power-charge 365 2024-0205

A4

St Ciaran's College

We aim to create a system that can use our natural resources such as rain, wind and solar power to gather enough power to charge a phone. We have decided to use these multiple forms of renewable energy to maximise the amount of energy we harvest, from our very changeable Irish climate. There are two main reasons that we have come up with this idea; the cost-of-living crisis and to generate electricity in an environmentally friendly way. The cost-of-living crisis is affecting people across Ireland and the UK, from food bills to electricity bills, with many people struggling to 'heat or eat.' Debt Justice, is a charity that campaigns against unjust debt, has found that "12.8 million adults in the UK are falling behind on bills or finding repayments a heavy burden." It is calling for urgent action to prevent people being "trapped in poverty". Therefore, a product like ours which will help to generate energy, in any weather condition, at no running cost should be of benefit to people who find themselves struggling with the cost of living.



Biodiesel Bonanza: Fuelling a Greener Future 2024-0284

A5

St Andrews College

Climate change is a very topical subject at the moment. With the increased awareness of carbon dioxide emissions and the rising fuel prices, biodiesel is now being widely talked about. There are more studies and experiments being done about biodiesel than ever before and we wanted to contribute on a student level, without lots of machinery or money, and show that anyone can make their own biodiesel at home. Our project is about creating biodiesel, a greener source of fuel, with cooking oil. We use a scientific process called transesterification to make it, which is combining our oil with a catalyst and an alcohol. We also created soap with the byproduct of the transesterification to make it more sustainable. We raised awareness by presenting our project at BT Young Scientist to the public and government officials, as well as contacting Irish run biofuel businesses about our work and sharing it to people in our school. The impact of this project was raising awareness to show that oils like used cooking oil are a new way of creating biodiesel that should be investigated, for the future of our planet, and the sustainability of generations to come.

Are Observatories Seeing as Much as They Can? 2024-0277

A6

Blackwater Community School

This project is about how light pollution affects how observatories see the sky. We aimed to research the impact of light pollution on the sky and raise awareness of light pollution. We sent a survey sheet with a survey link and instructions on how to complete it to our family and friends. The survey asked whether they could see various stars or constellations with their naked eye, where they were and their light pollution class (according to the Bortle scale). We also tracked the stars ourselves in more detail since we were more familiar with the stars. We submitted our project to BT Young Scientist. We made a section in our school newspaper about our project. We contacted eLife Sports and Science Centre about displaying our display board from BT Young Scientist. We met many people at BT Young Scientist who were interested in light pollution but completely unaware of it before seeing our project but had witnessed many of the effects of it.

BIODIVERSITY

15 LIFE ON LAND



Flora & Fauna LK 2024-0212

B1

Loreto Secondary School Letterkenny

Our project is a series of actions promoting biodiversity. We care a lot about the environment and want to show it through our project. We plan to launch a social media campaign to inform people of biodiversity and our project. After the initial launch, we will organise workshops to educate people on how to preserve biodiversity in our locality. We are going to make informative lesson plans and arts and crafts projects to increase interest and intellect. We hope to increase local biodiversity and get the community involved in our mission. Our plan also involves giving presentations to local primary schools. Using art, crafts and simple terms, we hope to encourage young people to be more environmentally aware and to encourage an early interest in activism and biodiversity. This could help shape future activists and scientists! The final stage of our plan is to plant a garden in our locality filled with Irish native plants. We hope that all our effects will educate and inspire people to be aware and eco-friendly and to increase and preserve biodiversity. We also hope to continue with our efforts in biodiversity outside this competition and keep Flora & Fauna LK alive in the future.

The Bomb Bakers 2024-0037

B2

St Jarlath's College

We collectively researched about the Irish environment and found plenty of information detailing the importance of bees and the impact they have in our eco system including everyday lives. Due to climate change and urbanisation, the bee population has been steadily declining in recent years. We noticed this worrying statistic does not get enough care or attention especially in our local town. We chose to develop an area of our school towards the cause of helping the bee population thrive once again, by providing them with a new protected haven. We raised awareness about the issue through presentations to first year classes and informing them about our project. We searched for a place to develop the new wildlife habitat, and shared ideas to make a plan to that our resources would allow us to achieve. We each admit that this project has deeply impacted our views and perspectives about the fragility of our eco system and made us realise that we can't just sit back and watch as the effects of climate change rapidly destroy the natural world. Our community, especially our schools, has shown appreciation for these new ventures to make improvements in our locality's biodiversity situation.

Air Quality - Lichen as Bio Indicators 2024-0023

St Mary's Academy CBS

B3

Our main goal was to study and identify Lichen in the area and use it as a bio-indicator for air pollution. We took several actions. At first it was research. We researched a variety of different aspects such as the types of Lichen, how they grow, why and where they go. We then went out and took several pictures of and samples of the different lichen, identifying the areas they grew in. After that, we came back and used a guide to identify what lichens were and to determine how lichen grows in areas of different air quality. Well, for us the impact was big, we learned a lot about not only lichen and Biodiversity near our school but also the effects that No2 has on the areas around our school. We have also educated younger students and pupils from the schools, bringing awareness to the students about No2 in the atmosphere and its effect on the biodiversity. We'd say it brought awareness of car pollution and air quality around our school and globally. Also, the link between air quality and respiratory illnesses.

Gáirdín na Beatha (Garden of Life) 2024-0256

Tullamore College

B4

Biodiversity is a complicated issue and everyone all over the world must work together to find a solution. Our project aims to improve biodiversity in our school community using several means. We Began by cornering off an area of the grounds and planting apple trees there. We also planted whitethorn bushes along the fence of the cornered off area. We chose whitethorn as it is attractive to bees. We want to give bees a food source as they improve the ecosystem in so many ways. We have begun building bee hotels to give the bees a place to live on our school grounds. As well as this we have taken steps to allow our school pitch to go fallow. This will allow nature to take over during the summer months and we believe the ecosystem on our school grounds will thrive. We have aimed to impact the community in as many ways as possible. We will conduct fundraisers to fund a bench in our biodiversity sector and will also campaign for others to do the same. This project has had a huge impact on everyone involved and since beginning we all feel a little more appreciative for the environment.

Trees for Tomorrow 2024-0199

Presentation Secondary School

B5

The aim of The Nature Buddies is to improve Ireland's biodiversity and spread knowledge about the species that need our help, so that our communities can act as one to support plants and animals and make a difference. We plan to repurpose an unused pond in Phoenix Park into an Irish Wildlife Pond which inhabits native Irish flora and fauna in a safe, protected area. It's the perfect way to help nature, support Éire and spread information. It can also be the ideal place for interactive, informational school tours and a fun place where everyone can embrace nature. We'll make a petition to convince the Phoenix Park to make our dream come true. We're also making a slideshow as a bio data of the various species we'd like to include in our pond to help raise awareness about them (attached in the petition). We hope to make a long-lasting impact on our environment and the people. This pond can be the start of many more actions taken in our communities to help nature which is dying out because of climate change. It'll make Irish citizens understand they can make a difference by getting their voice heard. Support The Nature Buddies!

The Bee Believers 2024-0132

Loreto Secondary School Bray

B6

Our project is dedicated to helping Irish bees and providing them a source of food through the pollen and nectar of flowers. We decided to raise awareness of bee endangerment through a bake sale in our own school, which we would sell homemade bee-themed cupcakes along with wildflower seeds in small paper bags that we made ourselves. We put in a huge amount of work with baking a recipe, making decorations out of fondant, getting flower seeds and individually folding A4 paper into small bags to hold them. We spent a lot of time raising awareness about bees through our Instagram account, which we were always conscious of keeping updated. The bake sale was ultimately a success, raising €70 - when the individual cupcakes only costed €1.50 - and giving away all the bags with the wildflower seeds.

BioGuardians 2024-0081

B7

Patrician Academy Mallow

We aim to raise awareness of invasive species in Ireland and specifically our hometown of Mallow. We want to show people the damage they cause to our natural habitats and native biodiversity by taking food, shelter and territory of our native animals and plants. We invited John Casey from Teagasc as a guest speaker to talk about this to our first years and Kevin Myers, a local historian and environmentalist took students on a nature walk in Mallows Town Park where he talked about the history and biodiversity around the blackwater. We held a quiz during Global citizenship week where one of the rounds had questions about invasive species. We made and hung posters around our school to raise awareness about the issue. We wrote an article for our local newspaper, The Mallow Star, we raised awareness of invasive species and directly impacted the 1st and 2nd years and TY students in our school and the teachers who teach those classes through the guest speakers and table quiz. They learned about invasive species, how they are a problem and how everyone can make small differences to help stopping the spread of invasive species. We indirectly impacted all 600+ members of our school community by spreading awareness through our posters and posts on our school Instagram page and Patrician Academy school app. We also hope we impacted the wider community to some extent through our article published in our local newspaper.

DGS Young Environmentalists 2024-0107

B8

Dundalk Grammar School

Our YEA project is to create a wildlife, sensory garden in our school. In the space, there will be an all-natural, self-sustaining barrel pond filled with native Irish pond plants, a homemade bug hotel built by our woodwork classes, who will also be making bird houses for the garden and memorial bench for a teacher who recently passed away. There will also be a hedgehog house consisting of leaves and twigs from around the school campus and lots of native Irish plants and trees. Our main aim for this project is to create a space outside for people who find school difficult for whatever reason where they can just relax and unwind in our peaceful garden that will have two main seating areas using recycled furniture. After doing lots of research on plants and other aspects of the garden, we went to our local garden centre to bounce ideas off, which was nothing but positive. We will be setting up a social media profile in the coming weeks to help promote this project to the student body and it will be headed by one of our committee members

The Langan Trail 2024-0126

B9

St Catherine's College Armagh

Our project is a dynamic initiative, creating a nature trail within the school grounds. Focused on environmental education, it aims to increase biodiversity awareness and interactive learning. The trail will be an outdoor classroom, engaging the whole school community with the local ecosystem. Through informative signages and interactive installations, the whole school will gain insights into the diverse flora and fauna. Our project not only highlights the environment but also a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of ecosystems. We hope that immersing everyone in nature, creates a passion for sustainability, helping fellow students to value the environment. We got our team together and started designing the nature trail early in the school year. The trail is the reopening of an old farm trail that existed when our school was a convent so the nuns could work the land. We designed the route, the markers for each site and the biodiversity theme to be included on each. We hope The Langan Trail will have a lasting impression on everyone who walks it. We are lucky to have large green spaces on our school grounds, but we wanted to utilise them even more. By making this trail we hope pupils, parents and the wider community can enjoy the biodiversity on show at our school.

National Peatlands Park Campaign 2024-0097

B10

No Planet B club

The 'No Planet B' club went on a trip to Lullybeg Bog. We learnt about the importance of bogs for biodiversity and as a carbon sink. We saw lots of amazing, endangered animals there including several Marsh Fritillary butterfly which is red listed and is one of the rarest butterflies in Ireland! GOALS: We wanted to raise awareness about biodiversity loss on our bogs and to join the national peatlands park campaign for the midlands to help save this amazing ecosystem. ACTIONS: We created a petition in support of this park aiming to get over 500 signatures. We made a short film to show at our speeches in Cloughjordan eco village, Mac Auley place, Feile Bride and Maynooth University. We were given a chance to present to Kildare County Council to all the Councillors. They gave us our first ever standing ovation!! Then we were invited to present at the Dail to Minister for Heritage Malcom Nonnan, the environmental Minister Ossian Smith and Senator Vincent P Martin. IMPACT: We have impacted over 60,000 people from our presentations, KFM radio interview and Kildare nationalist newspaper article. We have over 650 signatures on our petition and 870 views of our film. All these events also had a positive impact on us as individuals. We learnt lots of new skills such as public speaking, acting, filming, writing, how to do a radio interview and more!

