ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards

40 YEARS

conserving the environment
eco UNESCO
empowering young people

2026 FINALIST BOOKLET

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.

Youth Programmes

Young Environmentalist Awards: An all-Ireland environmental programme that recognises and rewards young people who take action to improve the environment and raise environmental awareness. Over 75,000 have participated in YEA over the course of the last 27 years.

Youth for Sustainable Development: A programme promoting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) through a Peer Education approach in a non-formal education sector.

ECO-Choices Programme: This programme focuses on the positive aspects of a community and the environment. It supports the building of young people's capacities to make positive life choices.

Training Programmes

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

Environmental Workshops & Summer Camps

Environmental Workshops & Summer Camps offer a wide range of Learning2Change environmental workshops for schools, youth groups and organisations. The workshops include 6-Steps-to-Success, Fashion Focus, Climate Action, and Food for Future. Our Green Teen and ECO-Explorers Summer Camps offer fun, hands-on learning experiences through outdoor adventures, nature exploration and creative activities.

ECO-UNESCO is a Sustainable Development Goals Ambassador. 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 get involved with ECO-UNESCO today?

Visit **ecounesco.ie** for more information or call us on (+353) 01 662 5491.

Scan the QR code to find out more!

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WELCOME ADDRESS

I'm delighted to welcome you all to the Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA) 2026.

This year is especially significant as ECO-UNESCO marks its 40th anniversary - a milestone that reflects four decades of inspiring environmental awareness, education, and youth-led action across Ireland. The YEA programme sits at the heart of that journey, demonstrating the lasting impact of empowering young people to become active stewards of the environment.

Since its launch in 1999, the programme has developed from a small initiative with just five award categories into a national platform with eleven categories, each highlighting a different dimension of environmental action and sustainability. What began as a vision to recognise young people's commitment to protecting the planet has now supported over 75,000 young environmentalists across the country, helping to nurture a generation of changemakers in their communities.

This year, with 340 project entries from across the island, we continue to see the creativity, dedication, and innovation that young people bring to environmental challenges. These projects are a powerful reminder that youth-led action remains at the core of meaningful and lasting change.

I would like to sincerely thank all participating teams for the time, effort, and passion you have invested in your work. Your commitment is what gives this programme its purpose and energy.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who has supported the programme over the years - our special guests, sponsors, funders, judges, and wider supporters. Your continued involvement makes the delivery and growth of the Young Environmentalist Awards possible, and we are deeply grateful for your support once again this year as we come together to celebrate the remarkable work of our Young Environmentalists.

Your efforts today are helping to shape tomorrow. We look forward to seeing the impact you will continue to make.

Kind regards,

Elaine Nevin
National Director
ECO-UNESCO

YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST AWARDS

BACKGROUND OF YEA

Established in 1999, the Young Environmentalist Awards is a long-standing programme that recognises and rewards the efforts of young people engaging in environmental action. 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 75,000 young people, extended its reach to 32 counties across Ireland, nurtured over 6,500 youth-led environmental action projects, and proudly celebrated young peoples' achievements with over 650 awards. The programme continues to inspire and support the next generation of active citizens.

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2020


2021


2022


2023


2024


2025


2026


IMPACT
OF YEA 2026

872,706
INDIRECTLY IMPACTED*

106,684
DIRECTLY IMPACTED*

29
COUNTIES REPRESENTED

7,012
YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED

28
AWARDS

340
REGISTERED PROJECTS

**Numbers based on figures self-reported by YEA participants*

ROADMAP TO YEA 2026

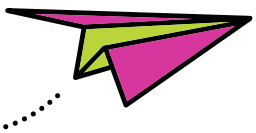
1

September 2025
The Young Environmentalist Awards 2026 officially launches, with registrations open to young people aged 10-18.

2

September 2025
ECO-Week takes place during SDG Week, with over 4,700 young people participating in our 20 online sustainability sessions.

3



September 2025 - February 2026
YEA groups got a chance to avail of key supports like the "6-Steps-to-Success" manual and online course, monthly mentor support sessions, and online YEA group check-ins.

4

October 2025 - February 2026
Action came to life this year, with a total of 340 registered groups developing youth-led projects to tackle environmental issues of their choice within their schools, youth groups and communities. YEA groups did outstanding work in delivering their actions, completing their submission forms, and creating short videos to showcase their impact.

5

February 2026
Submission deadline for completion of environmental action projects!

6

March 2026
ECO-Den semi-finals took place across Ireland over nine days, with seven in-person events held across the four provinces, including our new ECO-Den in Limerick, and two online sessions. During these, groups pitched their projects to ECO-Den judging panels. In total, 804 young people from 186 groups, representing over 100 organisations, progressed to the semi-finals.

7

May 2026
Shortlisted finalist projects are invited to the Young Environmentalist Awards Final Showcase and Awards Ceremony in the RDS.

ECO-DENS 2026 LOOKBACK

The ECO-Dens Semi-Finals for YEA took place in March 2026, with regional "Dragon's Den" style events held over nine days in six locations. This year 180 groups were shortlisted and pitched their environmental action projects to expert judging panels. The events offered a platform for groups to showcase their work, exchange ideas and be recognised for their efforts in environmental action!

Armagh ECO-Dens
Mon 23rd March
Lough Neagh Discovery Centre

Galway ECO-Dens
Tue 24th March
The Galmont Hotel

Dublin ECO-Dens
Tue 10th & Wed 11th March
Airfield Estate

Limerick ECO-Dens
Wed 25th March
The Hunt Museum

Online ECO-Dens
Thurs 12th & 26th March
Microsoft Teams

Cork ECO-Dens
Wed 18th & Thurs 19th March
Old Cork Waterworks Experience

THANK YOU

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who made the Young Environmentalist Awards 2026 such a success!

Most importantly, well done and thank you to all of the young people and mentors who took part in YEA 2026. Your ideas, action and commitment to the environment are what make this programme so impactful.

Thank you to our funders and sponsors, whose support makes this programme possible.

We are also grateful to our ECO-Den host venues Airfield Estate, the Old Cork Waterworks Experience, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, The Galmont Hotel & Spa, and the Hunt Museum. As well as a special thanks also to The Royal Dublin Society for hosting our Showcase and Awards Ceremony.

A sincere thank you to all of our judges across the ECO-Dens and Final Showcase:

Aidan McElroy (Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade), **Aisling O'Sullivan Dary** (SEAI), **Alanagh Tennanty** (IEN), **Amanda Power** (SEAI), **Amy O' Connell** (ESB), **Andrew Foster** (ESB), **Ankur Sati** (Dublin City Council), **Anna Rourke** (SEAI), **Ann-Marie Colbert** (SEAI), **Anthony O'Grady** (Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade), **Benvalla Mlowezi** (ESB), **Beth Frazer** (NIEL), **Caitlin Quinn** (ABC Council), **Chris McCarney** (ABC Council), **Collette Ryan** (Uisce Éireann), **Conor Anderson** (Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment), **Conor O'Reilly** (Department of Education and Youth), **Conor Edgely** (SEAI), **Cormac McCarthy** (SEAI), **Dónal Moriarty** (MKO), **Donncha O'Treasaigh** (Limerick & Clare ETB), **Ellen McGuirk & Emer Barry** (SEAI), **Garrett McSweeney** (Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade), **Gerard Griffin** (Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science), **Jass** (Wildlife Rescue Cork), **Jean McCarthy** (University of Limerick), **Jillian Saunders** (ESB), **Joanne White** (ESB), **Kathryn Moore** (University of Galway), **Keletso Malepe** (Goodbody Clearstream), **Kerry Houlihan** (SEAI), **Laura Fleming** (Dublin City Council), **Lisa Maddox** (DAERA), **Luke Fagan** (SEAI), **Madhu Murali** (SEAI), **Marguerite Nyhan** (University College Cork), **Mark Molloy** (Galway County Council), **Marushka da Costa** (Enrich), **Niamh O'Carroll** (EPA), **Orla Burke** (Cork City County Council), **Rasika Mhetre** (SEAI), **Richelle Manning** (ESB), **Seamus O'Loughlin** (ESB), **Sadhbh Ní Hógáin** (SEAI), **Shadi Bashiri Mousavi** (SEAI), **Shane Prendergast** (SEAI), **Sorcha Brophy** (SEAI), **Sheila Lyons** (Ulster Wildlife)

We'd also like to recognise the ECO-UNESCO staff and volunteers, whose dedication and energy bring the programme to life each year.

We hope you enjoyed the journey as much as we did, and look forward to seeing you again next year!

2026 YEA FINAL SHOWCASE & AWARDS CEREMONY

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

10:30 - 11:00 GROUP ARRIVAL AND SET UP

11:00 - 13:30 FINALIST SHOWCASE

With official opening in the Concert Hall

Showcase Space

Explore the work of our YEA finalists as they showcase their projects, and engage with a mix of exhibitors and activities all in the same space!

Concert Hall

Take a break from the Showcase to expand your knowledge at one of our talks

11:15 - 11:25 Our YEA Journey with CYEAG

Meet last year's Junior Overall Winners, Celbridge Youth Environmental Action Group! Hear from two members of this enthusiastic group, now also on ECO-UNESCO's Youth Advisory Panel, as they reflect on their project with local businesses to promote climate-friendly practices.

11:30 - 11:50 Beyond Words: Youth Climate Action with Seán Dillon

Young people are often called "the future", but they are raising their voice, making changes and influencing decisions right now! Seán Dillon, Ireland's Climate Youth Delegate, shares how young people are shaping climate decisions and solutions today, from Ireland to the UN, and how others can get involved.

12:00 - 12:20 Why Getting Outside Matters with Sarah Hourigan

Ever notice how different you feel after spending time outside? Sarah Hourigan from Nature Therapy Ireland, and the Woodlands for Health Programme run by Mental Health Ireland, Coillte and Get Ireland Walking explores how connecting with nature can support our health and wellbeing, and how even small moments outdoors can make a big difference.

12:30 - 12:50 The Magic Beneath Our Feet with Soil Boy

Ecologist and nature educator Soil Boy, from the Feet on the Soil podcast, brings us into the magic beneath our feet and the incredible world of plants we pass every day. He shows how soil and nature are full of surprises and why they matter more than we think.

Mentor Hub

Grab a coffee and relax with other mentors

12:00 - 12:30 Teach 'n' Meet Activity with ECO-UNESCO

This is 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 supporting 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.