The Nature Buddies 2024-0229

C1

Youth for Sustainable Development

The aim of The Nature Buddies is to improve Ireland's biodiversity and spread knowledge about the species that need our help, so that our communities can act as one to support plants and animals and make a difference. We plan to repurpose an unused pond in Phoenix Park into an Irish Wildlife Pond which inhabits native Irish flora and fauna in a safe, protected area. It's the perfect way to help nature, support Éire and spread information. It can also be the ideal place for interactive, informational school tours and a fun place where everyone can embrace nature. We'll make a petition to convince the Phoenix Park to make our dream come true. We're also making a slideshow as a bio data of the various species we'd like to include in our pond to help raise awareness about them (attached in the petition). We hope to make a long-lasting impact on our environment and the people. This pond can be the start of many more actions taken in our communities to help nature which is dying out because of climate change. It'll make Irish citizens understand they can make a difference by getting their voice heard. Support The Nature Buddies!

Pollinator Garden 2024-0156

C2

Moate Community School

This project is about restoring Irish plants and pollinators in our community. During the last few years, we have lost some of the key factors of biodiversity in our area and our project aims to restore these in a sustainable way by using native Irish plants and different sustainable practices to keep them alive all year round. We will also use pollinators such as Bees, Beetles and Butterflies to help keep the plants alive.

Flying High 2024-0092

C3

Ardscoil na Mara

Hello, we are "Flying High!" Our group is making bird boxes with camera's powered by solar panels. In our group we have Alfie Dunphy, Freddie Brazil, Cian McCarthy and David Twomey. We hand make our bird boxes, with top quality, locally sourced wood from our gardens as to reuse materials. We contacted our local nursing home and we are installing 2 bird boxes in their garden area. 1 of the 2 bird boxes has a high-quality camera installed inside of it which is solar power and is linked up to a tv inside of the nursing, which connecting the residents to the birdlife/wildlife outside.

Habitat Heroes 2024-0268

C4

Goatstown Educate Together Secondary School

How would you feel if your species were slowly dying out in a country you were native to, not good, right? Well however you feel is how red squirrels currently feel, they are native to Ireland. They should really be seen all around, but instead it is rare to ever see them. We have made a red squirrel habitat with nuts and seeds so they can eat. We aim to preserve red squirrel life and save their species. Our project aims to demonstrate to people in the wider community, the threat to the red squirrel population in Ireland and to show them what we can do as individuals and as a wider community to protect this precious, native species. With the help of our caretaker and art teacher at school we have built a red squirrel 'house' that will provide safety, shelter and security for the species and provide it with food necessary for its wellbeing. We will then place this house on the site of our new school in Goatstown to show what we can do to protect, not only the red squirrel, but any other species whose habitats are threatened by development.

The Bio-Nerds Biodiversity Trail 2024-0248

C5

Loreto College Mullingar

Our project is about the creation of a biodiversity trail so as to restore biodiversity in our school community. Our project involves the planting of various plants and flowers in a trail amongst the trees that we possess where biodiversity has decreased over the number of years. Our aim is to attract different types of species to the trail and to inspire students in junior years to take responsibility for the biodiversity around us. The actions we have taken include redesigning fairy doors which will be installed amongst the trees in the trail, planting various plants and flowers depending on several factors and designing pots and stones with unique designs on them. We promoted our trail by making and sticking posters around our school, making a music video with our own rap lyrics which will be posted on our school social media pages and contacting local newspapers to inform them on our project. Our project will have an impact on our school community as students will have the opportunity to learn about the biodiversity in our school community and access to a short walkway through the nature. This project impacted us as we expressed our passions and made a difference!

Creating A Welcome Home For Bats 2024-0178

C6

Rockbrook Park School

Our Project's goal is to create a welcome home for bats and spread awareness about everything bats do for the environment, and even people, as our school is a home for many bats, as well as loads of other species. We made and gave out a survey about bats in Ireland to get an understanding of our school's knowledge of bats. Once we had the common misconceptions and misinformation about bats, we began to make a presentation and posters. We made the presentation with the idea of presenting it to other years, and eventually to our out-of-school community. The posters were made with much of the same idea in mind. We would hang them up in hallways and make them stand out so people would be drawn to the posters and learn something new about bats. We also wanted to attract more bats to live in Rockbrook, so we made bat boxes, which would attract more bats to roost in Rockbrook. A biodiversity festival is held at our school in May, where we go on bat walks, which are great for educating people outside of the school about bats and Irish wildlife.

Oak Tree & Wildflower Project 2024-0083

C7

St Marys Secondary School

Our Climate Committee's aim was and still is to bring better biodiversity and a better local eco-system to our community. To do this, we started with The Oak Tree Project. Luckily, last year's Climate Committee had sown the seeds and we just needed to plant some more and find homes for the young saplings. The "Sale Day" was a huge success as we got lots of new interest and we gave away every single sapling. For the Wildflower Garden, we worked hard to build our own wicker fence and plant the seeds. The fence was definitely a challenge and we needed all the help that we got. We are so glad that all of our projects have not been in vain. The local biodiversity in our school has improved. We have noticed more insects and birds since starting these projects. Even though it is a school-based group, the Oak Tree Project is increasing biodiversity in lots of other communities as they are being planted in Wexford and some in Kilkenny too. This project improved my teamwork skills and I got to get to know people in my group better, and learned how to work with each of them individually.

Rockbrook Biodiversity Festival '24 2024-0147

C8

Rockbrook Park School

The Rockbrook Biodiversity Festival is a free public event. Our aim is to raise awareness of biodiversity and provide people with the knowledge to discuss and take action against the issues that threaten irreversible changes to our environment. We will do this through fun, interactive talks and activities lead by experts from a variety of fields pertaining to biodiversity and is open to anyone of any age group. Ultimately, the goal is to provide people with solutions against the current threats to our environment which they can adapt into their day-to-day lives, while also kindling a passion for biodiversity and nature in people. In an attempt to make learning about biodiversity as interesting and engaging as possible, we have organised several expert speakers who will share their insights, knowledge and experiences in their field of work. This will inform and encourage people take collective action against matters which are causing or accelerating the loss of biodiversity in communities. These actions will serve to raise awareness of environmental concerns and the lack of education surrounding them.

Wild at Heart 2024-0106

NA

Thornhill College

The Wild at Heart project sprouted mainly from our Eco Club's desire to develop Biodiversity in our vast school grounds, whilst offering students opportunities to get outside and connect with nature. We wanted to add a burst of colour, attract more wildlife, insects and birds and make our school grounds a hive of activity. We worked closely with the schools Ground Keeper and Eco School Field Officer, completing a walk around the grounds, used Google Earth to make observations and identified areas of development. Actions we took included researching the importance of wildflowers and bees, creating and sharing a virtual assembly with the whole school to raise awareness and share our plans for Biodiversity. We designed and constructed bird feeders from plastic milk jars and placed them around trees which proved successful, attracting new species like robins and blue tits, aside from the boisterous crows! We dug up and planted a new site for a mini wildflower patch and constructed bug hotels within this patch from recycled wooden pallets. school grounds.



ECO-ART & DESIGN

Projects which demonstrate creative ways to inform people about the environment and promote positive action

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



VapeCycle Solutions 2024-0216

B11

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís / Drimnagh Castle Secondary School

We at Vape Cycle Solutions are an ambitious group of teenagers who believe in our ability to bring about active change. We are focusing on Health while incorporating 'Eco Art and Design' into our project to create a life size model of the several organs that are affected negatively by vaping. We aim to increase awareness about health problems associated with vaping and intend to achieve this by actively trying to get in contact with Irish Heart. With their guidance and adept knowledge on the dangers of vaping, we strive to deliver our utmost efforts in aiding those who suffer from the consequences of vaping. This involves creating and putting up posters throughout our school, doing presentations to younger students both in our school and in the community to highlight the dangers of vaping. We're also dedicated to improving the cleanliness of our community with the help of younger students at our school. This involves arranging litter picks and reutilizing WEEE recycling boxes and placing them within the local community for the public to dispose of their vapes in an environmentally friendly manner. The rechargeable lithium batteries found in the vapes will be recycled to create portable charging devices, showcasing their continued usefulness.



SDG Courtyard Project 2024-0123

B12

St MacDara's Community College

The goal of our project is to improve the level of awareness and action, by students and staff, on preserving biodiversity in our school and greater community have for biodiversity. We set out to give our courtyards an enthralling, educational and eco-friendly redesign. These were to become safe spaces and displays of the beauty of nature and art in what can be a monotone and cold environment. We are bringing our idea of a safe space where nature can seep into our school to fruition. We turned our class into a team and discovered many valuable ideas among ourselves through workshops, team building exercises, frequent collaborative team sessions and idea bouncing. We ordered materials such as willow, spoke to professional artists and certainly did our research about all aspects of our project – from all of the SDG's to real world scenarios and current situations. We are here to educate and inform all, as biodiversity and the environment's threat cannot be overlooked. This will be through our magazine and, hopefully, our local newspaper as well as any other medium we can use to let them know why we care!



Adonis ECO-Artistry 2024-0219

B13

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís / Drimnagh Castle Secondary School

Our project seeks to raise awareness of various aspects of the world around us, specifically about the sea, waste and energy through a poster-board-esque, picture-taking and a projecting project. Our upcycled project is a picture frame that showcases the issues in our world to do with the climate and the environment in which we live. We aim to spread our word about how we need to change our ways and be more sustainable. We've taken a few actions to spread awareness and knowledge about these issues through our project. We advertise through our Instagram and use word-of-mouth to increase our sphere of influence. We also encourage people to post on their own social media platforms posing with our cut outs and tagging us as well. We believe that our project has positively influenced our community. Not only is it fun posing with different cut-outs but is also educating them on the problems in our world that we still need to face. On a personal level though, it's been fun hanging out together as friends and just painting away while chatting.



We Only Want The Earth 2014-0242

B14

Loreto High School Beaufort

The goal of our project was to spread awareness about climate justice and equity. Climate equity is defined by the USPA as 'the goal of recognising and addressing the unequal burdens made worse by climate change'. We both care about this issue a lot and think that it should be one of the issues central in the conversations and solutions to the climate crisis. While trying to decide how to take action on this issue, we discovered the poem 'We Only Want the Earth' by James Connolly. It was originally written about the labour movement but reading it through an environmental lens, it also perfectly addresses the issue of climate equity. We (the people of the world) only want the earth, a demand that becomes less extreme once you realise its roughly 8 billion people demanding it. We created a lino print using a discarded block from the art room, put it up in the Connolly Bookstore and in our school and we peer taught to multiple classes on the issue.



MARINE LIFE

Projects which look at activities which are impacting ocean health and our marine environment



The Impact of Unsustainable Pair Trawling in Kenmare Bay 2024-0188

C9

Pobalscoil Inbhear Sceine

Our goals were to ban/limit unsustainable pair trawling in Kenmare Bay and within the 6 nautical mile limit along the coast of Ireland, to inform the local community of the negative impacts of unsustainable pair trawling, and to preserve marine life and biodiversity. To do this, we held a workshop and conducted a survey of locals, we created a petition and are in the process of collecting signatures, and we also created a website. Currently, we are in the process of lobbying politicians (Dáil visit on the 28th of February) - Ran a poster competition with the TY class - Designed a submission template for the ongoing public consultation that the school community will sign. This submission template will also be published in the Kenmare advertiser where the local community will be able to sign and sent it to government. - A social media account (X/Twitter) - conducting interviews with local radio stations and newspapers. - Impact/ prospective results of our project - It's become an important topic in the local community - Protecting people's livelihoods - Educated people about the issue of unsustainable pair trawling and how it is affecting our beautiful bay - Given people a voice and a chance to express their opinions about unsustainable pair trawling.



Life below the surface 2024-0166

C10

Glanmire Community College

We investigated, in order to raise awareness of how pollution affects marine life and why marine life is vital to us human beings and to our planet. This goal wouldn't be reached easily, as we needed to work hard as a group and as individuals by putting time, effort and resilience into our project and its research. We researched factors that cause pollution such as littering, chemical dumping and deforestation. As a group we found ways that we could help reduce this extreme issue. Our goal was not only to spread awareness but take action within our community. We presented an informative power point to first years about marine life and its importance within our lives and how we can protect their ecosystem. We set up a litter picking roster for green schools students to carry out every day after lunch time to clean the school grounds. Our group and other green schools members did a beach clean up in Whitebay which was a great success as we managed to collect multiple large bags of rubbish and left the beach spotless. We learned how to protect marine environment more effectively. We also spread our knowledge around the school.



Lough Corrib Incoming Crisis 2024-0202

C11

Coláiste Iognáid S.J.

We carried out a project on water quality and Marine Biology surrounding Lough Corrib to highlight effects of pollution on marine life. We did investigations and testing for the levels of phosphates and Nitrates. Kick sampling was carried out to identify native and non-native invasive marine life in 5 different locations. We worked, shared results and raised awareness through other projects including; the Eco Advocates Teams, EDCO 4 ALL, Watersport 4 Green project, Corrib Beo organisation, the Green Team and the Colaiste Iognáid school among others. We looked for healthy marine life and invasive species also. We did kick sampling to see what vertebrates and invertebrates were present. Sewage worms were found as well as non-native Zebra mussels. The Pearl mussel is greatly endangered due to agricultural pollution and over harvesting during English Rule over centuries. We found there was high levels of pollution in the stagnant waters in Galway Canals but better quality water around upper Lough Corrib near the hidden lakes. We got insight into his legal battle with government bodies in the EU High courts in an effort to bring awareness, conservation and management into the area, in order to protect the populations of Pearl mussel and monitor water quality and reduce pollution getting into the water from the land.





Seal Protection 101 2024-0052

C12

St Colman's Community College Secondary School

Our project is about raising awareness and educating people on seals, to help keep these creatures safe. We aim to raise awareness to teach people about seals and their ecosystems, how to protect them both directly and indirectly. To do this we used social media such as Instagram in order to put up informational posts. By having them online and in short formats this can keep people's attention for a bit while also informing them on issues and this method also works quite well for spreading the information to younger people. We made a sculpture of a seal showing how things like litter can affect them. We posted our process of making it to garner people's interest to our page which leads them to the information we want them to learn. We promoted facilities that assist in the issues we talked about encouraging people to donate or volunteer if they can, this encourages people to try to help and do what they can.



Threats to Marine Life in South Dublin 2024-0077

C13

Mount Anville Secondary School

Threats to marine life are major issues in today's world. Our team of nine aimed to spread awareness and solve this heart-wrenching problem through organising beach-clean-ups, educating people through social media and giving talks to younger students on the threats to marine life and what they can do to help. We also aim to adopt a turtle from The National Reptile Zoo as this can help save marine animals in Ireland. We aim to spread the word of appalling marine life as far as we can to make people aware of the situation our planet is facing. Our project began by saving the marine life from the many extreme dangers like pollution and water wasting. We began by posting essential information on our social media to inform as many people as we could. We then organised beach clean-ups to bring our ideas to life. By this point, we realised that it would be beneficial to spread awareness to younger years, so we organised informative talks to educate the future generation. We hope to impact our community and make people realise that we need to help the environment, as it has helped us for so many years.



Maraam Grass Restoration Project 2024-0090

C14

Scoil Mhuire

We wanted to raise money to help replant Marram grass and help with a beach clean-up. We raised the money, we traveled to Tramore we took part in Marram grass replanting, and we took part in a beach clean-up. We replanted a full section of the beach, and we filled loads of bags of plastics from the beach.

ECO-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Projects which develop practical solutions to local environmental issues and involve local communities.

Newbridge - Leaders in Sustainability 2024-0295

D1

Newbridge College

We explored the impact of the rising cost of living on families and whether this affects their ability to live in an environmentally sustainable way. Our project was based on a Case Study of our town, Newbridge in Co. Kildare. We designed, piloted and carried out a survey in our local town. We got 713 responses to our survey. The results of this survey are analysed and conclusions drawn. Based on our feedback from our respondents we are proposing innovative and radical changes to ensure sustainable living at individual, local and national level which would lead the way for others to follow. Recommendations will be put forward as to how to support, encourage and incentivise people to live more sustainably in Newbridge, Ireland and beyond. Recommendations will be made as to how people can make changes to live more sustainably in this area at minimal or no cost. We raised awareness of our project by sharing the results with local county counsellors and politicians. We contacted local elected representatives and expressed our concerns and shared our proposed solutions. Our study is relevant, current and applicable to the people that live in our town and further afield.



Eco-Empire Expanded!! 2024-0136

D2

Meán Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh

Our project is called Eco-Empire Expanded and we strive to increase the biodiversity of our local community by creating habitats and safe environments for the Horticulture and the Ecological elements. To do this we have decided to construct a Pond measuring 6.5x6.5m and 4ft deep and a path walkway around our Outdoor classroom so we, the students can enjoy the nature around us. Together as a group we raised awareness of the project by posting on a social media platform (Instagram) @ecoempire_expanded to the people in the local area and we took action by planning and beginning the construction of our pond and researching product and equipment we would need which is funded by a €5,000 grant we received. The Eco-Empire Expanded project impacted each and every one of us involved in many different ways mainly in gaining an appreciation of the area around us and learned to love taking care of it for the future of our school. We hope that our work will not only be of use to our students and teachers but also to the public so they can come and go and enjoy the natural section of Castle Gregory as they please.

Safety Streets 2024-0071

D3

Kinsale Community School

Our project aims to reduce carbon emissions from vehicles in our school area. We plan to do this by making the roads in our surrounding area safer and encouraging people to walk to school as well as emailing bus companies asking them to stop idling in the school car park. We started by doing a safety audit of the roads and we documented the changes we would like to be made. We sent these to the county council to be reviewed. Next, we asked a member of our council to give a road safety presentation to our TY students and show them a VR car crash experience. We measured carbon levels in the car park and concluded they were dangerously high because of the busses idling. We sent this information to the bus companies and asked them to get the drivers to stop this. We also gave out 300 high-vis vests to encourage walking and cycling to school as well as organising a walk to school day later in the year where we plan to highlight any changes we have made to the road.

De-influencing Sustainability to Save Humanity 2024-0133

D4

Ursulines College Blackrock

Our project focused on de-influencing sustainability to save humanity. For example, so far we have organised a Swap Shop in our school. The swap shop was basically an event for students to bring in old clothes they no longer wear (still in good condition) and swap. In this Swap Shop we had multiple stations such as uniforms, teachers clothes and students clothing. All the clothes that were still remaining after this were donated to charity. In addition for this project, we are hosting a sustainable architectural art competition for our first years. We will have 2 winners. Projects will be graded on how sustainable they are and how well they are built. Another event we held was a sustainable Halloween catwalk where everyone had to make a costume from waste in their home and then they had to walk down the 'runway' to be judged. We also created a plastic free system in our schools coffee shop where you can only bring a reusable bottle to use for your drink. We also decided to deep clean and improve our school greenhouse that had gone a bit run down from over the summer. Our aims are making the school more sustainable, reduce waste and greenhouse gases, repurposing waste and raise awareness of the circular economy

What's Up With The Single Use Cups? 2024-0134

D5

Kinsale Community School

We aim to reduce the use of single use disposable cups. Our school recently purchased a coffee truck which uses plastic cups. We have introduced the 2GoCup Campaign in Kinsale Town, our school and surrounding communities. As part of our research, we have created a survey and got Killarney Coffee shops, who are currently part of the Killarney 2GoCup Campaign, to fill out the survey. We handed out fliers to local coffee shops, informing them about the meeting with Transition Town Kinsale and the CEO of the 2GoCup Campaign. We contacted Raffaella Valenti, and with the results from the survey, we created a PowerPoint Presentation, which we then presented to Kinsale Coffee Shop owners at the meeting with Transition Town Kinsale to encourage them to introduce the 2GoCup Campaign to Kinsale. We also got to hear more information about the 2GoCup Campaign from the CEO, Kevin Murphy. We invited the local coffee shop owners to the meeting and handed out information leaflets prior to the meeting. We have introduced the 2GoCup Campaign to our school and Kinsale Town.

Composting in School at PSN 2024-0061

D6

Pobalscoil Neasáin

The group initially began with a project to develop and manage a coherent waste management system in the school as the current system was not effective and all waste produced in the school was ending up in general waste. We also initiated the redevelopment of food waste management in the Home Economics department. We started by contacting the waste management company and cleaning company, followed by senior management (in relation to budget allowance). We also took steps to fundraise for this project by hosting a Clothes Swap Day for the entire school which also gave us the opportunity to raise awareness for the whole project. Concurrently, we also started a Pocket Forest in the school with the aim of developing a school sensory garden with a biodiversity theme. We helped prepare the soil, plant the trees and learned how to nurture the plants for the future. The impact of the waste management system will be tenfold as there is no proper system, and this will hopefully bring about a greater level of awareness to the whole staff and student body for years to come.



Hostile Architecture 2024-0293

D7

ECO-UNESCO

Our goals are to raise awareness about the cruelty of hostile architecture in our society and inspire legislative change so that this cruelty can be stopped. We plan on doing some social media promotion on Instagram, holding a dialogue with young people and organising a petition for legislative change.



COP Castlegregory 2024-0137

D8

Meán Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh

We are students from Castle Gregory, who want to make a change in our local village by making it more sustainable, eco-friendly and tidy. We are inspired by the COP 28 movement which is happening NOW!. Therefore, we named our project 'COP Castlegregory'. Our first idea is to install more public bins in our village in order to reduce amount of litter which is polluting our local beaches. We also aim to encourage local businesses to commit to do least two activities to raise awareness through their businesses. Another part of our project is 'Dune dudes' which is a project we have collaborated with Maharees conservation and Eugene Farrell from university of Galway to track erosion and build-up of sand on the dunes of Maharees using D.O.D rods (Depth of Destruction) and measuring sticks that we hand painted and cut ourselves. We have a separate Instagram account dedicated to dune dudes which shows all our progress. We have set up Cop Dingle together with a local village and have also mobilised TY students participation in Junk Kouture. With support from our teachers we were able to convince most of our class. Each group has their own social media to show their progress in this journey



Sustainable Eco Action in Schools (SEAS) 2024-0170

E8

Skerries Community College

Our project, Sustainable Eco Action in Schools (SEAS), is about making schools more sustainable in all aspects. We started this project last year and are continuing it this year as a Further Growth Award. This academic year, we started an eco club in our school, which many first year students joined. Having an eco club in our school is a great way for students from different years to collaborate on climate action. Building on our work from last year – where we looked at sustainability in many areas of the school – we decided to focus on one area in particular this year: vending machines. We also made our school's Christmas Doors competition even more eco-friendly than it was last year, which was when we started trying to make the Christmas Doors Competition more eco-friendly. We encouraged people to decorate their classroom doors with materials that could be reused or recycled, which significantly reduced the amount of waste going in the rubbish bin.





ECO-INNOVATION

Projects which research, develop and create products or services that contribute to sustainable development

A Smart & Sustainable Irrigation System 2024-0232 St Ciaran's College

E1

Our project aims to help people who have busy lives or poor mobility to have a garden and keep plants. It helps to save water and aims to encourage people to grow their own food. It is an automatic plant watering system that detects if a plant needs water and automatically waters it. It uses a moisture sensor, water pump and a Genie motor board with 2 chips, a Genie E18 and a L293D. When the moisture sensor detects that the soil is dry, it activates the pump to carry the harvested rainwater to the soil. We competed in the BT Young Scientist and Technologist Exhibition in Dublin to raise awareness for our project and the problems it is aiming to solve. We also carried out surveys about our project with parents in our year group and teachers at our school. We impacted our community by visiting the Tully Meadow community gardens in Augher. We presented our project and the problems that it is looking to solve. We have enjoyed working on our project and it has made us more aware of the world around us.

Revived Wardrobe 2024-0128 Kinsale Community School

E2

For our project we are trying to promote recycling and reusing of old clothes. We plan to host a clothes swap shop in our school where student bring clothes they no longer use and swap them for new clothes they can wear

To design and develop a filter for household chimneys composed of minerals to reduce carbon dioxide emissions 2024-0273 St Aloysius' College

E3

Global warming is an increasingly worrying problem worldwide. It is one of the greatest contributors to climate change carbon dioxide emissions. By creating an eco-friendly filter for chimneys using a variety of inexpensive and abundant minerals, we hope to reduce these emissions before it is too late. These minerals include limestone, quartz, marble and granite and all have the capability to absorb carbon emissions. We began raising awareness in our school by using a shoe box with a different question each week about global warming. Students wrote their answers on a piece of paper and put them into the box. At the end of the week, we pulled out a piece of paper and the first correct answer won a small prize (e.g. ruler, key chain). We also held a poster competition in which the most creative ideas also won a prize. We also created an Instagram account to provide people with regular updates on our endeavours. This new appreciation and determination has further inspired us to stand up and fight climate change before our precious Earth is damaged beyond repair.