Quiet Space

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

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

13:30 - 14:00 LUNCH BREAK

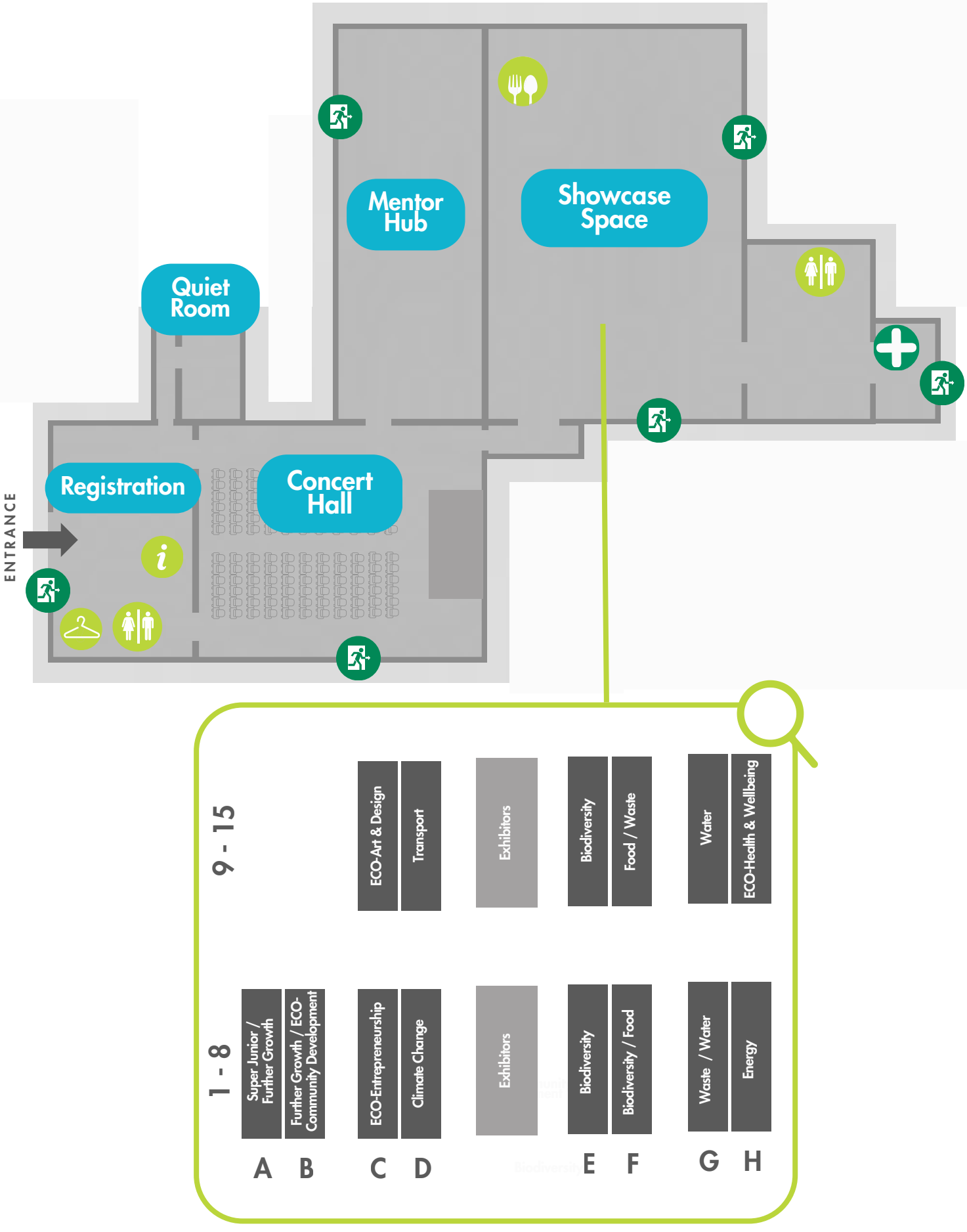
With a Karaoke Session in the Concert Hall!

14:00 - 15:45 AWARDS CEREMONY

In the Concert Hall with MC Clara Murray

14:00	**Opening Welcome** by Elaine Nevin, National Director of ECO-UNESCO
14:05	**Special Address**
14:10	**Overall Super Junior**
14:15	**Category Awards** Biodiversity, Climate Change, Transport, ECO-Community Development, Water, ECO-Health & Wellbeing
14:40	**Dance with Donking**
14:45	**Category Awards** Food, Energy, ECO-Art & Design, Waste, ECO-Entrepreneurship
15:00	**Additional Awards** Highly Commended, Further Growth Award, Local to Global Award, People's Choice Award, Mentor of the Year
15:25	**Overall Junior & Senior Winners**
15:45	**Award Ceremony Finish**

GETTING AROUND



MEET TODAY'S JUDGES

Our Judging Panel will be circulating around the finalist showcase from 11:00 - 13:00 to meet the young environmentalists and view the amazing environmental action projects created as part of the Young Environmentalist Awards 2026. We are sincerely grateful to our judging panel for generously giving their time and for their invaluable support of the programme.

YEA FINALIST JUDGING PANEL 2026

Aidan McElroy, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade
Alan Sherry, Dublin City Council
Anthony O'Grady, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade
Billy Murphy, Enniscorthy Community Alliance
Caitlin Shekleton, Rethink
Christina Blazejewska, Goodbody Clearstream
Collette Ryan, Uisce Éireann
Conor Anderson, Department of Climate, Energy & the Environment
Conor O'Reilly, Department of Education & Youth
Garrett McSweeney, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade
Gerard Griffin, Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science
Helen Walsh, SOLAS
Jean McCarthy, University of Limerick
Joe Byrne, City of Dublin Education and Training Board
Karen Ciesielski, Irish Environmental Network (IEN)
Lee Carroll, Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (SEAI)
Marguerite Nyhan, University College Cork
Marushka da Costa, Enrich
Mary Cunningham, Chair of Judging Panel
Megan Best, Native Events
Rosemary Mulholland, Ulster Wildlife
Sarah Keating, Royal Dublin Society (RDS)
Valerie Duffy, National Youth Council Ireland (NYCI)

FINALIST PROJECT SUMMARIES

FINALIST PROJECT INDEX

Super Junior

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Buzzing Biodiversity- Bringing Nature Back to School!	Forgney NS	Super Junior	Co Longford	A1
Growing Wild	Carrowholly NS	Super Junior	Co Mayo	A2
Save Our Seas	Ballindaggin NS	Super Junior	Co Wexford	A3
A Home for Nature - Maghery	St Marys PS	Super Junior	Co Armagh	A4
Tackling waste in Citywise, Jobstown, Tallaght...the WORLD!	CityWise Education	Super Junior	Co Dublin	A5
Plan Bee in Creevy	Creevy NS	Super Junior	Co Donegal	NA

Further Growth

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Willow Weavers	Ard Na gCraith NS	Super Junior	Co Westmeath	A6
Outdoors with the Fairies	Include Youth Service Clones YWICM	Junior	Co Monaghan	A7
Breaking the Cycle	Meanscoil Iognáid Rís	Senior	Co Dublin	B1
Gambling with the Climate	Eureka Secondary School	Senior	Co Meath	B2
SOS: Save our Salmon	Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine	Senior	Co Kerry	B3
The Earth Energy Project	Coláiste Iósaef	Senior	Co Limerick	B4

ECO-Community Development

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Bay South Allies	Westland Row C.B.S.	Senior	Co Dublin	B5
Bottles for a Cause - Turning Trash into Treasure	Ardscoil na mBráithre	Senior	Co Tipperary	B6
Planet PSI Sustainability Podcast	Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine	Senior	Co Kerry	B7

ECO-Entrepreneurship

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Irish Seaweed as an Eco-Friendly Absorbent for Road Oil Spills	Rosses Community School	Junior	Co Donegal	C1
Turning the tide on Plastic	Presentation Secondary School Thurles	Junior	Co Tipperary	C2
Eco-Opoly	Tullamore College	Senior	Co Offaly	C3
From Cutlery to Keepsakes	Tullamore College	Senior	Co Offaly	C4
Knot Wasted	Tullamore College	Senior	Co Offaly	C5
ReThread	Millstreet Community School	Senior	Co Cork	C6
Shading the Future	Castleblayney College	Senior	Co Monaghan	C7
Waste to Wonders	Strangford Integrated College	Senior	Co Down	C8

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ECO-Art & Design

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Bottle Blooms	St John the Baptist's College	Junior	Co Armagh	C9
Fantastic Plastics	Eureka Secondary School	Junior	Co Meath	C10
Animal Conservation Mural	St Patricks Cathedral G.S	Senior	Co Dublin	C11
Better than Bought	Kinsale Community School	Senior	Co Cork	C12
Patch and Paw	St Brigid's Secondary School	Senior	Co Kerry	C13
Shoreline Shapers	Meán Scoil Nua An Leith Triúigh	Senior	Co Kerry	C14
The Green Lesson	Crana College	Senior	Co Donegal	C15

Climate Change

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Less Fart, More Smart: How a Happy Meal for Cows Cuts Methane	Luttrellstown Community College	Junior	Co Dublin	D1
The future we choose Ireland 2050	Scoil Ruain	Junior	Co Tipperary	D2
Can Algae Save Our Planet?	Firhouse Educate Together S.S.	Senior	Co Dublin	D3
Change the Climate	Glanmire Community College	Senior	Co Cork	D4
From Pond to Plot: Using Lemna minor as Nature's Own Fertiliser	St Brogan's College	Senior	Co Cork	D5
'Nitrogen footprints': the biggest problem you've never heard of	Coláiste Bríde	Senior	Co Wexford	D6
What's the Alternative	St John Bosco Community College	Senior	Co Clare	D7
40 Shades of Greenwashing	Coláiste Bhaile Chláir	Senior	Co Galway	D8

Transport

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Driving Change	Ursuline Secondary School Thurles	Junior	Co Tipperary	D9
Pareto-Optimal Transport with Environmental & Health Impacts	Athlone Community College	Junior	Co Westmeath	D10
Eco-Miles Ahead	Kinsale Community School	Senior	Co Cork	D11
Footsteps vs. Footprints: Cutting Carbon on the Way to School	St Mary's High School	Senior	Co Cork	D12
Mission: Emission Control	St. Brigid's Secondary School	Senior	Co Kerry	D13
Safe Cycle Awareness Campaign	The Royal and Prior School	Senior	Co Donegal	D14
Step Up for the Planet	Mercy College	Senior	Co Sligo	D15