Climate Policies: A Mission or a Minefield? 2024-0285 Gaelcholáiste Luimnigh

E4

Our project aims to help people identify companies that have a positive or negative impact on the environment so they can make more educated decisions when buying products or services. We have created a website called greenpolicydecoder.com that contains summaries of companies' climate policies. These summaries contain the company's main climate goals, what actions the company has already taken and some climate-related certifications or ratings they have earned. When making these summaries, we ensured that technical terms were either avoided or explained and that the overall length was short and split into different paragraphs to make it easier to read. The website contains links to resources that can improve a person's climate knowledge (for example, the Climate Jargon Buster), underneath will be an explanation of what the resource can be used for. We have raised awareness of our project through appearances on podcasts (Ecolution), on the radio (Raidió na Gaeltachta) and at BT Young Scientist where we interacted with the public. We have social media accounts which advertise our project. We have had nearly one hundred visitors so far who have browsed our website showing there is a demand for what we provide.



Optimised biodegradable plastic 2024-0262

E5

Gonzaga College SJ

Both of us have been fascinated by chemistry from an early age, and with climate change on the rise in recent decades we have taken it upon ourselves to improve and spread awareness regarding the necessity of eco-friendly products. With that in mind, we decided to improve upon a product which is already on the market, a biodegradable starch-based plastic. Our goal for this project is to create a cheaper and easier to produce version of the starch-based plastic in the market as we think that plastic pollution is one of the leading contributing factors to the climate crisis. Traditional plastic can take several hundred years to biodegrade, but with our cornstarch bioplastic it only takes a few months, which is a massive improvement. Furthermore, we have been working on our formula to be effective, while still cheap to produce. By doing this, we believe we can achieve more eco-friendly and cheaper packaging and plastic goods.



Bin Your Vape 2024-0070

E6

Youth Work Ireland Cavan Monaghan

The goal of our project is to spread awareness on how to properly and safely dispose of disposable vapes. We aimed to link in with the local environmental officer in Monaghan County Council and see if there is a possibility of installing vape only bins in identified blackspots around the town. We have researched the damage vapes have on the environment, identified vape litter blackspots around our local town and created a letter addressed to the environment section in Monaghan County Council seeking their support. We have also researched what type of vape bins are available currently and we have begun looking at our designs for what we think a vape bin should be like. If successful in getting bins installed in town, we will carry out an awareness campaign to encourage people to use the bins provided in town. Through our project, we have gained a better understanding on the impact vapes have on the environment and learned about how vapes can be safely disposed. Within the group itself some of the members have stopped vaping. The 6 Steps to Success have helped develop skills and gain an understanding of environmental issues around the world.



Reclaiming Lithium from Used Batteries 2024-0263

E7

St Mary's College

Our project aims to reclaim and recycle the lithium in used lithium-ion batteries. We did this by piercing the batteries and then reacting them with water to create lithium hydroxide. We saw how NASA employs the use of lithium hydroxide to absorb excess carbon dioxide in the air in spaceships so we then, based on that, reacted lithium hydroxide and carbon dioxide, which gave the product lithium carbonate, a raw material mined in order to create lithium-ion batteries. We then did further tests to prove the substance created was lithium carbonate. We theorise that if our experiment was conducted on a larger scale, it would not only be able to recycle lithium with ease but would also absorb carbon dioxide from the air. Lithium is predicted to be in short supply by as soon as 2025, and the current methods for recycling them either pollute the air (pyrometallurgy) or acidify the local waterways (hydrometallurgy) and both of these methods cost more money to recycle the batteries than to just mine more lithium. This project aims to find an eco-friendlier way of recycling lithium.

FOOD

Food projects explore ways to achieve food security and improved nutrition by promoting sustainable agriculture and local products



Roots Cafe 2024-0025

F1

Knockevin Special School

Knockevin pupils were shocked to discover how much food packaging, distribution and waste contributes to climate change. When our school built a new classroom to help us learn life skills, we decided to turn it into an Eco Café. We aimed to open this café to the school and local community to help spread some important messages. We researched and planned before opening and aimed to use our café to promote local, sustainable food with minimal waste. Our whole school motto is 'Together We Can Achieve More' and we have applied this to climate change. Every visitor to our café is able to see for themselves what actions we are taking and how they can help us to make a small difference to the environment. We regularly promote our eco messages on displays in the cafe, in school assemblies, with advertising on our posters and through social media. We chose the name 'Roots Café' because we believe that through developing our café we are developing 'roots to grow and wings to fly'. We have only started on our journey but we know that Roots will inspire many others and our café will grow and grow!

SustainApple Future 2024-0122

F2

Scoil Ruain

Our project aims was to raise awareness about the local and global issues around food. We learned about some of the problems associated with food. We didn't think that many people knew about these problems and we felt that they are very important and that everyone should know. We made a series of mini documentaries on food related issues. These will be shared on the school's social media page. They will be played for every class in the school. And we have invited the students from our local primary school up for a screening of our documentaries. We have purchased 30 Irish bare root Irish apple trees to start our very own school orchard. We have created an apple recipe book which encourages people to buy locally grown apples or even to grow their own. We surveyed every student in the school to find out their opinion and knowledge of food related issues. We intend to survey them again once we have finished our awareness campaign to see if there are changes in opinions or knowledge. Impacts: Students, parents, teachers and their families are much more aware of food, the problems associated with food production, and better ways to produce and consume food.

Veggie Venture 2024-0210

F3

Kinsale Community School

Our project aims to educate young people about the negative effects of importing vegetables and discouraging them from importing by encouraging them to grow their own vegetables. We are conducting workshops in local primary schools showing them how to plant their own fruit and vegetables at home in a fun and interactive way. So far we have gone to Dunderrow National School. We showed the pupils a PowerPoint about the environmental effects of importing vegetables. We also showed them how to plant their own vegetables and did a survey with them asking how many pupils had a garden and how many wanted one. We hope to raise awareness about the growing problem of large food imports and implement this easy fix into our daily lives. Growing your own vegetables can even be a calming recreational activity for most people and will help improve our upcoming generations' diet as our food is becoming more and more enhanced with chemicals and fats.

Food irradiation will save our nation! 2024-0258

F4

Coláiste Treasa Kanturk

We investigated how food irradiation can be utilised by farmers to preserve seasonal foods that often go to waste when not sold. This project highlights the lack of awareness, facilities and trust people have on food irradiation. Farmers have raised concerns about the levels of food waste that take place on their farms yearly resulting in a major loss to these farmers. Due to this, an increase in imports must be provided to meet the demands of our population, resulting in an increase in food miles. An increase in food miles leads to an increase in carbon dioxide released into our atmosphere, adding to the effects of climate change and the more we rely on foreign trade, the more imports we require and the more fossil fuels we consume. The actions carried out include a project questionnaire (issued to 503 respondents), an education pamphlet given to consumers and farmers and a post-pamphlet questionnaire (issued to 31 respondents) to test the effectiveness of the pamphlets and prove that food irradiation is a successful food preservation method that should be introduced into Ireland to reduce food wastage, food miles and the over-reliance on foreign trade for fresh, acceptable produce.

Be Impactors! Consider Sustainable Food FACTORS! 2024-0272

F5

Schull Community College

We found that sustainability wasn't a consideration when teenagers purchase food. So, we came up with this campaign whose aim is to deliver the needed skills-based education and boost awareness so that good habits can develop. Our 3 main goals are: to change the current negative perception of making sustainable habit changes when purchasing food, to increase young people's awareness of sustainability by educating and promoting symbols seen on food packaging and to increase people's knowledge on living more sustainably. Our research included online research, two surveys and two focus groups. They determined the problem and how to try to fix it. This showed the cruciality of skills-based education to change their perception of making changes. Lack of clarity and misinformation on packaging was another big issue, it deterred young people due to confusion. TDs and Senators were contacted about this. Our campaign involved workshops, social media, posters, leaflets, notices and letters around our school, locality and further afield. Our message throughout was to: Be Impactors! Consider Sustainable Food FACTORS! F – Form New Habits, A – Awareness, C – Carbon Neutral, T – Try New Brands, O – Organic, R – Recyclable Packaging, S – Sourced Locally.



Food Waste Management in GETSS 2024-0035
Goatstown Educate Together Secondary School

F6

Our project is about food waste management in Goatstown. Our aim is decreasing the food waste in our school and local community by doing research and using fun, interactive and unique ways to spread awareness. Food village is a service in our school, among many others, that provide students with lunches that they can order with money 2 days in advance and eat during lunch. However, a lot of the food that the students order is wasted. We raised awareness by making posters, sending out surveys, making a game which the people at our school could play and making a social media account where we posted info on food waste regularly.

TRANSPORT

Projects which look at the impacts of the transportation we use, more sustainable means of transport, etc.



Cycle Hawks 2024-0226
Mercy Secondary School Mounthawk

F7

Following up on from our Climate Conference last year, we are working on the Action Projects that our members came up with, beginning with our first action project this year, cycling to school. Our team is named Cycle Hawks and our focus this year is to incentivise students to cycle to school and show them the benefits of doing so. We created a video that helped promote cycling to schools and showcasing the new facilities available within our school to facilitate cycling. We are also in the process of reaching out to primary schools to be able to teach them about the benefits of cycling and to incentivize younger generations for them to have a healthy life. We created a petition for our local council to create safer routes to school and enhanced road safety measures. We had over 1200 people sign it, parents and students alike. The petition will be presented to the members of Kerry County Council at their next meeting on 4th March 2024.



Wheel for the Road 2024-0214
Loreto Secondary School Letterkenny

F8

Our goal is to create a safer and less congested road network to promote environmentally friendly transport, e.g. walking, cycling and even e-bikes/scooters. Reduced road congestion will greatly decrease the carbon emissions released to the atmosphere thereby reducing the environmental impact of road use (reducing Ireland's Carbon footprint). To raise awareness around these goals, we gave an educational speech to a First and Second-Year class in our school, carried out a survey regarding road safety and the environmental impacts of the road and we sent emails to politicians such as Joe McHugh, Eamonn Ryan and Heather Humphries, addressing these environmental issues and how they can help, for instance, through lobbying for improved funding for roads and rural areas. We noted that lack of funding affects road conditions especially in rural areas which account for 82% of road fatalities. Over 2000 people have been impacted by our actions in such little time. We have increased the people's knowledge of road safety & promoted eco- friendly traffic.



Greener Transport Ideas for the Garden of Ireland 2024-0276
Marino Community Special School

NA

The key goal of our project is to raise awareness of the negative impacts of single driver commuting and congested traffic on the N11/M11 route in Wicklow. We also promote alternative, greener and more efficient forms of transport, including carpooling and cycling. Through interviews and surveys, we found that there are limited public transport or cycling facilities in Wicklow since the DART system only covers the north of the County. Congestion also affects local towns and villages. Drivers become stressed and agitated which increases the possibility of accidents. Slow-moving vehicles wasteful of energy and damage the environment through emissions and noise pollution. The students have made a model to depict the heavy traffic that passes through the beautiful Glen O Downs. We concluded that use of single-drive vehicles is unsustainable. We recommend greater investment in greener forms of transport such as park and ride, bus, rail and cycle routes as well as promote sustainable travel options for instance use of public transport and cycling to school.



WATER

Water projects look at issues such as impacts of pollution in oceans or rivers, water scarcity or water waste

H2O Heroes 2024-0160

G1

Kinsale Community School

Our goal is to reduce the amount of paint water and plastic that is being poured down the drain as this is creating water pollution. We aim to change/ alter people's behaviour by informing them of the many ways plastic can get into the ocean without people realising that this could and will be happening as well as giving an alternate solution. We also aim to encourage filtering water before putting it back into our sewage system. We lastly hope to have most people in Cork using this water filter. As part of the project, we created a water filter and also had the opportunity to learn from attending the COP 24 Conference. We made impact by spreading awareness in the ways previously mentioned. We hope to increase that number as we have planned a load of future actions

Water Conservation and Pollution 2024-0162

G2

Glanmire Community College

Our Young Environmentalist project 2023/24 is based on the theme of Water Conservation & Preventing Pollution / Water waste. We decided as a group to take on this project as water is a vital human resource. Water is vital to our individual health and our collective agricultural needs, yet this is an extremely overlooked factor. Our aim was to encourage water conservation, while preventing water pollution and wasting of water. We did this by going to local primary schools to educate the younger generation, implementing ideal water habits into our daily lives, going on various river cleanings. We attended a beach clean-up to raise awareness of the dangers of water pollution and raising awareness to our community about countries who don't have easy access to water. We did this by organising walk for water. We had an impact on many people particularly the younger generations who became aware about water wastage and how some people aren't lucky enough to have access to water. We were able to add tags to our school water to decrease the water wastage from 400ml to less than 200ml. We were also able to bring pipe leaks around our to the attention the vice principal

Fast Fashion: its Effect on Water Pollution 2024-0143

G3

Our Lady of Mercy College Beaumont

We can clearly see that the big fashion organisations are not concerned about the environment at all, so it's time for us, the consumer, to make a stand. Our project involves hosting interactive workshops with other students in our school that highlight just how much we overconsume, especially when it comes to fashion. Through our workshops, we helped people realise that we do not need 50 pairs of shoes, or 20 pairs of jeans. Buying smarter is much better than buying more, both for the environment and our banks accounts! By buying more essentials, mixing and matching, and creating a theme to our wardrobe we can say no to fast fashion and its negative effects. Students got the opportunity to realise just how much you can do with simple items of clothing. Through this, students got the opportunity to ask questions; Would this item match with other items in my wardrobe? Will it last without any damage? Will this item only be worn in the summer, or can I wear it all year round? This project highlighted the issue of overconsumption in our school and hopefully spread beyond into the families of our students who participated in our workshops.

Don't E.co-lie to us 2024-0207

G4

ECO-UNESCO

We seek to reduce the levels of bacteria and waste in the coastal waters in Balbriggan so that it would be safe to swim in throughout the year. We want to do this by cleaning the Front Strand beach In Balbriggan and surrounding areas while getting in touch with the local and Fingal County Council to raise awareness. We will also attempt to test the water to discover the main polluters and see which action we need to take depending on the pollutants. When contacting our local councils about the issue we shall include clips of young people highlighting why they need the beach and why it needs addressing as a priority. Reducing the pollution in the area would help the community because they rely on the beach for entertainment, especially young people as Balbriggan has the youngest population in Ireland. We want to make sure that the water is safe for bathing by reducing waste and cleaning the water. This would help improve the scenery and attract tourists thereby raising local businesses' incomes. Fishermen would be able to fish in areas of clean water that aren't affected by pollution. This benefits us as sea life in polluted waters can absorb toxins and chemicals from the pollution which could then cause illness to people when consumed



Hydro Heroes 2024-0105

G5

Mercy College Sligo

Our project is intended to promote sustainable living by reducing unnecessary water wastage within our school community. We intend to do this by designing and creating two rainwater harvesters, one beside our polytunnel to water our plants and the second one beside the art room to wash paintbrushes. We want to build these harvesters because we found while watering our polytunnel there was a lot of treated water being used which we could substituted for rainwater. Younger members of our green schools also came to us with concerns around the unnecessary water wastage when cleaning paint brushes. We brought a passionate group of students together who were dedicated to completing this project to the highest standard. We started researching schools who had installed rainwater harvesters to find the best way to go about it. After compiling a list of materials, we sent an appeal out to families of students in our school to collect rainwater. We cooperated with our technology and art departments in our school to get students and teachers to work together in making a difference in our school. We impacted our community by bringing people together to inform them on sustainable living.

The Large Scale Application of Solar Stills 2024-0283

NA

Salesian Secondary College

We have put together a research project into the application of solar distillation in providing clean drinking water to developing countries and disaster zones. We aimed to put together a plausible plan on how to teach people in struggling areas how to build their own solar stills, allowing them to purify their own water. We began with researching different solar still designs, deciding on a single pane design for us to model, due to its simplicity and how easy it would be to replicate. We then gathered information on the countries that could make the most use of this technology, before selecting Sierra Leone as our case study. We went on to detail a few plans on how solar stills could be applied in Sierra Leone and in disaster zones, along with a separate plan to finance it. As a part of our financing plan, we designed a demonstration website to show how we could execute our plan. We brought our project to BT Young Scientist to raise awareness to the problem and bring attention to our solution. We did not receive any prizes, but received quite a bit of press attention, raising awareness for our project.

WASTE

Waste projects explore our consumption and production patterns, and how to reduce waste

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



Swap with Style 2024-0057

G6

St Cecilians' College, Derry

Our goal was to reduce textile waste and create awareness about "fast fashion" through a termly clothing swap shop in our school called "Swap with Style". We aim to change attitudes around wearing second-hand clothing among teenagers by renaming them to "sustainable fashion" and "preloved fashion". We created a concept note detailing how the project would work. One brings a clothing item and receive a ticket to then leave with something of your choice from the shop. No money would be exchanged! We thought that we would trial it and then other schools could follow our lead. The feedback has been outstanding! In our first swap shop before Christmas, 277 items were swapped! That's 277 less items into landfill/oceans. Also, economically it proved really viable in this current cost of living crisis and the fact that we are a school in Creggan, a socially deprived area of Derry. More swap shops were planned to increase our reach and impact. It has had a profound impact on our school and the wider community as pupils are now happy to own preloved clothing and are more likely to think sustainably in all their consumer choices.

Fixing Fashion 2024-0138

G7

Meán Scoil Nua an Leigh Trúigh

Our project is raising awareness towards fast fashion via our social media platforms on Instagram and Tik Tok. We came together as a group because we all have an interest in the issue surrounding the fast fashion industry. Everyone had an interest to enter the Young Environmentalist Awards as we had heard that students from previous years in our school entered and were successful. Our aims as a group are to open people's eyes on the damage that the production of clothes to a high mass has on the environment and developing economies. We held multiple swap shops, clothing collections, organised guest speakers, wrote an article for local newspapers and hung multiple informative posters up around our school. 'Fixing Fashion' has definitely made us all aware of the damages of clothing on the environment and as a determined group we are doing what we can to make our school and local community aware of this and what we are doing to combat it.

HURRY UP AND LEAF 2024-0279

G8

Cashel Community School

Across the world, we know that leaves are a big problem for everyone. Gathering leaves or leaving them on the lawn is a big issue. Gathering them requires energy, space and time while leaving them on the lawn results in dead grass and a loss of nutrients to the soil. We identified a possible all natural, non-toxic, organic solvent that would decompose leaves on a lawn while allowing the lawn to benefit from the leaves' nutritious properties. We noted that existing equipment (leaf blower, lawnmower) are not environmentally friendly as they give off harmful carbon emissions. We aim to halt this through our organic solvent. For our solution, we focused mostly on repurposing waste products such as beet tops, fish offal, yeast, slurry and vegetable compost as throwing out of such products can also be an issue. By using waste products, we could repurpose them. We set up a controlled testing environment, tested 360 leaves with 6 different solutions which we ran for 3 weeks and then subjected them to 3 different testing modalities: tensile, compression and visual.

Mother Natures Minions 2024-0111

H1

Mountmellick Community School

Last year in our school we introduced recycling bins into every classroom. We found that the bins weren't being used properly and when we were emptying them, we sometimes would have to go through all the rubbish to separate it. This year we decided to try to get the recycling up and running properly this time. We made signs to go beside each bin in every classroom, stating clearly what could be put in the recycling and what could not. We also introduced recycling bins into our canteen and the staff room to encourage the teachers to get involved too. We started shredding any paper that we found in the bins and one of our teachers is now recycling this shredded paper and using it as bedding for his cattle. We also targeted electricity waste by running a campaign asking teachers to switch off lights and computers after each class. We tried to reduce the use of aerosols with posters and by raising awareness of the harmful effects they have on both people and the environment. Our final project is to run a swap shop at Easter of this year to raise awareness of fast fashion and the effect it is having on our environment.

School Wide Recycling and Upcycling Project 2024-0159

H2

Ballyclare High School

We decided upon our unique and creative plant pot upcycle project, which involved collecting and repurposing plastic bottles which we found scattered throughout our school, Ballyclare High School. Through cutting the bottles in half, we successfully rejuvenated these otherwise "useless pieces of litter", thus preventing it from harming the environment. As an ECO team, we therefore fulfilled our aim of protecting our local environment by reusing the plastic bottles and turning them into plant pots and water funnels for classrooms and the school greenhouse. Many members of the team acted through sharing our creations with the wider community in a local charity shop (Hope365). It was chosen as a perfect location to promote our project as we both share similar aims of reusing what once may have been regarded useless. Furthermore, in our efforts to showcase our project to a wide range of people in our communities, the project was also shared in Glenabbey church. We wholeheartedly believe that our project has not only reduced waste, impacted on the classroom learning environment and improved airflow but has also impacted the ECO team positively as we invested time and resources, we and reaped in the rewards, as the community now has less waste.

TRENDY THRIFTING 2024-0196

H3

Terence MacSwiney Community College

We aim to promote secondhand clothes shopping especially among young people to reduce landfill and make thrifting trendy. Being Stylish shouldn't cost the Earth! We started a SWOP Shop where students and staff can shop or swap old clothes. We held a sustainable fashion show with donated clothes from our community and clothes on loan from our local St. Vincent de Paul. On the day, staff and students modelled the outfits and students also read out facts about fast fashion and the dangers to the environment. We started weekly Instagram reels "Thrifty Thursday" where we interview staff and students on their thrifted outfits and "Student Styles" where we advertise our swap shop products to students and staff. We made a poster showing things we communally re-use, like restaurant cutlery and challenged people to do the same with clothes for instance from a secondhand shop. We are working on our Interactive Sustainable Shopping Map of Cork City which shows videos of where you can shop sustainably in Cork (drawn and filmed by students). More and more students are open to the idea of shopping secondhand and it is gaining popularity. Many students and staff have used our swap shop.



Guardians of the Owendoher 2024-0179 **Rockbrook Park School**

H4

The Owendoher is our school's river. A school can be a hotspot for litter because of the students who go there five days a week. Through our project we hope to decrease the amount of waste going into the sea through the Owendoher and keep the river clean. We schedule litterpicks regularly and we have an awareness campaign underway. We also want to spread awareness to our local communities and discourage littering nearby our local rivers. We also plan to measure the water quality as part of the Globe Ireland River Ecosystem Campaign.



Green Clean 2024-0281 **St John Bosco Community College**

H5

Our project is about the use of cotton pads and the waste they create. The aim of our project is to reduce the amount of waste caused by these cotton pads and any alternatives that can help with this. We are going to share a survey with people asking about their use of cotton pads. We are also planning on creating a poster campaign by hanging up posters made by us around school to spread awareness about our project and the effect these cotton pads can have on the environment. We hope to create an ad campaign by advertising our project on our local radio station Clare FM to help bring awareness to the issues discussed in our project. We propose to hold a Kahoot quiz. Our project will help to influence people to use reusable cotton pads, this will save them money in the long run as well as helping reduce waste that ends up in land fill.



Gaia 2024-0204 **Youth Climate Justice Programme**

H6

Gaia is a waste-based project which focuses on combatting the effects of fast fashion and spreading awareness of the effects of the fast fashion industry and the consequences for humanity if it continues at the same pace it has been. Our aims for this project are to: Educate people about the fast fashion industry, its causes, consequences and how we can stop it including; upcycling old clothes into new, fashionable pieces which people can wear day-to-day; keeping existing garments in proper shape and teach others how to maintain their clothing; having an impact on the fashion industry to stop the current, everchanging trends and slow the cycle down and finally, having fun! We've raised awareness in various ways including workshops with 1st and 2nd years to having an Instagram and even performing at the Earth Gala run by ECO-UNESCO. We've also raised awareness about the environment and fast fashion during the litter picks we volunteer in. Gaia has impacted us in various ways and will leave an impression on us until the end of our lives. Our community has benefitted from it with us tidying it up and we've developed tons of skills from participating in the YEA as Gaia.