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Biodiversity

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Buzzing Meadows	Rockbrook Park School	Junior	Co Dublin	E1
ComPost Malone	Skerries Community College	Junior	Co Dublin	E2
Dim the Light	Desmond College	Junior	Co Limerick	E3
Helping Pollinators in the Environment	Coláiste Cholmcille	Junior	Co Galway	E4
Measuring student's responses to identify birds by sound	Tallaght Community School	Junior	Co Dublin	E5
Wildlife Rangers		Junior	Co Mayo	E6
Backyard Biodiversity	Coláiste Bríde	Senior	Co Wexford	E7
Blackwater River Post Fish Kill Assessment	Boherbue Comprehensive School	Senior	Co Cork	E8
Don't Stop Bee'livein'	Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh	Senior	Co Cork	E9
GeoGuard	Blackrock College	Senior	Co Dublin	E10
GoWild	Meán Scoil Nua An Leith Triúigh	Senior	Co Kerry	E11
Plant Life on a Raised Bog	Loreto College	Senior	Co Westmeath	E12
Invasie Species & Impacts on Irish Biodiversity	Loreto College	Senior	Co Westmeath	E13
Improving Soil Biodiversity on Irish Farms Using Multispecies Swards	St Mary's Secondary School, Macroom	Senior	Co Cork	E14
Running Road Run-off, Off The Roads	Ramsgrange Community School	Senior	Co Wexford	E15
Save the swifts!	Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine	Senior	Co Kerry	F1
The Birds and The Bees	St Jarlath's College	Senior	Co Galway	NA
The Bizzy Corner: Small Space, Big Impact!	Presentation Secondary School	Senior	Co Wexford	F3
The Bug B&B	St Brigid's Secondary School	Senior	Co Kerry	F4
The Perks of Being a Wildflower	St. Leo's College	Senior	Co Carlow	F5
World War Tree	Coláiste Bhaile Chláir	Senior	Co Galway	F6
Mini bug motels	Ardee Community School	Senior	Co Louth	NA
Habitat Heroes!	F.C.J Secondary School	Senior	Co Wexford	NA

Food

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Biodegradable Fruit Stickers	Scoil Chonglais Post-Primary School	Senior	Co Wicklow	F7
Green Plate Project	Coláiste Bhaile Chláir	Senior	Co Galway	F8
Local Food Heroes	Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine	Senior	Co Kerry	F9
Using food to produce food	Skibbereen Community School	Senior	Co Cork	F10

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Waste

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Can Seaweed Bioplastics Reduce Waste in Agriculture?	Schull Community College	Junior	Co Cork	F11
Giorgi the Litter Fighter	Stratford College	Junior	Co Dublin	F12
St Colm's Fast Fashion	St. Colm's High School, Draperstown	Junior	Co Derry	F13
Wear Your Values	St Catherine's College	Junior	Co Armagh	F14
Binovation - The Future of Recycling	Davis College	Senior	Co Cork	F15
From Logistical Waste to Living Spaces: The Upcycled Garden Project	Balla Secondary School	Senior	Co Mayo	G1
From Waste to Wealth	Clarin College Athenry	Senior	Co Galway	G2
Happiness Comes in Waves	St. Brigid's Secondary School	Senior	Co Kerry	G3
Soil Sense	Patrician Academy	Senior	Co Cork	G4
Waste not, Want not	Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine	Senior	Co Kerry	G5
Reef Found	Ardee Community School	Senior	Co Louth	NA
Holy Sheet!	Ardee Community School	Senior	Co Louth	NA
An EGG-cellent Idea	St Brogan's College	Senior	Co Cork	NA

Water

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Every Step Makes a Splash	Eureka Secondary School	Junior	Co Meath	G6
SeaScanner: A Practical Solution to our Overfishing Crisis	Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál	Junior	Co Cork	G7
Can Bacteria Beat the Bloom	St Ciaran's College	Senior	Co Tyrone	G8
Drop by Drop	Meanscoil Iognáis Rís	Senior	Co Dublin	G9
From Grave to Stream	Carndonagh Community School	Senior	Co Donegal	G10
Keep the Coast Clear	Glanmire Community College	Senior	Co Cork	G11
Orange you Curious?	Mercy Secondary School	Senior	Co Kerry	G12
Solar Powered Robot River Skimmer for Oil-Based Pollution Removal	St Andrews College	Senior	Co Dublin	G13
Waste Reduction	Coláiste Bríde	Senior	Co Wexford	G14
When the Wind Blow, Where the Plastics Go?	Ramsgrange Community School	Senior	Co Wexford	G15

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Energy

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
Power From Play	St John the Baptist's College	Junior	Co Armagh	H1
Switch and Save	Avondale Community College	Junior	Co Wicklow	H2
A Novel and Sustainable Insulation Material for Irish Dwellings	C.B.S. Roscommon	Senior	Co Roscommon	H3
LightUp Kolkata: Solar Lights from Recycled Materials	Coláiste Treasa	Senior	Co Cork	H4
Machine Learning to optimise the design of Hydroelectric turbines	Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál	Senior	Co Cork	H5
Phantom Energy	Mountmellick Community School	Senior	Co Laois	H6
The Battery Battle: Which Powers Better- Rechargeable or Disposable	Meánscoil na mBráithre Criostaí	Senior	Co Kilkenny	H7
The osmotic power plant and its global implication	Coláiste Mhuire	Senior	Co Westmeath	H8

ECO-Health & Wellbeing

Project Name	Organisation	Age Category	County	Display
AQD17	St Mary's Academy CBS	Junior	Co Carlow	H9
Garden to Plate	Rockbrook Park School	Junior	Co Dublin	H10
Air Aware	F.C.J. Secondary School	Senior	Co Wexford	H11
Down to Earth	Loreto Community School	Senior	Co Donegal	H12
Knowing Nature	St John Bosco Community College	Senior	Co Clare	H13
Seasense: A seaweed based biosensor for early sepsis detection	St Columba's Comprehensive School	Senior	Co Donegal	H14
Sustainable & biodiverse Sensory Garden to Support Student Wellbeing	Mount St Michael	Senior	Co Cork	H15

20260035 - Buzzing Biodiversity- Bringing Nature Back to School! A1

Forgney NS

Students plan to transform their tarmac and concrete school grounds into a mini urban biodiversity hub by designing and maintaining movable and vertical planters, bug hotels and learning stations. They'll explore the nearby forest for inspiration and learning (their Outdoor Classroom), create scavenger hunts to teach others about local species and involve the wider community in a 'Green Open Day'. Project goals include; increasing biodiversity on school grounds using sustainable, movable planters and vertical gardens; educating students about native plants, pollinators and ecosystems; encouraging stewardship through hands-on care and citizen science activities and connecting with the local community through shared learning, art and environmental action.

20260045 - Growing Wild A2

Carrowholly NS

Our project began with the goal of helping birds in our local area. As we observed and learned more through birdwatching, we decided to focus on owls. We discovered that our local environment provides a suitable habitat for Barn Owls. To support and encourage the growth of their population, we decided to build and install nest boxes. These boxes provide safe places for the owls to breed and raise their young. Through this project, we hope to help maintain and increase the Barn Owl population while raising awareness about their importance in the local ecosystem.

20260120 - Save Our Seas A3

Ballindaggin NS

We are from County Wexford in the sunny southeast, and one of our favourite things to do is visit Wexfords beaches. We really value these places and want to help keep them clean and safe for everyone. To make a difference, we organised a beach litter pick to remove rubbish and protect marine life. We also held a colouring competition and a quiz to help people learn more about the importance of clean seas. Through these activities, we aimed to raise awareness in a simple and engaging way and encourage our community to take better care of our beaches.

20260236 - A Home for Nature - Maghery A4

St Marys PS

The pupils of Maghery Primary School often use the local park as an outdoor classroom. The P7 class agreed to make the park a better home for butterflies and bees. Local Council staff met the pupils and picked two areas of the park to leave uncut during the summer 2025. The pupils designed nature information signs and the local community group Maghery Matters paid for the manufacture of the signs. The children carried out a survey of the wildflowers and insects found on their new wildflower meadow in June 2025. The children helped write an article in a local community newsletter and one pupil encouraged their parents to leave an area of their own garden uncut for the summer.

20260312 - Tackling waste in Citywise, Jobstown, Tallaght...the WORLD! A5 CityWise Education

This project focused on improving waste disposal practices within Citywise and the wider local community. The young people identified incorrect recycling and the absence of a brown bin in the café as key issues affecting their centre. Their overall goal was to reduce landfill waste, improve recycling habits, and increase awareness about responsible waste management. They carried out research on recycling guidelines and bin costs, met with the CEO to advocate for a brown bin, and organised a litter pick at Cheeverstown Luas stop, with another planned for Jobstown Park. The group also designed educational posters, spoke to other clubs, and shared their work with the Echo newspaper to raise awareness beyond their centre.

20260013 - Plan Bee in Creevy
Creevy NS

Plan Bee in Creevy focuses on creating a pollinator-friendly garden while updating the garden and woodlands area around Creevy NS. Our group is very concerned about climate change and the decline of pollinators due to habitat loss. This project aligns perfectly with a larger upgrade of our school grounds, allowing us to take meaningful action to protect these ecosystems. By integrating pollinator-friendly planting into the school's development, we aim to support biodiversity, provide habitats for insects, and promote environmental awareness among students. The project is part of a wider plan to combine positive ecological changes with modern school development.

FURTHER GROWTH

Previously entered YEA projects, that have been continued and developed further

20260155 - Willow Weavers
A6

Ard na gCraith NS

Super Junior

Last December, Sixth Class took part in a willow weaving project in our school grounds. The children planted living willow and worked together to create a fedge (a living fence), a willow hut, and an arboury. This hands-on project helped them to understand sustainability, teamwork, and the importance of biodiversity. As the willow grows, it will provide habitats for insects and birds while also creating a natural space for play, reading, and reflection. The children took great pride in their work, knowing the structures will continue to develop and benefit both the school community and local biodiversity for many years to come.

20260176 - Outdoors with the Fairies
A7

Include Youth Service Clones YWICM

Junior

Our project transformed an old, overgrown patch of land beside the canal into a fairy village for families, children, and the wider community. Many people in our town do not have easy access to green spaces, and this area had become neglected. Our goal was to restore the space while protecting the natural habitat and creating something fun that encourages people to spend time outdoors. As a group, we cleared the site and reused materials to build fairy houses, doors, fences, and other props. Building on last year's fairy door project, we expanded the idea to attract more visitors. The village helps children connect with nature and highlights the importance of caring for local green spaces.

20260200 - Breaking the Cycle
B1

Meanscoil Iognáid Rís

Senior

Our project breaking the cycle aims to promote reusing and recycling clothes. Ireland is one of the highest countries per capita consumers of clothes in Europe, making fast fashion a big issue here. We will be attempting to break the cycle, hence the name. We're aiming to do this by upcycling charity shop clothes into creative new outfits, which we will showcase on social media to promote sustainable fashion. We will also be running a swap shop giving people a chance to trade old clothes instead of buying new ones. Through these actions we hope to make sustainable fashion more appealing to all.

20260136 - Gambling with the Climate
B2

Eureka Secondary School

Senior

Our team believes that education and small daily actions are vital for helping spread awareness about climate change and getting people invested into learning about what they can do to be more sustainable. We noticed a gap for learning about sustainability in the education system as schools where not making learning fun or engaging so we developed games for children, teens and adults we translated the game into 4 languages and sent to over 20 countries. This year we aim to professionally printing the game and research about turning it into a business, we are contacting the department of education to improve education for sustainability in a more engaging way.

FURTHER GROWTH

Previously entered YEA projects, that have been continued and developed further

20260114 - SOS: Save our Salmon

B3

Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine

Senior

Save Our Salmon (SOS) is a student-led environmental project focused on protecting the rapidly declining salmon populations in our local rivers. As young people growing up in an area where Salmon are deeply connected to our culture, tourism, and community life. Our project aims to highlight the seriousness of this issue, raise awareness within our community, and advocate for a complete ban on commercial salmon netting in our area. By examining scientific data, engaging with local stakeholders, and speaking directly with government representatives, we hope to inspire meaningful action before salmon stocks reach an irreversible crisis point. SOS is more than just a school project—it's a commitment to protecting our rivers, our wildlife, and our future.

20260286 - The Earth Energy Project

B4

Coláiste Iósaef

Senior

Our project tackles food waste by expanding last year's vermicomposting initiative into anaerobic digestion. The aim is to reduce food sent off-site, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and give students hands-on experience with circular economy solutions. We secured €2,500 through an ESD Grant to purchase a MyGug anaerobic digestion system, which produces compost and biofuel. Working closely with Fiona Kelleher from MyGug, we chose a suitable location and consulted the principal and caretaking staff on installation and operation. Awareness was raised through classroom activities, discussions, and school meetings, showing students how food waste can be transformed into useful compost and why this is important for climate action.

ECO-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

20260297- Bay South Allies
B5

Westland Row C.B.S.

Senior

The Bay South Allies project is an active environmental initiative focused on cleaning Dublin Bay South over two months by working with schools, environmental groups, youth clubs, and politicians. Our team carried out several activities to raise awareness and support cleanup operations at Dublin Docklands and Grand Canal Dock. Materials collected during the project were used to create educational displays about waste and recycling, including a mascot costume to engage the community. We explored how artificial intelligence impacts the environment and highlighted polar bear extinction. Through designing a deep ocean cleaning machine, promoting the eco-friendly search engine Ecosia, campaigning for more bins, and studying circular economy principles, we addressed marine pollution, sustainable habits, and long-term waste reduction.

20260117 - Bottles for a Cause - Turning Trash into Treasure
B6

Ardscoil na mBráithre

Senior

While volunteering with Tidy Towns, we identified a dual issue: the environmental blight of litter and the financial waste of unreturned deposit containers. We launched a circular economy initiative to convert this waste into funding for our local hospital's paediatric ward. Our strategy involved three pillars: a Transition Year litter-picking rota, a permanent "Return Bin" for student donations, and a community "Bottle Donation Day" for bulk collections. This project successfully transformed environmental action into social care. To date, we have diverted hundreds of containers from landfill and raised over €700. We were proud to donate the first €600 before Christmas, proving that sustainable waste management can provide tangible support for our community.

20260115 - Planet PSI Sustainability Podcast
B7

Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine

Senior

Our podcast focuses on promoting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Each episode will support at least one of the SDG's by featuring exciting conversations with inspirational people within our community. Guests will include members of our school community as well as the wider Kenmare area, therefore promoting positive social relationships within the community. Topics include Good Health and Wellbeing, Life below water, and gender equality. Through our podcast, we hope to make an impact on motivating young people to take part in building a sustainable future for us all. We believe that by developing a podcast, it would be more accessible and engaging. Our podcast is designed to be inclusive of all and aims to balance entertainment with educational content.

ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

20260337 - Irish Seaweed as an Eco-Friendly Absorbent for Road Oil Spills

Rosses Community School

Junior **C1**

Oil and fuel spills on roads pose serious safety and environmental risks by making surfaces slippery and allowing pollutants to enter waterways. Many current clean-up materials are effective but non-biodegradable and generate extra waste. This project investigated whether Irish seaweed could act as a low-cost, eco-friendly alternative. Three locally sourced seaweeds were washed, dried and crushed, then tested for oil absorbency using vegetable oil. Their performance was compared with common absorbent materials. Friction tests using a ramp and block measured surface grip before oil contamination, after oil was added, and following clean-up with seaweed. Results showed that seaweed, especially oarweed, absorbed large amounts of oil and significantly improved surface friction, demonstrating strong potential as a biodegradable road clean-up material.

20260149 - Turning the tide on Plastic

Presentation Secondary School Thurles **C2**

Junior

Plastic pollution is a growing environmental problem, with large amounts of plastic waste ending up in landfills, oceans, and ecosystems. Our project looked at creating bioplastics as a more sustainable alternative. We first experimented with milk and banana skins, but these materials were not very successful. We then explored seaweed as a possible solution. Seaweed grows quickly, does not need fresh water or fertilisers, and does not compete with food crops for land. We collected Laminaria digitata from Spanish Point in County Clare and processed it to make a thin, flexible bioplastic similar to cling film. Our goal is to raise awareness of seaweed-based plastics and share our findings with experts at Bantry Marine Research Centre.

20260251 - Eco-Opoly

Tullamore College **C3**

Senior

For our project, we created a board game called Eco-Opoly to raise awareness towards the global issue of fast fashion and upcycling. We noticed there is a major problem with young people in Ireland buying from companies that support using fast fashion. Our aim was to make the people in our community want to try to put a stop to supporting these companies and influence them to upcycle. We researched the problems and implemented these into the board game. We played the board game with the younger students in our school and our families and promoted the board game on social media.

20260255 - From Cutlery to Keepsakes

Tullamore College **C4**

Senior

From landfill to accessories, from cutlery to keepsakes, our project aimed to create stylish, sustainable keepsakes for youths, while also making a positive environmental impact. We came up with this idea from seeing how popular the idea of 100% sustainably sourced products is, until its priced much higher compared to a fast fashion alternative. We changed the norm of our style of product by sourcing locally, cutting costs, and keeping the price low. Thus, allowing people with an interest in sustainability, or even those not interested in it, to make an impact without being cost anything extra. We raised awareness of our sustainable impacts in presentations given to students in the school, in competitions, and in social media posts.

ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

20260250 - Knot Wasted
C5

Tullamore College

Senior

Our project, titled Knot Wasted, focuses on waste wood and deforestation. Our goal is to raise awareness about deforestation while showing practical ways to repurpose waste wood. We plan to educate students in schools through basic woodcraft lessons, teaching them both woodworking skills and the importance of protecting forests. Students will use waste wood to create new items, giving the materials a second life. In addition, we will make our own products from waste wood, which can be sold to generate funds. These funds will support future projects, helping us continue promoting sustainability and reducing the impact of deforestation.

20260295 - ReThread
C6

Millstreet Community School

Senior

ReThread is a youth led sustainability platform focused on reducing the environmental, ethical, and economic impacts of unsustainable fashion through education, technology, and community action. It encourages young people to make informed choices about how they buy, reuse, and value clothing. The prototype includes an Info Hub on fashion's environmental footprint and labour issues, upcycling tutorials, a thrift shop map to support local circular economies, an impact tracker to estimate carbon emissions and water use, and a SwapShop feature for exchanging clothes. ReThread addresses textile waste, microplastic pollution, and overconsumption, while supporting Sustainable Development Goals. It promotes practical, accessible climate action and encourages a shift towards circular, responsible fashion.

20260309 - Shading The Future
C7

Castleblayney College

Senior

The basis of our project was to develop a biodegradable UV filtering material to limit exposure and phototoxicity integrated with a data driven app for human health awareness and ecological impact assessment. Research showed, skin cancer is Ireland's most prevalent malignancy with 11000 cases diagnosed annually, projected to double by 2040. Ultraviolet light exposure is the main cause and contributes to ocular disease: cataracts, photokeratitis and progressive visual impairments. Conventional UV protection poses health and ecological risks: synthetic filters and plastic carriers disrupt endocrine function, harm marine life and persist as microplastics. Developing biodegradable, marine safe, biocompatible photoprotective technologies is imperative.

20260184 - Waste to Wonders
C8

Strangford Integrated College

Senior

We are turning recycled bottle tops into fidget spinners. We are melting the bottle tops down in the oven, putting them into a 3D mould and creating fidget spinners. We then sold these, and the profit which is made (100% as there are no costs involved in the process) will go towards funding of a plastic injection moulding machine where we can diversify our products and the volume and type of plastic we can use making this project sustainability and having longevity in its positive environmental impacts. With time we aim to create other designs such as plant pots, pencil pots etc. These bottles tops are sourced from recycling organisations and also from litter picks and collections from our school site.

ECO-ART & DESIGN

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

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

20260047 - Bottle Blooms C9

St John the Baptist's College

Junior

The Bottle Blooms project turns recycled plastic water bottles into sustainable flowerpots. We thought of this idea as there are lots of plastic bottles bought in the canteen in one day and they are either thrown in a general waste bin, or they are being littered. To make the flowerpots we collect bottles, cut, clean, add some gravel, fill it up will soil, add a few seeds and then sell them to teachers and pupils (we are on track to make £100 by Summer). Our overall goal is to reduce litter in our local community and our school grounds. We have raised awareness by visiting primary schools, posts on the school's social media, and helping with the school's open day.