Paper Pioneers 2024-0125 **St Mary's Academy CBS**

H7

Our project looks deep into the recycling that goes on in our schools or our homes. Our aim is to raise awareness and improve recycling in our schools and our homes. The action that has been carried out was simple but effective. From each class we picked two groups of two students to go around our school collecting the recyclable rubbish. When the group was finished, they came back to the class, and then we weighed the rubbish that have been collected per floor of the school. The bins that were in the classes were specifically for the material that could be recycled. We also labelled the bins with posters that read 'RECYCLING' or 'WASTE' in front of it so people can see what bins are for recycled material. Firstly, to increase awareness of our project across our school community we put posts about our work on school Social Media sites and we emailed all the teachers to encourage them to come on board with our project. Gradually, we saw the weight of the recycled bins going higher which showed us that these bins that are in the different classes are having a positive effect. The result came out too 30.4kg which is equivalent to 729.6 trees that we have saved from just within our school. We are delighted with our results.

Fantastic Fashion 2024-0211

Loreto Secondary School Letterkenny

Our YEA project is based on waste and its detrimental environmental impact on our planet. For our project, we are focusing on fast fashion. We aim to raise awareness about this issue and we aspire to reduce the environmental impact of waste. We set up a stall for two days where students and staff could donate old, second-hand clothes. To entice people to join in and participate, we gave out free lollipops and treats to those who donate. After everyone got the chance to give in their clothes, we collaborated with another group who shared the same concern with us which was waste. We provided them with the clothes we had collected and they displayed them around our Concert Hall, allowing people to peruse and bring home what they want. The remainder of clothes that were not taken home were donated to charity. As well as that, we established a voluntary donations box at the clothes swap. Proceeds that were accumulated were donated them along with the clothes.



Deadly effects of vapes but what about the environment 2024-0257

11

Marist College

Our project, "Deadly effects of vapes: but what about the environment" aims to spread awareness on the effects of vaping to the human body and the environment. From our research, we discovered that not only is it wasteful in vape production but also in their disposal. Whilst researching we also found out that most of the worlds vapes are made in China, meaning they have to be sent around the world to their customers thousands of miles away. Planes emit a lot of CO2, boats create even more for it to be shipped on a boat it can take weeks. Weeks of a boat on the move is weeks of pollution being left in its wake. Vapes whilst some hold the name "Disposable" they are far from being disposable or at least being disposable safely. The batteries contain harmful acids and the casing is plastic meaning it has to be disposed of correctly in bins such as wee bins. However, a lot of underage vapers are too scared of being caught by their parents to bin them correctly.



The Waste Bankers 2024-0082

12

Patrician Academy Malrow

To reduce waste in our school and community, we undertook research and used statistics, talks and actions in schools, youth groups and the community in our area. We spoke to the Tidy Towns group in our town to co-ordinate litter picks. We collaborated with our Green Schools committee to organised proper disposal of general waste, recycling and compost by sorting a new system of bins in the social areas of our new school building. We organised a guest speaker to talk about Sustainability in the home. We gave a PowerPoint presentation to the different classes in the school about waste and this helped us raise awareness of our issue with other students. We were involved in organising the schools Global Citizenship week activities which were based on the 17 Sustainable Global Goals (SDGs). We were involved in organising the quiz in which some of the rounds were related to waste and sustainability. We fielded a trip to the Meals on Wheels unit in the town to see how they package their food and handle their waste. Our project had a significant impact on our school community. We have been successful in helping change the way waste is disposed of in our school and we have raised awareness around the issue through our various actions – talks, presentations, newspaper articles and events.



NOTSOFRANKANDHONEST 2024-0271

13

Kinsale Community School

This is a continuation project from 2023. Last year we started by testing the bio-degradability of biodegradable products and their effects on soil fertility. We found out that some bio products have a negative effect on our environment. This is bad as bio products are seen as the 'solution for pollution'. We could not let this slide and ended last year spreading awareness to around 12,000 people. This year we tested how bio microplastics from FrankandHonest coffee cup lids affect a plant's overall structure. We did this by planting 500 cress seeds. Half of them were planted regularly in brown earth soil the other 250 had the bio microplastics contaminated in the brown earth soil. We then conducted three experiments to contrast the plants and concluded some disturbing results. As of now we have only presented this project at the BT and some classes in our school. We plan on spreading these results to as many people as possible as they are not made aware of the associated problems. Big Businesses falsely claim that their products are making a difference. We have attempted to contact FrankandHonest numerous times and we wont stop until they change their ungreen ways.



Vape Vanquishers; The New Era of Smoking Litter 2024-0135

14

Glanmire Community College

We investigated whether vape or cigarette associated litter causes more waste pollution. We carried out three beach cleans and three river cleans as well as a clean of our local area. The objectives being to establish a baseline of data that can be used in further investigations about vaping litter and to raise more awareness around vaping associated litter, a new type of litter that is on the rise. Cigarette associated litter is more difficult to pick up than some other forms of waste such as cans or bottles, etc. that is why we also wanted to bring more attention to this type of litter. On the cleans that we carried out we brought out 25-30 students from our Green Schools committee to help us clean the areas. We used equipment such as litter pickers, gloves, plastic bags and data sheets provided by Clean Coasts which we adapted to include vaping litter. This project has had a major impact on not only us but the whole Green Schools community. We have noticed an increase in awareness of our peer's knowledge of vape and cigarette litter as they have been actively looking for it during our cleans.

MyGug: Our School's Food Waste Cycle 2024-0251

15

Kinsale Community School

Kinsale Community School has an enormous population of almost fifteen hundred. Food waste is a massive problem in our school. Last year, our school got a fantastic piece of technology, the MyGug, which converts food waste into biogas and fertiliser, but it was going almost totally unused, as students didn't know what it was or how they could use it. We decided to change this with our project. Our main goal was to create a totally circular food waste economy in KCS. We started this by spreading awareness. We reached out to secondary and primary students, sending out surveys, running a design competition, poster campaign and giving presentations to secondary and primary students. The most important steps were those of action. Once the student population understood MyGug, we had to make it accessible to them. We did this by sourcing food waste bins throughout our school so that every scrap of food waste could be collected and fed to MyGug. All this waste was then converted to biogas and fertiliser. The fertiliser was used to grow fruit and vegetables in our school green house, which were then cooked by our Home Economics classes, using MyGug's biogas.

Reduce Litter in SJBC 2024-0024

16

St John the Baptist's College

We all know that littering is a problem. Every day, we see trash scattered around the school grounds leaving our school looking untidy and having a negative impact on our environment. We have a responsibility to ensure that our school is a clean and safe environment. We spend a significant amount of time here so it is our duty to take care of it. How can we make a difference and litter less in our school? Firstly, we looked at our own habits. We made a conscious effort to properly dispose of our rubbish and encourage everyone to use bins in the area. We also have taken part in a community litter pick. It may seem like a small action but it can go a long way in keeping our school clean. Secondly, we were mindful of the waste we generate. Therefore, we encouraged the use of reusable water bottles and containers instead of buying single-use ones. Furthermore, we organized school-wide clean-up events. This will not only help us to maintain a clean school but also create a sense of responsibility and pride in our surroundings. Lastly, let's lead by example!

Eco-Education 2024-0114

NA

Coláiste Chiaráin

For our project we are discovering the importance of recycling in our homes, school and in the workplace. Our reasoning for picking recycling as our topic came from us observing the lack of people putting the correct items into the right bin. After careful thought, consideration and idea generation we concluded that we should pick waste as our chosen topic as not only have we seen people not doing proper waste separation in our school but we also feel this is the most interesting topic to research and look into as we feel not enough work has been done to promote proper recycling. Our action plan is to firstly, make a poster to put on the announcement board in the gp area of our school. By doing this we are reaching a lot of students as everyone in the morning or at break passes through the gp area. Secondly, we will go around to all the first-year classes and present them with a slideshow. This will give them an in-depth view of how to properly recycle and teach them on what bins they should be using based on their recycling.

Thornhill College

The project aims to educate our school and community about fast fashion and its devastating impacts it has on our environment. We educated staff and students on how they can still dress fashionably while using alternative, eco-friendly options. We did Google searches, we listened to our teachers and we also watched documentaries on fast fashion found on the Eco schools' website, True Cost and Inside the Shein Machine. We then devised a virtual assembly which was shown across the whole school. We encouraged students and staff to second hand, shop on eBay, Vinted and our swap shop. We produced posters to encourage our school community to buy second hand on the lead up to Christmas. We encouraged people to make Christmas decorations from recycled materials, showed them how to make their own Christmas neck garlands and hairbands and even the instructions on how to make their own Shrinky key rings. Guides were posted on Year group Google Classrooms so they could all access them. We made people aware of this event through our social media accounts, through posters on school notice boards. Our work has had a massive positive impact on other students and the community.



CLIMATE CHANGE

Waste projects explore our consumption and production patterns, and how to reduce waste

13 CLIMATE ACTION



Pit or Bales... Which is more sustainable? 2024-0252

H9

Millstreet Community School

Our aim with our project was to find out which method of silage was more environmentally, socially and economically friendly. We firstly made a survey on Microsoft forms and sent them to various farmers around our local area, Duhallow. We got over four hundred responses. We then interviewed contractors to find out how much they charge for the services to farmers (e.g.: Fertiliser/slurry spreading, mowing, tedding, raking, baling, wrapping, drawing, stacking, pit-covering). We went through the results and analysed the data by separating the farmers who do pit and bale silage, pit only, and bale only and compared the cost for both silage making processes. They are quite similar. We then interviewed Irish Farm Film Producers Group (IFFPG) regarding what happens to the silage after it has been dropped off to the collection points. They helped us to understand where the plastic goes and how it is cleaned. We interviewed Sharon Barrington of IFF Plastics Limited

How green are the local GAA clubs? Comparing the carbon footprints of our rural GAA clubs 2024-0255

H10

Presentation College Headford

The biggest intention of our project was to measure the carbon footprints of two GAA clubs. With climate change so prevalent, we thought that this should be studied. Research into this issue showed this is the first real study of GAA clubs and their environmental impact. We calculated oil and electrical emissions by analysing club energy bills. Travel was calculated by sending a survey to nearly 1,000 club members. The survey got a large response, with 300+ respondents. Using survey data, we calculated the carbon impact of travel by creating a formula that calculates an individual's emissions. Our project has shown that the clubs have large environmental impacts. In the Caherlistrane club, nearly 440,000 km were driven for one season, while Annaghdown had a carbon footprint of 53,397 kg of CO2. If all clubs have the same carbon footprint as these two clubs, then GAA accounts for a yearly 111,000,000 kg of CO2 (roughly 0.2% of Ireland's emissions). We have suggestions that clubs can use to lower emissions. We will be presenting emissions reports to our clubs, and people are considering carpooling "in the spirit of our project". Our project reached 260,000+ people, spreading awareness.

Eco-friendly Adventures 2024-0237

H11

Eureka Secondary School

Our project aims to educate children on climate change and how we can help slow global warming and what they can do to be more sustainable through a board game. We took a survey on a group of children aging from 6-13 for our project. The winner is one who finishes the fastest. The game has a spinner and cards that tell you ways to help or harm the climate and how many steps you can move backwards or forwards in accordance with the action on the card. The game will educate people about simple ways to help combat climate change. We listened to speeches online by experts, read our school textbooks and read articles online. We completed a survey, analysed the results and answered any questions the young people that took the survey may have had. We believe that our project had an important impact on our communities. We have educated young people who took the survey about actions to take to help our planet, we have made TikTok and Instagram accounts to continue to raise awareness and bring new attention to this issue.



Cois Fharrage to COP28 2024-0215 Coláiste Chroí Mhuire AND Coláiste Cholmcille

H12

Our project seeks to raise awareness of climate change and how it will affect us- the young people of Cois Fharrage in the west coast of Ireland particularly our shore and the bog. Our aim was to raise awareness of these two immense carbon sinks which when mistreated result in dire consequences. We attended workshops organised by speakers from the community, including academics, activists, artists, farmers and university of Galway to learn about the topic. We then wrote an open letter we read on video, showing beautiful shots of the landscape and highlighting how much our world will change due to climate change. Our school organised 8 glass panels of images and information to be hung in a central, visible location. These eye-catching panels celebrate the 8 unique habitats in our area daily remind us to take every opportunity possible to prevent and reverse the effects of climate change. This experience showcased the views of young people on the topic of climate change and increased awareness in the community on how climate change would impact our locality. We were also delighted that our project would have a global impact when our open letter was viewed at COP28 - turning our local views into global reflections.