20260125 - Fantastic Plastics C10

Eureka Secondary School

Junior

We are called fantastic plastic because we are upcycling plastic to make it look fantastic! We tackled the 13th SDG Climate Change. Only about 10% of plastic is recycled so were teaching people how to recycle everyday products so they have the surety that their helping the planet. We are also very passionate about art. It's amazing to make something with your own hands that not only looks beautiful but also helps our planet stay healthy. WE raised awareness by selling our recycled crafts at our school Christmas fair, and by making social media accounts. We hope to do a workshop for our primary schools once we get permission. We hoped to have inspired people to recycle more and to put a creative spin on it.

20260002 - Animal Conservation Mural C11

St Patricks Cathedral G.S

Senior

For our project, we chose to focus on animal conservation, as more than 47,000 species are endangered due to increasing human activity. We believed the most meaningful way to share this message was by painting a mural that highlights animals on the brink of extinction. Our mural serves as both a tribute to these struggling species and a powerful reminder that our generation has the ability to create change. Through this artwork, we hope to inspire students, teachers, and parents to care more deeply about conservation and to take action by spreading awareness or contributing to meaningful efforts that protect wildlife.

20260030 - Better than Bought C12

Kinsale Community School

Senior

We're tackling the issues of overconsumption and fast fashion, based on SDG 12. Clothes are often poorly made using synthetic materials and dyes, which are bad for our health and the planet. We aim to reduce textile waste by educating people how to upcycle and repair clothes they have. We created our own natural dyes using everyday items, hosted colour analysis workshops and upcycled clothes. We planned a repair workshop for 1st years to upcycle clothes. We made posters for a clothing swap and we will be accepting unused clothes to upcycle too! We are raising awareness about our 'Better than Bought' project through social media, as well as through posters in school.

ECO-ART & DESIGN

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

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

20260049 - Patch and Paw

C13

St. Brigid's Secondary School - Killarney

Senior

Patch and Paw chose to bring awareness to the topic of fast fashion and material waste in the fashion industry. With a particular focus on educating younger students and our wider school community. We raised awareness by researching the impact of fast fashion, creating informative posters, and conducting online surveys to assess students' knowledge. To reduce waste, we repurposed fashion materials from charity shops to create new loved items. We entered additional competitions to develop more ideas on this topic and to help us create as much as effective awareness. Lastly, we were able to make first hand direct awareness to younger students teaching them vital repurposing skills as well as giving them facts and statistics on the topic.

20260023 - Shoreline Shapers

C14

Meán Scoil Nua An Leith Triúigh

Senior

We are Transition Year students who developed a project combining environmental action with creative expression. Working as Shoreline Shapers, we carried out regular beach clean-ups along the Castlegregory coastline, collecting waste that could harm marine life and ecosystems. Instead of discarding it, we transformed the materials into environmental art. Each piece reflects themes from the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including Life Below Water and Sustainable Cities and Communities, while encouraging discussion on wider global issues. Our aim is to raise awareness of pollution on local beaches and inspire positive change. By working with groups like Maharees Conservation Association and holding exhibitions, we show how small local actions can help create a more sustainable environment.

20260096 - The Green Lesson

C15

Crana College

Senior

As a team, we plan to create an artwork made entirely from recycled materials. We hope this will inspire our community to repurpose their rubbish, whilst also reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. We also plan to visit local primary schools, educating them about the role we can play in sustainability and assisting them with making their own sustainable art piece. We will spread awareness on the issue through educating our local community and on a social media account. We hope to raise awareness about how people can help their community environmentally no matter their age.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Projects that address the causes of climate change or help manage its impacts

20260339 - Less Fart, More Smart: How a Happy Meal for Cows Cuts Methane

Luttrellstown Community College

Junior **D1**

Agricultural methane emissions are a significant contributor to climate change, particularly in Ireland where pastoral farming plays a central role in the economy. As young people concerned about climate action, we chose to take a proactive approach by investigating practical, affordable strategies to reduce methane at source. We designed and conducted controlled experiments to test additive combinations that could influence fermentation processes linked to methane production. Beyond the laboratory, we actively shared our findings at national science exhibitions, engaged with peers and educators, and initiated conversations about sustainable farming solutions. By combining scientific investigation with advocacy and outreach, we aimed to develop evidence-based solutions and to empower others to consider innovative approaches to agricultural sustainability and the potential of feed additives.

20260296 - The future we choose Ireland 2050 D2

Scoil Ruain

Junior

Our project explores what life in Ireland could look like in the year 2050, focusing on four key areas: food, waste, homes, energy, transport, and nature. We will investigate how Ireland can become more sustainable by reducing food waste in households, schools, and businesses. We will look at how homes might be built or upgraded to be more energy-efficient and environmentally friendly. The project also examines future energy sources, such as renewable energy, and how transport could change to reduce pollution. Finally, we will explore how nature and biodiversity in Ireland can be protected and restored. Overall, the project helps us understand how our choices today can create a greener, healthier Ireland for the future.

20260124 - Can Algae Save Our Planet? D3

Firhouse Educate Together Secondary School

Junior

Our project investigates as the title makes all too clear if "Algae can save our planet?" We look at the many environmental benefits and properties algae hold as well as negatives and downsides, most of algae's environmental factors are caused through photosynthetic processes; some of these processes are carbon sequestration which we heavily focus on and wastewater remediation. We researched the Calvin cycle, lipids, chemical filtration compared to physical filtration. We designed and created a photo bioreactor that would trap and store carbon before repurposing it as oxygen, we measured and tested our PBR and encouraged others to create others as well.

20260137 - Change the climate D4

Glanmire Community College

Senior

We aimed to spread awareness about the recent changes in our climate. We focussed on deforestation, its impacts on our climate and how it affects humans on a day-to-day basis. For our action project we constructed an outdoor eating area that also classified as Sensory Garden and a teaching environment. We looked at adding trees and different types of replenishing flowers because we wanted to do our part planting pollinator friendly species to give wildlife a chance to pollinate. We spread awareness by doing a quiz with the first-year classes, doing a fundraiser to gain the money we would need also we created a poster to hang up around the place letting people know about our cause.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Projects that address the causes of climate change or help manage its impacts

20260287 - From Pond to Plot: Using Lemna minor as Nature's Own Fertiliser

St Brogan's College

Super Junior **D5**

Our project aims to investigate the potential of Lemna minor (duckweed) as a sustainable and natural fertiliser for everyday gardens. We plan to analyse its nutrient composition, focusing on key elements that support healthy plant growth. We will also explore a range of practical application methods to determine how duckweed can be most effectively incorporated into typical garden settings. In addition, we intend to evaluate its impact on soil fertility over time, examining changes in nutrient availability and overall soil health. Through this research, we hope to assess whether Lemna minor offers an environmentally friendly alternative to conventional fertilisers.

20260060 - 'Nitrogen footprints': the biggest problem you've never heard of

Coláiste Bríde

Senior **D6**

Our project, Nitrogen Footprints: The Biggest Problem You've Never Heard Of, aims to raise awareness about nitrogen pollution and its impacts. It combines an educational program with a wider awareness campaign. The educational program has three parts. First, participants learn what nitrogen pollution is, where it comes from, and its effects on the environment. Second, individuals explore their personal impact using our nitrogen footprint calculator, helping them understand how their actions contribute and what changes they can make. Third, the program focuses on collective action, showing how communities can work together to influence organisations and governments. Our awareness campaign shares key information with a wider audience to spread understanding of this urgent environmental issue.

20260151 - What's the Alternative D7

St John Bosco Community College

Senior

Our goal is to encourage more people to care for our environment and to raise awareness on climate change. We would like to give people ideas on how they could reduce their carbon footprint and the amount of plastic they use in their everyday lives. We plan to do this by creating a list of ways people could change their daily lives to better the environment. We would like to educate people of eco-friendly alternatives they could use. Examples of some of these are using reuseable water bottles, using refills for shampoo, shower gel etc.

20260304 - 40 Shades of Greenwashing D8

Coláiste Bhaile Chláir

Senior

Our project is about greenwashing, where companies use packaging and advertising to look more environmentally friendly than they are. Our goal is to help people recognise misleading "eco" claims and encourage more honest and sustainable choices. We researched companies such as Nestlé, Zoflora and Ecover, using online sources and reading different articles to learn more about how they promote their products and what their real environmental impact might be. Even though the YEA project opened in September and we only started in January, we have made good progress so far. We are currently creating a display poster to raise awareness in our school and show others how to spot greenwashing. Our teacher and mentor, Miss Corrigan, is supporting us throughout the project.

TRANSPORT

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

20260289 - Driving Change

D9

Ursuline Secondary School Thurles

Junior

Our project is about raising awareness and encouraging people to use public transport instead of cars, to reduce Ireland's transport related carbon emissions, meaning cleaner air and Ireland getting closer to achieving its 2030 carbon emissions targets. Transport is the sector responsible for the second highest proportion of greenhouse gas emissions, at 21.7% of Ireland's total. Of this passenger cars account for 53% of road transport emissions, or 6 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent greenhouse gas emissions in 2024. By raising awareness among children and young people of the benefits of public transport, we are starting a movement to get people moving more sustainably, for the future. For our future.

20260265 - Pareto-Optimal Transport with Environmental & Health Impacts

Athlone Community College

Junior **D10**

Urban transport systems must balance sustainability, efficiency, and public health, yet many cities are still dominated by private cars. Our project examined how different transport systems perform when these factors are considered together. Using a computer simulation, we modelled 700 realistic systems with varying levels of petrol cars, electric cars, public transport, and active travel. We applied Pareto optimisation to compare trade-offs between emissions, congestion, efficiency, and health outcomes. Only 27 systems performed well across all measures. Car-dominated systems ranked poorly, and while electric cars lowered emissions, they did not solve congestion. The strongest results came from balanced systems with more public transport, walking, and cycling, which we presented through talks, posters, and video.

20260071 - Eco-Miles Ahead

D11

Kinsale Community School

Senior

Eco Miles Ahead addresses issues of local transportation and what we can do to combat them. We went into this with the perspective of students, who have observed the state of the school buses and demand solutions. We knew something must be done. The state of our buses, among other public transportation, is unacceptable. So much of the population relies on this subpar system for our daily life. Eco Miles Ahead aims to highlight these realities, to advocate for our needs and to encourage others to demand a better quality of daily travel. We organised bicycle repair workshops, school walks, carried out surveys and investigations and made social media accounts to achieve our goals.

20260057 - Footsteps vs. Footprints: Cutting Carbon on the Way to School

St Mary's High School

Senior **D12**

We aim to investigate the environmental benefits of walking to school compared to traveling by car. Our focus is on understanding how much pollution is reduced when students walk instead of using cars. By measuring factors such as emissions saved, fuel use reduced, and traffic congestion decreased, we hope to show the positive impact of this simple daily choice. Walking also promotes health benefits for students while supporting cleaner air and a quieter environment. Our project demonstrates how small, consistent actions, like walking to school, can contribute to a healthier community and a more sustainable future.

TRANSPORT

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

20260052 - Mission: Emission Control

D13

St. Brigid's Secondary School - Killarney

Senior

Our project's main aim is to promote the use of cycleways, local link buses, TFI Anseo buses. This is important due to the extreme traffic congestion in Killarney during school hours which causes pollution. We want to show how people can travel in ways that are sustainable and help save our environment. The environmental issue that we plan on tackling is air pollution from traffic. This is a big issue due to how much it can negatively impact the environment if people do not travel and transport in an environmentally friendly way. We also aim to encourage others to walk to school as we organized a Walk to School Day in October.

20260170 - Safe Cycle Awareness Campaign

D14

The Royal and Prior School

Senior

Our project focuses on creating a safe cycling route for older students in our school community. Our aim is to make cycling to and from school safer and more accessible by identifying and mapping safer routes. By improving safety along these routes, we hope to encourage more students to cycle instead of using cars, reducing carbon emissions and benefiting the environment. We conducted a Google Form survey to see how many students currently cycle to school and found that no one had ridden their bike this year, which was surprising. Our main goal is to increase that number to ten students. So far, we have mapped a 5 km safe route for students.

20260015 - Step Up for the Planet

D15

Mercy College

Senior

Our project, Step Up for the Planet, is all about raising awareness of why using sustainable transport really matters. As young people, we're going to be living with the effects of climate change the longest, so it's important that we start making smarter choices now. In this project, we explore how things like walking, cycling, carpooling, and using public transport can cut pollution and reduce traffic. We also want to show that small changes in our daily routines can actually make a big difference when lots of people get involved. Step Up for the Planet encourages everyone—students, families, and the wider community—to think about the impact of their travel habits and choose greener options whenever possible.

BIODIVERSITY

Projects look at researching and protecting types of plants, animals and ecosystems

15 LIFE ON LAND

20260062 - Buzzing Meadows E1

Rockbrook Park School

Junior

This project focused on raising awareness about declining bee population and how a meadow can highlight their importance as pollinators. The main goal was to educate people on this issue and show them how it's possible bring back these pollinators by making some changes to the environment. To achieve this, we researched, shared information through presentations and discussions, and created engaging content to reach a wider audience. We also organised activities that promoted understanding and involvement. Awareness was raised through school-based approaches, visual materials, and conversations that encouraged people to reflect and ask questions. Overall, the project helped inform others and contributed to greater awareness and engagement around the issue.

20260181 - ComPost Malone E2

Skerries Community College

Junior

Our project, ComPost Malone, aims to combat textile unsustainability through a swap shop we hosted. As of February 8th, we plan on creating a safe biodiversity space for the Large Carder Bee which is very vulnerable in our local area. Textile sustainability ties into the topic of biodiversity because natural fibres such as cotton and linen are often grown outdoors in unsustainable manners. Furthermore, we meet weekly to discuss our plans and current sustainability issues. At our school's annual club recruitment fair we recruited approximately 20 first years who occasionally attend our meetings. We chose this topic because of how the large Carder Bee experiences direct impact of our local positive and negative actions.

20260310 - Dim The light E3

Desmond College

Junior

Our project investigates the effect of artificial light at night on Artemia. We studied how light pollution affects their life cycle, including hatching, behaviour, movement patterns, and reproduction. The experiment tested whether constant artificial light disrupts their natural biological rhythms. We also explored whether these effects could be passed on to the next generation, such as changes in behaviour, hatching success, or birth defects. Alongside the experiment, we raised awareness about the impact of light pollution on marine life and how it can also affect humans. We presented our findings to all first year students in our school and created posters explaining simple actions people can take at home to reduce light pollution.

20260199 - Helping Pollinators in the Environment E4

Colaiste Cholmcille

Junior

Our second-year group created Helping Pollinators in the Environment to support declining pollinator species in our community. We used Ireland's Deposit Return Scheme to collect bottles in school and local businesses, turning the refunds into funding for pollinator-friendly plants. With this, we developed colourful garden spaces in a nearby pensioners' area, working with residents to design and plant them. The project raised awareness of biodiversity, encouraged recycling, and strengthened intergenerational connections. Pollinators have already begun visiting the new gardens, showing positive early impact. Our project demonstrates how simple, student-led actions can meaningfully improve the environment while benefiting the local community.

BIODIVERSITY

Projects look at researching and protecting types of plants, animals and ecosystems

15 LIFE ON LAND

20260332 - Measuring student's responses to identify birds by sound E5

Tallaght Community School

Junior

We studied the impact on students of identifying birds by sound using the Merlin ID application during ecology trips in a suburban area. We thought this could provide a new, easy, and affordable way for students to study birds, as many schools cannot afford expensive spotting scopes. Junior cycle students were taken to Tymon Park, Tallaght, to test whether their interest in birds would increase when using the application. During the trip, students identified 21 species of birds from 14 different bird families. Using a matched-subject design, we found that the number of students who thought birds were important increased from 65% before the trip to 82% after the trip.

20260065 - Wildlife Rangers E6

Junior

Our project focuses on monitoring and protecting wildlife on our local beaches, with a special focus on the seal colony at Roonagh Pier. We aim to improve their habitat and quality of life by cleaning the beach and placing informative posters to raise awareness in our town. Part of our work involves recording the number of seals, observing their behaviour, and noting changes over time. We will also monitor environmental conditions, helping us understand how factors like litter, tides, and human activity affect the seals and their surroundings. This project combines conservation, education, and community engagement.

20260061 - Backyard Biodiversity E7

Coláiste Bríde

Senior

Backyard Biodiversity is a project that aims to protect biodiversity and re-introduce native Irish wildlife to local urban areas. In order to do this, we are taking an AEA approach to our project; Action, Education and Awareness. Some of our actions include building bird boxes and planting native plants for pollinators. We created an education programme to teach 1st 2nd and 3rd year CSPE students about biodiversity and how they can help protect it within their homes and school. We then spread awareness with signs around our school walkway pointing out native Irish wildlife and through our Instagram account. We teamed up with Enniscorthy Alliance and Wexford County Council to receive native Irish trees to be planted around our school.

20260336 - Blackwater River Post Fish Kill Assessment E8

Boherbue Comprehensive School

Senior

Our project investigated water quality in the Blackwater River following a major fish kill in August 2025 where approximately 32,000 fish died. We carried out a six-week longitudinal study across ten sampling sites, collecting 120 water samples and analysing nitrate, nitrite, pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity and macroinvertebrates. Results showed nitrate levels exceeded EPA Good Status thresholds at all locations, while dissolved oxygen and pH remained within healthy ranges. Conductivity was highest near the fish kill location, indicating localised pollution signals. Macroinvertebrate diversity suggested long-term ecological recovery despite short-term chemical changes. Through this project we aimed to raise awareness about nutrient pollution, improve understanding of river health monitoring, and encourage more frequent water quality testing within our local catchment.

BIODIVERSITY

Projects look at researching and protecting types of plants, animals and ecosystems

15 LIFE ON LAND

20260329 - Don't Stop Bee'livein' E9

Coláiste An Spioraid Naoimh

Senior

Our project focused on the Asian yellow-legged hornet in Ireland and its impact on bees and the environment. We started by researching the hornet's biology, how it spreads, and why it is dangerous. We used articles, Invasives.ie, and expert interviews, including Claire Deasy from the National Parks and Wildlife Service, to gather information. We then used R software to create a model predicting hornet population growth and how nest removal could slow it down. We visited University College Cork to learn from researchers about invasive species management. Finally, we shared our findings through reports, visual displays, and presentations, aiming to raise awareness and provide practical advice to protect Irish bees and ecosystems.

20260294 - GeoGuard E10

Blackrock College

Senior

Overfishing is a serious issue that threatens marine species, their habitats, jobs, and a major food source. Our project investigates using geofencing technology as a solution. GeoGuard produces tiered alerts, high, medium, and low, based on the likelihood of fishing and whether a vessel is breaking geofence rules. It also includes a detection system for tracking dropouts, which happens when a vessel turns off its tracking to fish illegally in marine protected areas. The system was tested, and the results confirmed that it works. GeoGuard can help reduce illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing by automating monitoring, prioritising alerts, and tracking potential violations in marine protected areas.

20260024 - GoWild E11

Meán Scoil Nua An Leith Triúigh

Senior

Hi, we are GoWild. We chose to focus on raising awareness about the importance of the Ringed Plover, a species on the Amber List of BirdWatch Ireland. We created a learning programme and an interactive workbook to support workshops, guided walks, and talks that inform and engage people. Our project supports Sustainable Development Goals such as Life on Land and Climate Action. We are working with Maharees Conservation Association to help protect these birds and improve understanding in our community. We also visit local primary schools to deliver fun, interactive sessions for younger students. We believe young people should understand their environment and can help create solutions for a more sustainable future.

20260110 - Plant Life on a Raised Bog E12

Loreto College

Senior

The aim of our project is to carry out a line transect across Cloncrow Bog to investigate how plant life changes from the drier perimeter to the wetter interior. The bog has recently undergone restoration, raising the water table closer to the surface. Our research will provide a baseline for monitoring future changes in flora and water levels. We will mark out a transect from the dry edge to the centre, recording plant species using photography and identification guides. Peat depth will be measured with Peat Depth Probes, and water table levels and pH monitored using piezometers. Stations will be checked monthly to observe seasonal changes and assess the restoration's success.