Climate Change is NOW, so Climate Action is NOW 2024-0291 The Institute of Education

H13

We sought to address humanity's greatest challenge - the existential crisis amidst climate change. From our involvement with climate action in our communities as well as a countless amounts of research, we have begun to recognise a problem that has been preventing people from taking the necessary action on climate change and that has stopped them from playing their part in combating the climate crisis. That problem involves the mindset of understanding that climate change is an issue for the future since we will probably not experience the effects of it in our time. We know that these ideas have serious negative repercussions, so, we took matters into our own hands. We carried out a large-scale scientific study that puts climate change into real-time by showing how the Irish climate has already changed. We examined Met Eireann data from the past 60 years to explain the impact of this change. With use of our project, we hope to inspire a movement of action amongst the Irish people. By showing people that climate change is happening NOW, we're enforcing a brand-new mindset that "the time for action is NOW".

An Environmental Performance Index for Counties of Ireland 2024-0173 Millstreet Community School

H14

Our goals include spreading awareness about problems in the environment to make it clear to counties in Ireland on what they can improve in order to help them do their part to save the environment. Our project ranks counties based on their environmental performances using an altered version of the Yale Environmental Practices Index (Yale EPI) to suit our investigation. This will allow counties to see first-hand data on how they are performing in certain aspects that affect our climate. We started by gathering our data and organising it in the excel sheet. The next step was the ranking and once this was done, we went about communicating our results. To raise awareness, we set up an Instagram account and we spoke about the project with the junior years in our school. We went to local primary schools, contacted the local newsfeed and most importantly told every county council. Our project impacted counties in Ireland by making them aware of simple things that they can improve on. Our community supported us allowing us to spread the word! Our project made us closer friends and helped us learn more about our country and the environment.

ECO-HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Projects which explore the link between our health (physical and emotional wellbeing) and the environment we live in



Benefits of nature and gardening on mental health and wellbeing 2024-0086

H15

Mercy College Coolock

Our project is on eco-health and wellbeing. We have a polytunnel in our school which needs some maintenance before we can plant our fruit and veg. This has been ongoing for the last few weeks. While we were cleaning the polytunnel, 4ths planted beans in newspaper pots which grew on the windowsill in their classroom. We have aligned our project with sustainable goals 3 (Health and Well Being), 13 (Health and Climate Action) and 15 (Biodiversity and Ecosystems). Growing your food helps to reduce carbon footprints, food waste and plastic pollution related to food production. It also helps to reduce noise pollution as vegetation absorbs sound by acting as a natural sound barrier. We hope that by promoting gardening/ planting in our school and within the wider school/family communities we shall benefit on mental health and wellbeing as well as the benefits on the environment. We plan to speak at school assemblies, have a gardening club at lunchtime and invite grand(parents) and some of the members of the local community to plant with us.

Making Mercy Marvellous 2024-0244

110

Mercy College Coolock

We felt there was a need to tackle multiple social issues to truly help and improve the school - to make 'Mercy' marvelous! Together we decided to tackle and improve our community, wellbeing of fellow students, promote health and sports. To improve our community and social wellbeing of students we cleaned up and renewed our outdoor area and the mural to make it an appealing and comfortable place for students to go outside during lunch with their friends. To promote healthy eating and bring more healthy food options available to students in our school, we introduced fruit pots, and also brought in a card machine so all students can buy a healthy lunch in the canteen as most students don't carry cash around anymore, but would rather have Revolut account or debit card. There was a lack of sports available in our school, so we brought in badminton during lunch to encourage students to participate and play with other students. This also helped encouraged and presented an opportunity for female students participation in sports.

Raising Awareness of PM2.5 - It Affects Us All 2024-0278

111

St Finian's College

We have designed a sensor using an Arduino and a PM2.5 sensor to show how high levels of PM2.5 are. This sensor is to be placed at various outdoor training locations. This is so that people with underlying health conditions can judge whether or not it is safe for them to train, due to high levels of PM2.5. We initially decided to investigate how much PM2.5 people were exposed to at various outdoor training locations in Mullingar, these being the athletics club, soccer club, rugby club and tennis club. We found that the levels at the athletics club were particularly high and that it would be a good idea for people to know how high these levels are as they could impact people, especially those with health conditions. We presented our findings to our year group and to many other classes in our school. We also sent out a survey to all students in our school to determine their awareness of air pollution. Our project would impact people who train outdoors as it would notify them of how high levels of PM2.5 are and they would be able to judge whether it would be safe for them to train.

Deodorant 101- A Solution to Pollution 2024-0253

112

St Mary's College, Arklow

We wanted to investigate what effect changing our deodorant could have on the environment and the effect on our overall health. We have researched the types of deodorant being used by adolescents and adults and were stunned to see the amount of chemicals in the ingredients list. Deodorant has many known effects on the environment. These include water pollution from triclosan washing off our bodies into our waters and air pollution as high as emissions from today's trucks, cars or aluminium that is derived from strip mining bauxite ore. We have made our own natural deodorant that has the same purpose as any deodorant filled with chemicals can (thus it prevents body odour and eases sweat without polluting). This potentially creates a solution to the pollution from deodorant and its potential harm to the human body. We gathered as much data as possible on what the best brand is, the most effective and best price deodorant to come up with our own brand. We made our own natural and home-made deodorant and tested it against the most used roll-on, spray and other deodorant to see which one is the most effective at preventing smells and sweat.

A campaign to Reduce Nitrous Gases in our School Community 2024-0225

113

St Brigid's College

Our project aims to lower the nitrous dioxides in our school atmosphere to protect our student's health by preventing people from idling (stopping with their motors on) outside of our school. We placed probes in two different areas of our school to measure the nitrous gases level in those areas. Probe A was placed by the roadside, the most congested area during drop offs and pick-ups. With most of our students waiting there at knock-off time, we anticipated the nitrous gases level to be higher. Probe B was closer to the school, where congestion is less. Here, we predicted that the nitrous gases level would be lower. These probes were sent to a lab to be measured. When we received our results, our assumptions were confirmed. We have gone to the County Council about this to prevent the school buses from idling, we have designed a big four foot squared board to be placed outside of our school, warning them not to idle. We have placed posters both around our school and on our school's social media to raise awareness and finally, we plan to go to our school board about preventing our students from waiting by the road, where the nitrous gases are higher, instead, encouraging them to wait closer to the school. We hope all this will reduce the level of nitrous dioxides and help to protect our students.



The Scenic Sensory Garden 2024-0100 Kinsale Community School

114

The aim of The Scenic Sensory Garden project was to set up a sensory garden in our school. We wanted to spread awareness and discuss the benefits of it. Our group scouted a spot in our school. After speaking with the school caretaker and chosen our plot, we contacted a guest speaker, who guided us on the best way to go about starting the garden and gave us more valuable information. We learnt about the best flora to use and about eco design. To spread awareness, we plan to speak with a local primary school about our project along with first years at our school. Our group also plans to speak with the students on the special needs unit and we plan to get them involved. We set up a social media account to spread the word and to keep people posted on all our work. The actions we took will result in our school having a new sensory garden and will spread awareness of how it affects our mental wellbeing and its importance in schools.

Project Air 2024-0095 Ronanstown Youth Service & ECO-UNESCO

115

Our concept, Project Air, aims to raise awareness and educate young people on the harmful effects of vaping towards the environment and our physical and mental health. The actions we took, in tackling this project, were carefully investigated and researched. We took on the responsibility of reaching out to WEE Ireland to supply our local youth centre with recyclable vape/ battery boxes. We also made a fun educational video to share the effects vaping has on the environment and people's health. We previously worked with our South Dublin Comhairle ná nÓg on a year-long project on vaping. That previous experience and knowledge pushed us towards this topic for our YEA project since we already have a drive and motivation for this pressing issue, we were excited when the opportunity came up for us because it meant we could continue some of the work that we had done previously. It was also a opportunity to learn more about vaping.

SUPER JUNIORS

Beach Clean 2024-0129 Mahoney Family

17

We picked marine litter from the beaches in Co. Clare and Co. Galway. We asked for sponsorship from our friends and family for our work and to give the money raised to an environmental charity. We told people about the damage marine pollution does to sea creatures and encourage them to pick litter too. We picked litter from 5 beaches over 4 months. We raised sponsorship money on GoFundMe to give to The Friends of the Earth charity. We spoke with beach visitors about our work and encouraged them to pick litter too. We made a Google slides show and 'Scratch' type pollution game to present to the children in Ardahan NS 3rd to 6th classes and their teachers. We made a work of art with rubbish collected from the beach. We made the beaches better places for the sea life and for visitors to enjoy. As evidence of our effectiveness, we raised money for an environmental charity, we taught the children in our community about the damage pollution causes to the sea creatures. We learned about the effects of pollution and are determined to continue collecting rubbish on a regular basis from the beaches near us.

Embracing the Dark 2024-0240 Nature Inspires

18

Our project is 'Embracing the Dark'. Its aim is to look into the topic of dark skies and why it matters for the environment, animals and humans alike. We learnt a lot about the 'dark sky' and why it is important to protect the environment. We spread the information around our families. Exploring the bog and forest at night was a weekly adventure. Lighting a safe fire, sitting around it and roasting marshmallows was a treat. We went on a bat walk and an ecologist came out during our last meeting. He told us all about moths and their role within the environment and importance for biodiversity. We learned that there are over 1,500 species of moths in Ireland. Some moths look very spectacular like the poplar hawk moth, and some are very difficult to identify. Each one of us did some research within their designated theme. We did a lot of practice videos which most of the time finished off with giggles. The biggest impact would be if we can convince local representatives to do a map where people can admire a near enough unpolluted sky in and around the Ox mountains...weather permitting. Therefore, we wrote letters to various people who might be able to help us. We hope some of these politicians, climate action officer, and dark sky experts will support us.

Save Our Environment from Early Retirement 2024-0108 Ardnagrath National School

Our project is to create awareness of not just the devastating effects oil products on the environment but also how the extraction of the oil, gas and other natural minerals causes to the earth's core and the disasters that occur as a result. Our research highlighted these resulting effects; earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes and heating up of the earth's surface. In different areas of the world this is leading to huge loss of life, destruction of our built and natural environment. We raised awareness by presenting findings to all children and staff in the school. Parents put our project on Facebook and the school website. Our Junior Mayor lobbied local councillors and a motion was put to the Council to provide rented bicycles in key areas in the town to reduce use of cars. In an event in TUS University Athlone we exhibited our project, talked about our concerns and shared our ideas for a solution. Knowledge is power. Pupils and parents have renewed eagerness to reduce, reuse, recycle, save energy, use alternative means of transport and reduce their carbon footprint.



Sustainable Travel for the Future 2024-0200 Scoil Mhuire, Monivea

The Green School Committee's Walkability Audit and Walk to School Week showed us that parents were worried about their kids walking in the village as it wasn't safe. We know that it is difficult to walk from the school to the playground safely. We did Sustainable Travel Workshops with An Taisce and learned about travel solutions in different places. We wanted to come up with a solution to the problem in our village and to talk to someone who could help us to make the changes needed to have a village that is safer to walk around. This means that there will be fewer car journeys which is better for the environment. We created a model of the village, using recycled materials and then added in some solutions to make the village safer to walk around. We contacted a local County Councillor to share our ideas with him. We are hoping our ideas will be used in the County Council's plans for the village



Lifting the Liberties 2024-0103 Francis Street School

We are finding ways we can help improve our local community. These problems included the lack of access to care facilities for working horses in the city, the poor state of the Oliver Bond flats and the issue of homelessness. To do this, we working as a whole school community to build a prototype of an invention which would help solve the three problems. These models are prototypes, they represent what we wish could be made if backing and funding was provided. We were mindful of including parents, an expert, pupils and teachers.