BIODIVERSITY

Projects look at researching and protecting types of plants, animals and ecosystems

15 LIFE ON LAND

20260331 - Invasive Species & Impacts on Irish Biodiversity

E13

Loreto College

Senior

Our project focuses on non-native invasive species that threaten Ireland's biodiversity. We investigated three main species: Japanese Knotweed, New Zealand Flatworm, and Asian Hornet. We researched how these species arrived in Ireland, their effects on local ecosystems, and strategies to control harmful impacts. Our aim is to raise awareness and support a balanced ecosystem. We conducted surveys with different year groups in our school to understand how much students know about these species. We also gave a presentation to our horticulture class. Additionally, we surveyed local gardeners, beekeepers, and farmers to gather observations, advice, and information on the presence and management of these invasive species in their areas.

20260174- Improving Soil Biodiversity on Irish Farms Using Multispecies Swards

St Mary's Secondary School, Macroom

E14

Senior

Our project, "Using multispecies swards to increase soil biodiversity on Irish farms," aims to improve soil health by replacing normal grass pastures with multispecies swards. These swards contain a mix of different plants, which can support more life in the soil and make farming more sustainable for the future. They can also help reduce the carbon footprint of farming while improving soil biodiversity. Many Irish farms are experiencing a loss of biodiversity, which could affect long-term productivity. Our goal was to raise awareness about the importance of healthy soil. We shared our project by speaking to teachers who are farmers, giving talks to TY students, and putting up posters in our town and at the mart.

20260284 - Running Road Run-off, Off The Roads

E15

Ramsgrange Community School

Senior

Our project is an investigation into chemical road run-off from roads and its effects on soil in the area. Road run-off has a significant effect on soil and plant health in the area. As well as this, we are investigating phytoremediation. This is the process of using plants to heal soil by absorbing pollutants such as heavy metals like mercury and boosting nutrient levels in soil. It also balances the pH level of soil, making it more acidic which is ideal for plant growth. To summarise, we are investigating whether, phytoremediation is an effective and cost-effective solution to road run-off.

20260214 - Save the swifts!

F1

Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine

Senior

Our project aims to help save the swifts in Kenmare. Last summer, we helped survey the swifts nesting in our school with a local community group. We also met an ornithologist who showed us how to monitor swifts properly. Our school already has specially designed swift boxes. We surveyed the school grounds and mapped areas important for biodiversity, including meadows, gardens, and flower beds. We used this information to plan actions to support the swifts and uploaded the data to pollinators.ie. Swifts depend on insects for food, so planting pollinator-friendly flowers helps provide enough insects for them to eat. We also visited a local primary school to teach children about swifts and continue raising awareness in the community.

BIODIVERSITY

Projects look at researching and protecting types of plants, animals and ecosystems

15 LIFE ON LAND

20260211 - The Birds and The Bees

F2

St Jarlath's College

Senior

Our project involves many things to help increase the bio – diversity around the school. Firstly, we are planting trees around the back of the church. We have received funding from the church and plan to plant the trees on the 9th of February. As well as that, we plan on planting wildflowers around the front of the school. This is to attract more bees to the school and help increase the school's biodiversity around the school. Finally, we are going to collaborate with another group in our school to help get rid of the Giant Hogweed around the back of our school.

20260173 - The Bizzy Corner: Small Space, Big Impact!

F3

Presentation Secondary School

Senior

The Bizzy Corner: Small Space, Big Impact! is a student-led biodiversity project created at Presentation Secondary School, Wexford, located in the heart of a busy town. Our aim was to tackle the loss of biodiversity by transforming a small, unused outdoor space into a thriving wildlife garden using the no-dig gardening method. Students planted pollinator-friendly flowers and bulbs, created habitats using log piles, rock piles and mossy stones, and installed bird feeders and bird baths to support local wildlife. To ensure long-term impact, we established a lunchtime Gardening Club to care for the space and educate younger students. Through hands-on action, raising awareness and teamwork, our project demonstrates how small urban spaces can make a big difference for biodiversity!

20260051 - The Bug B&B

F4

St. Brigid's Secondary School - Killarney

Senior

We are actively protecting and promoting biodiversity in our school and the wider community. Our actions include restoring a bug hotel, planting wildflowers, and visiting local primary schools to deliver workshops that inspire young people. To attract pollinators, we planted varieties of native Irish plants across the school and local primary schools. We plan on planting a hedgerow of 50 native trees in our school. Additionally, we are installing rainwater harvesters to sustainably water our plants and reduce water waste. Working closely with the Tidy Towns group, we have received plants, expert guidance, and strong community support. This collaboration has helped link our school with the wider community. Our aim is to create a lasting, positive impact through meaningful, practical action.

20260107 - The Perks of Being a Wildflower

F5

St. Leo's College, Convent of Mercy

Senior

Wildflowers play an important role in biodiversity by providing habitats for insects and small mammals. They are especially important for endangered pollinators like bees. Bees have a key role in our food system because they pollinate many of the crops humans rely on. A quote often linked to Albert Einstein says, "If the bee disappeared off the face of the Earth, man would only have four years left to live." While this is not completely accurate, it highlights how important bees are in the food chain. Many people see pollinators as annoying insects because they do not understand their value. In our project, we aim to raise awareness about wildflowers and encourage more planting in our local area.

BIODIVERSITY

Projects look at researching and protecting types of plants, animals and ecosystems

15 LIFE ON LAND

20260291 - World War Tree

F6

Coláiste Bhaile Chláir

Senior

Our project focuses on native trees in Ireland and why they are important for wildlife and the environment. We noticed that many students in our school could not identify native trees, so we carried out a survey to assess their knowledge and analysed the results. To address this, we plan to give a talk to students to teach them about native trees and their benefits. We will also plant native trees around the school and create posters to raise awareness, helping students understand the value of protecting and supporting Ireland's natural habitats.

20260091 - Mini bug motels

Ardee Community School

Senior

Our issue was the lack of biodiversity in our area. To help raise awareness, we built and painted mini bug motels and donated them to nearby schools. We visited two primary schools to talk about the importance of insects in our environment and why they matter for ecosystems. During our visits, we encouraged the children to help decorate the bug motels using natural materials like sticks and leaves. This made the project more interactive and helped them understand how small actions can support local wildlife. Overall, the project went well and helped spread awareness about biodiversity.

20260127 - Habitat Heroes!

F.C.J. Secondary School

Senior

Our project aims to preserve, protect, and raise awareness of local natural habitats in our area. We decided to focus mainly on birds and bees because they are an important part of our ecosystem. To support them, we built bird boxes, created bug hotels, and set up a "No Mow" area to encourage wild growth. We also carried out surveys to learn more about local wildlife and organised a poster competition in our school to involve other students. We believe our natural wildlife is very important and should be respected and protected throughout our community now and in the future.

FOOD

Projects that promote more sustainable food systems, such as food security and sustainable agriculture

2 ZERO HUNGER

20260324 - Biodegradable Fruit Stickers F7

Scoil Chonglais Post-Primary School

Senior

The food industry uses large amounts of non-biodegradable materials in packaging, and single-use plastics are a growing environmental problem in Ireland. The Scoil Chonglais project aims to develop biodegradable, compostable alternatives. Last year, we designed biodegradable stickers for fruit and vegetables, winning a prize at SciFest Carlow. This year, the project expanded to include all packaging for fruit and vegetables. We created recycled cardboard, edible glue, bioplastic, and nettle-fibre food nets. We tested properties like tensile strength, water resistance, and compostability. All materials can be safely composted. Our research is timely, as the European Parliament will ban single-use plastics in food sales by 2030. We won 3rd prize in the STRIPE Young Scientist Senior Group category and the REPAK award, raising awareness locally and nationally.

20260277 - Green Plate Project F8

Coláiste Bhaile Chláir

Senior

Our project is based on how being vegetarian, even some of the time, can have a positive impact on the environment. We focused on how food choices affect climate change, carbon emissions, and waste. We investigated school meals and found limited vegetarian options, so we created a healthy, realistic vegetarian meal plan for students. We surveyed students to understand their knowledge of vegetarian diets and analysed the results. We successfully introduced a Meat Free Monday, which was well received, and we plan to make it a weekly event. We also set up a wormery to recycle fruit and vegetable waste, which is maintained weekly by our group.

20260079 - Local Food Heroes F9

Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine

Senior

The project looks at the vibrant Kenmare local food scene, examining what is happening locally versus the global picture. To do this, we visited local producers, surveyed local people on food purchasing and production. We ran a campaign on the Planetary Diet – educating our fellow students on the benefits of eating for our health and that of the planet, as part of our school's sustainability week. We worked in the school garden – growing vegetables and experiencing the benefits of fresh produce. We created a short magazine with the information we learned and we are working on a campaign to bring awareness to our wider community on the problems and solutions in our food system.

20260264 - Using food to produce food F10

Skibbereen Community School

Senior

Our project focused on using the MYGug Biodigester to reduce food waste and produce sustainable energy and fertiliser. At first, we maintained the Gug but noticed there wasn't enough food waste from the school to run it efficiently. We discovered that eating areas lacked food waste bins, so we got permission to place painted, clearly labelled bins around the school and made posters to raise awareness. After presenting to each class, students and teachers began using the bins correctly. The Gug now produces gas, which powers the home economics rooms, and nutrient-rich liquid fertiliser, which we use in the greenhouse and share with the community, creating a circular system and reducing our school's carbon footprint.

WASTE

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

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

20260323 - Can Seaweed Bioplastics Reduce Waste in Agriculture? F11

Schull Community College

Junior

The aim of this project is to provide farmers with a viable alternative to the convenient, but environmentally damaging plastics often used in agriculture, such as polythene. Turnip and parsnip seeds were grown under bioplastic made from a known fertiliser, seaweed, and polythene plastic for two weeks, and their germination rates and soil qualities were compared. We found seaweed bioplastic has comparable germination rates to polythene plastic. This shows that seaweed bioplastic could be a possible substitute for traditional plastic for early plant growth. It has potential to reduce plastic waste in agriculture without significantly affecting seed germination. In future more research could be done to make the bioplastic more stable and correct any errors made.

20260249 - Giorgi the Litter Fighter F12

Stratford College

Junior

We have created a Scratch game which educates users about the Deposit Return Scheme. Our interactive and challenging game shows users the true value of each can and bottle with references to real prices on many goods, which can encourage many to pick up littered bottles and cans, clean their communities, and help protect the environment.