Upcycling Our Sensory Garden 2024-0125 Ballybay Youth Club YWICM

Our project is called Upcycling Our Sensory Garden. This project aims utilise our creativity in raising awareness of the environmental effects of waste as well as highlighting the importance of upcycling. We also want to present to people ways of turning unwanted items into something useful. We want members of our youth club to make use of our garden and the items that we upcycled. Our group raised awareness by going out to and discussing about the project with the local community groups, for example, the men's shed and the Ballybay town team. We also used our social media to post pictures to keep everyone updated on our progress and to show them different ways to upcycle. Our project has gained recognition around our community within our primary school and the youth club as many of our peers are now interested in carrying out upcycling projects.





Water Quality in our Community 2024-0189

J4

St Raphael's NS

Our goal was to test the water quality in our locality. We live near many water sources in Dublin and often see litter in the water. This made us ask the question; is the water good quality? We took water samples from nearby water sources, The Liffey, The Royal Canal and Sandymount Beach. We then tested the water for its PH, temperature and its turbidity or appearance. We found the water quality of the Canal and Liffey was okay but not excellent. We also tested bottled and tap later and found the tap water to have better quality. We presented our findings in projects through graphs, bar charts and information posters. They were then presented across the school, on the school podcast and at the RDS Science blast exhibition, as well as writing to the local newspaper. We raised awareness on how to improve water quality by picking up litter at a local level while also highlighting the governments need to address agriculture and factories polluting our waters.

Creating a Biodiversity Garden 2024-0176

J5

Kinaffe National School

With our project, we aimed to educate ourselves about the importance of biodiversity conservation, waste reduction, and sustainable practices; to promote sustainable waste management practices within the school community; to create habitats for bees, birds, and butterflies etc, to preserve and restore natural habitats to support wildlife populations and ecosystem health and to raise awareness about the critical role of pollinators in food production and ecosystem functioning. We learnt about the ecological benefits of trees, such as providing oxygen, regulating temperature, and preventing soil erosion, while actively participating in tree planting activities to improve local green spaces. We assigned bin inspectors and organised litter-picking activities to maintain a clean and litter-free environment on school grounds and locality. In addition, we separate bins for different types of waste (e.g., recycling, compost, landfill) in each classroom to promote proper waste segregation and to encourage recycling and composting. Students and staff now turn off lights to reduce electricity consumption and minimizing carbon footprint, conserve water by turning off taps. We planted trees and are maintaining a garden to enhance biodiversity, providing habitat for wildlife, and creating outdoor learning opportunities. Our project empowers our refugee students to take an active role in shaping their school environment and contributing to positive change.



Cool biodiverse school! 2024-0184

J6

Gaelscoil Iarfhilthá

The goal of this project was to increase awareness of biodiversity in our school population and to play our part in making our school grounds rich in habitats. We started by surveying our school population and we came to the conclusion that hardly anyone in our school knew what biodiversity was. We organised 2 guest speakers on 2 separate occasions to explore the school grounds and investigate the various habitats. We erected bird feeders, along with pictures of the various birds that visit the grounds. Senior Infants took part in Birdwatch Ireland Irish Garden Birds Survey. We built a bug hotel, planted pollinators, which we received from our local County Council, left an area for wildflowers, erected signs to help us identify the trees in the school grounds and created a no mow area. We got Benny to come to the school and show us how to dissect a squid and discuss marine life with us. We ran a photo competition and had a prize for the best picture depicting nature/biodiversity. We used our noticeboard, emails and Facebook page to create awareness. Visitors to the school read our signage, our students are discussing biodiversity with their parents and we have reports of binoculars being purchased to view garden birds!



What role do plants play in sustainability? 2024-0243

J7

Dublin 7 Educate Together National School

Emphasising basic botany and environmental benefits, we engaged in sustainable gardening, striving to create a greener urban landscape within the local community. The project prioritised conservation and advocacy for sustainability, integrating lessons on plant life, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity. From organic farming to green living, we applied knowledge in designing and constructing urban community garden planters, while also assessing local sustainability impacts. Through hands-on activities, group projects and presentations, this interdisciplinary endeavour seamlessly wove together various subjects, uniting the broader community to address the real-world challenge. Overall we have raised the awareness within the school and local community. There is a commitment within our school for each class level to take responsibility to plant crops in the community garden. Also the local community is more engaged with planting produce that they can use for cooking, dyeing materials and improving general air quality within the community. They are also more aware of the origin of produce and are making a greater effort to buy locally produced items.



Biodiversity Champions 2024-0194

J8

Dunboyne Senior Primary School

We are 6th class students from Dunboyne Senior Primary School. Over the last year, we have been working extremely hard to lead and develop actions to support Biodiversity in our School Grounds. We chose this topic because we are passionate about protecting our environment. Some of the actions we have taken include creating a compost container out of old pallets, creating a micro pond, planting pollinator friendly bulbs and acorns, installing bird houses, hedgehog hotels and bug hotels. Installing bird feeders and taking part in Winter Bird Watch and starting a recycling initiative in the school. A very important part of the work we have been doing is raising awareness among our school community. We held a poster and slogan competition. We created a Biodiversity Power Point and shared it with all classes. We created a Biodiversity Trail and took classes on guided Biodiversity Trails of the school grounds. We put updates on our school website, school twitter page and school newsletters. We held a Biodiversity Action Week. We also created a Biodiversity Rap. We are passionate, creative and dedicated to improving Biodiversity in our School and wider community. Small changes that we make can have a big impact.

Combating Environmental Issues in Our Local Area 2024-0181

NA

Firies Mixed National School

Our goals were; to learn all about environmental issues affecting our area, and ways of combating these issues using Lego robots (because we love Lego!!), and to share our creations with everyone we can. We shared our research, robots and ideas with other classmates to let them learn all about environmental awareness. We also shared our project with family members and others in the community through Facebook. The impact of the project was such that we learnt loads about how we can take care of our local environment, and anybody who saw our project also did. We had great fun in learning using Lego as it made it far more hands-on, and it was easier to learn about environmental issues all around us, such as littering, water pollution and food waste.



MEET TODAY'S JUDGES

Our Judging panel will be circulating around the finalist showcase from 10:30 - 12:30 to meet the young environmentalists and view the amazing environmental action projects created as part of the Young Environmentalist Awards 2024.

We would like to thank the judging panel for their time and their support of the programme.

Finalist judging panel of the Young Environmentalist Awards 2024:

Daniel O'Gorman, Department of Education

Kevin Dooney, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

Heather Lamont, Enrich

Laura Grimes, Clearstream Solutions

Eimear Christian, Uisce Éireann

Gerard Griffin, Youthreach

James Hayde, Iveagh Garden Hotel

Dean Eaton, Dublin City Council

Caitlin Breen, Airfield Estate

Desmond Cox, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

Eileen Hanratty, RDS

Claire Marshall, Fingal County Council

Cheryl Beckett, IKEA

Aoife Cannon, SEAI

Chris McCarney, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

THANK YOU

ECO-UNESCO would like to thank each of our funders and sponsors of the Young Environmentalist Awards 2024.

Thank you to the YEA Team and to the venues that hosted ECO-Dens 2024; Univeristy of Galway, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre in Armagh, Airfield Estate in Dublin, and the Old Cork Waterworks Experience in Cork. Thank you also to Dublin Royal Convention Centre.

Thank you to the judges of this year's ECO-Dens:

Liz Denton, Accenture

Caitlin Breen, Airfield

Chris McCarney & Rosemary Millar from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Sheena McEldowney, Education Authority Northern Ireland

Rosie McDonagh, Community Foundation Ireland

Orla Burke, Cork City County Council

Daniel O'Gorman, Department of Education

Claire Canning, Department of Foreign Affairs

Kevin Dooney, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

Gerard Griffin, YouthReach

Conal O'Hanlon, Dublin City County Council

Barbara Owen, Ecclesiastical Insurance

Clare Lynn, Enrich

Niamh O'Carroll, EPA

Davnet McEllin, Galway ETB

Cheryl Beckett, Francesca Heatley & Lisa Owens from IKEA

Paul Sherlock, Monaghan County Council

Marcus Shorthall, Musgraves

Aoife Cannon, Lee Carroll, Joel Franklin, Ruth Buggie, Denis Dineen, Maeve O'Reilly,

Mary Holland & Sadhbh Ní Hógáin from SEAI

Áine O'Loughlen, Sligo County Council

Eimear Christian, Uisce Éireann

Alexey Janes, Ulster Wildlife Trust

Brenda Gallagher, University of Galway

ECO-UNESCO'S YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST AWARDS FUNDERS & SPONSORS

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of our funders and sponsors



**An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide**
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications



**An Roinn Leanáí, Comhionannais,
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Department of Children, Equality,
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Rialtas na hÉireann
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The Scheme to Support National Organisations is funded by the Government of Ireland through the Department of Rural and Community Development



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Fingal County
Council



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Mayo County Council



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council



ABOUT ECO-UNESCO

Who we are:

ECO-UNESCO is Ireland's leading environmental education youth organisation that works to conserve the environment and empower young people. We run a wide range of programmes and services to inspire, educate and empower young people to take positive environmental action.

ECO-UNESCO Youth Programmes:

ECO-UNESCO's **Young Environmentalist Awards** are an all-Ireland environmental programme that recognises and rewards young people who take action to improve the environment and raise environmental awareness. Over 65,000 have participated in YEA over the course of the last 25 years.

ECO-UNESCO's **Environmental Workshops & Summer Camps** offer a wide range of Learning2Change environmental workshops for schools, youth groups, and companies. The workshops include Fashion Focus, Climate Action, and Food for Future. Camps are around Easter and our Summer Camps include Green Teens and ECO-Explorers.

ECO-UNESCO's **Youth for Sustainable Development** programme promotes Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) through a Peer Education approach in a non-formal education sector.

ECO-UNESCO's **ECO-Choices Programme** is a programme that focuses on the positive aspects of a community and the environment. The programme supports the building of young people's capacities to make positive life choices.

ECO-UNESCO is an accredited **QQI Training Centre**. We offer accredited and non-accredited training courses in the areas of sustainable development, environmental education and youth and community development.

ECO-UNESCO is a Sustainable Development Goals Champion. We work across the island of Ireland and with partners in Europe and internationally. We are affiliated with the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA).



Why not become involved with
ECO-UNESCO today?
Visit ecounesco.ie for more information or
call us on (+353) 01 662 5491.

**Scan the QR code on the left to
find out more**

GET INVOLVED TODAY!



Plant the Seed Appeal

We are planting 65,000 to acknowledge each young person that has taken action to protect our environment in local communities all over Ireland as part of the Young Environmentalist Awards.

Support us today in ECO-UNESCO and your donation will help us educate and empower even more young people with the skills and opportunities to take environmental action.

Your donation will support our work to plant the seed of knowledge as we celebrate 25 years of the Young Environmentalist Awards. Donate now: <https://www.idonate.ie/forms/planttheseed>



Workshops & Summer Camps

Discover nature in the heart of the city!

The action-packed Green Teen and ECO-Explorers Camps have been designed to support young people's personal development through physical activity, nature learning and engaging in environmental thinking. Participants will explore environmental issues in a fun and creative way, go on day trips around Dublin, meet like-minded people, and gain confidence and new skills.

The Camps are run by ECO-UNESCO, Ireland's environmental education and youth organisation, which has over 30 years' experience working with children and young people raising environmental awareness in a fun, interactive and creative way.



Youth for Sustainable Development

The Youth for Sustainable Development (YSD) programme is for young people interested in learning more about sustainable development issues, and how they can put their knowledge into action to protect the environment and become leaders for positive change within their communities. The programme consists of a 12-week workshop series, which engage young people in a fun and interactive way. Register your interest here: <https://bit.ly/4ay8VQJ>

Through our Collective Leadership workshop, we aim to shift the focus and reliance on individual power and authority, to cooperative action to create meaningful and lasting change. The climate crisis is an incredibly complex issue, and it requires us to rethink traditional understandings of what it means to be a leader, which oftentimes excludes the many, while giving power to the few. This is a 2 hour workshop that gives plenty of opportunity for engagement, and reflection on the leadership qualities and strengths already inherent in all of us, and the opportunities that arise when we work together.



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ECO-UNESCO is a registered charity in the Republic of Ireland Charity Regulatory Authority Number:

20015145 Revenue Number: CHY 7225 Company Number: 106860