20260197 - St Colm's Fast Fashion F13

St. Colm's High School, Draperstown

Junior

Imagine turning old clothes into brand-new stars of the runway! Our Pre-Loved Fashion Show is all about proving that being eco-friendly can also be colourful, creative and seriously cool. With 90 amazing outfits rescued from wardrobes instead of landfill, we're showing our school community that sustainable fashion isn't just important, it's fun! Every outfit on the catwalk can be bought, giving clothes a second chance to shine while helping us cut down waste. With support from Mid Ulster Council and NIRN, plus Big Dee DJ bringing the beats, we're creating an event that celebrates style, sustainability and smart choices for our planet. Fashion with a purpose -what's not to love?

20260043 - Wear Your Values F14

St Catherine's College Armagh

Junior

We are tackling the immense environmental and social harm of fast fashion, aiming to challenge the 'wear it once' mentality within our student body. Our goal is to raise awareness and empower pupils to adopt sustainable and ethical style alternatives to purchasing new clothes. The central action of our campaign, 'Wear Your Values,' is a whole-school fashion show. Students are collaborating to upcycle old garments, source unique finds from charity shops, and showcase clothing swaps. We raised awareness through workshops detailing textile waste statistics and promoting conscious consumerism. This project provides practical skills, shifts mindsets, and demonstrates that a greener wardrobe is achievable and desirable for everyone.

WASTE

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

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

20260230 - Binovation – The Future of Recycling

F15

Davis College

Senior

Binovation addresses the growing waste problem in our local communities whilst paving the way for a greener environment. We designed Binovation to use advanced sensors and solenoids to automatically sort recyclable waste, which eliminates human error. The Binovation app then tracks recycling habits and provides interactive educational content, transforming mindless scrolling into environmental action. Our goal is to assist homes and communities with sustainable practices. By showcasing our prototypes to students and teachers, we've managed to turn Binovation into a call to action for a sustainable future. It demonstrates that inexpensive technology can significantly impact our world for future generations while turning everyday recycling into a meaningful habit.

20260203 - From Logistical Waste to Living Spaces: The Upcycled Garden Project

Balla Secondary School

Senior **G1**

This project involved designing and building garden furniture using reclaimed pallets and other recyclable materials. The aim was to reuse waste materials creatively while developing practical woodworking skills. We made several items, including a workbench, a garden bench, and a planter. Pallets were dismantled, measured, cut, and sanded before assembly to ensure the furniture was safe, strong, and varnished to be suitable for outdoor use. Wherever possible, recycled fixings and finishes were used to reduce environmental impact. The project helped us improve our ability to use tools safely, follow plans, measure accurately, and work effectively as a team while solving construction problems. Overall, it demonstrated how sustainability and creativity can be combined to produce functional outdoor furniture.

20260276 - From Waste to Wealth

G2

Clarin College Athenry

Senior

Our project investigates whether compost made from household waste can improve soil health. We believe soil treated with this compost will have higher microbial respiration than untreated soil and similar levels to soil treated with slurry or chemical fertilisers. We partnered with Barna Waste, which turns brown bin waste into compost that can be used on soil. In our experiment, we measure soil microbial respiration by recording the carbon dioxide released. We also examine soil organic carbon and the dry matter of grass to make the results relevant for Irish farmers. Our aim is to promote healthier soils that support crop growth while reducing carbon loss and encouraging a circular economy.

20260075 - Happiness Comes in Waves

G3

St. Brigid's Secondary School - Killarney

Senior

Our project aims to raise awareness about preventing waste on local beaches and in the National Park. While collecting litter, we marked areas with the most waste to identify where bins could be added. We plan to email Kerry County Council with our results to encourage action. To educate our school, we invited a marine biologist and a Tidy Towns volunteer to speak about the impact of waste and ways to prevent it. We also noticed batteries were being disposed of incorrectly, so we ordered a battery collection bin. During Open Night, we ran a fun activity for incoming first years to teach correct recycling and proper waste disposal.

WASTE

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

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

20260226 - Soil Sense

G4

Patrician Academy

Senior

This project tackled waste, soil degradation, and low environmental literacy within our school community. Our overall goal was to embed active global citizenship through hands-on sustainability learning aligned with ESD to 2030. Students from the Global Citizenship Education classes, the Green Schools Committee, and the Solas Special Class took action through composting, soil health citizen science, waste audits, planting, water conservation, and creative environmental projects. We raised awareness through peer-to-peer workshops, posters, public-speaking competitions, films, surveys, assemblies, social media posts, and whole-school displays. Partnerships, grants, and national programmes supported student-led action, amplifying environmental responsibility across the school.

20260113 - Waste not, Want not

G5

Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine

Senior

Our project rescues unwanted bicycles and other items from local recycling centres and gives them a second life through repair, refurbishment, and creative upcycling. Our team members assess, clean, and restore each bike/ item using sustainable methods, preventing waste and reducing environmental impact. The refurbished goods are then sold at affordable prices to the community, promoting upcycling and also accessible transport. Proceeds are also reinvested into charitable causes, supporting local initiatives and people in need. By combining environmental responsibility, practical skills development, and social good, the project turns discarded goods into valuable resources that benefit individuals, communities, and the planet for future generations.

20260094 - Reef Found

Ardee Community School

Senior

Our project focuses on the importance of recycling and the problem of people not recycling properly. To spread awareness of how to recycle the correct way, we held a recycling art workshop with 2nd years in our school. During this workshop we taught them the importance of recycling and how to recycle the right way. During the workshop, we created art pieces out of recycled materials. Once completed their recycled art, we brought all the art pieces together and attached them to a large background to display them in our school's art room. Some materials that were used are: used cans, old DVDs, soft plastic.

20260102 - Holy sheet!

Ardee Community School

Senior

Our TY group decided to take on a problem hiding in plain sight: paper waste in Ardee Community School. Between worksheets, notes, and endless printing, our school uses about 500,000 sheets of paper every year - that is over 50 trees into homework. On top of that, it costs around €10,000 annually, which could be spent on better things than empty printers. Paper production does not just affect trees; it also uses massive amounts of water and energy and adds to pollution and climate change. Our project aims to make students and staff think twice before hitting "print" and to promote simple habits like double-sided printing, online submissions, and reusing scrap paper. Slight changes. Significant impact. Fewer dead trees.

WASTE

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

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

20260119 - An EGG-cellent Idea
St Brogan's College
Senior

We wanted to track our MYGug Biodigester to measure how much food it could digest and how much gas it produced over a month. Our goal was also to ensure the gas was being used effectively and to raise awareness about both the Biodigester and food waste in our school. We used leftover food from the school canteen as input, and we explored the idea of introducing a dedicated food waste bin in the canteen to collect more material. By monitoring the system and sharing our findings, we aimed to show students and staff how food waste can be reduced while producing useful energy.

WATER

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

20260123 - Every Step Makes A Splash G6

Eureka Secondary School

Junior

Our Project is called every step makes a splash. This project is an awareness project to help spread awareness and support for young women and girls in foreign countries. These people do not have clean water, so they walk many kilometres every day to reach a fresh water source. They then collect the water and make the hard journey back these people often do this barefoot, and it often takes a long time. These young women and girls miss out on a good quality education. Our project includes us walking laps around our own school pitch while carrying heavy bottles of water to represent the journey these young women and girls make every day.

20260335 - SeaScanner: A Practical Solution to our Overfishing Crisis G7

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál

Junior

The SeaScanner is a concept for an undersea sonar device to scan for fish, and to direct fishing vessels away from areas of low populations, to allow for proper recovery, allowing the fishing industry to be more sustainable. So far, the SeaScanner has gone through 3 full re-designs, improving greatly each time. While the project has been largely conceptual, we are beginning to take the next steps by investigating funding options, testing various power sources, and creating an engineering-style 3D model. The final SeaScanner unit would be 10 feet long, 8 feet wide, and 8 feet tall, matching the dimensions of a standard 10-foot shipping container.

20260327 - Can Bacteria Beat The Bloom G8

St Ciaran's College

Senior

Our group investigated the effect of Lactobacillus bacteria, commonly found in dairy products, when combined with the starch in fermented rice water. We wanted to test whether this mixture could improve the quality of stagnant water that contained algae and grime. To do this, we added the mixture to samples of stagnant water and observed the changes over time. We monitored the appearance and overall condition of the water during the experiment. Our results showed that the mixture helped improve the water quality and reduced some of the algae and grime. This suggests that natural bacteria mixtures may help treat polluted or stagnant water.

20260130 - Drop by Drop G9

Meanscoil Iognáid Rís

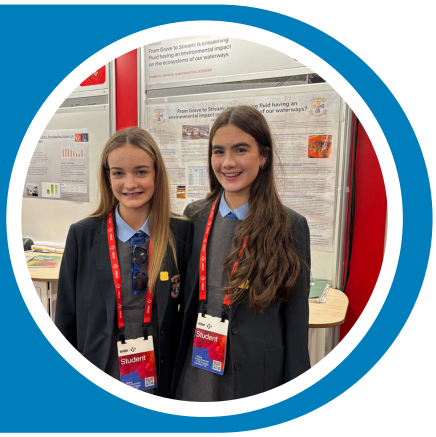
Senior

Drop by Drop is a project focused on reducing wasted rainwater around our school. We noticed that a lot of rainwater was running off onto concrete and not being used. To solve this, we installed water butts to collect the rainwater. We now use the collected water to help water the plants in our school garden. We contacted Ray Cunningham, who provided us with the email for Dublin City Council, and they offered to supply us with a water butt. We also gave presentations to first year students to raise awareness about water waste and encourage simple actions to save water.

WATER

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

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



20260293 - From Grave To Stream

G10

Carndonagh Community School

Senior

The project investigated the potential environmental risk of embalming fluid leaching into local waterways, inspired by observations near An Grianan, Donegal, where water from a roadside pipe flows close to a graveyard. Given the routine use of large volumes of embalming fluid, the study examined the effects of its key components, methanal and methanol, on water quality and duckweed growth. River water samples were exposed to concentrations ranging from 10,000 to 250 ppm. Results showed severe reductions in duckweed health and frond count at all levels, alongside drastic drops in dissolved oxygen into hypoxic ranges. Although field testing showed minimal contamination, our other results warrant more sensitive monitoring techniques for trace environmental pollutants.

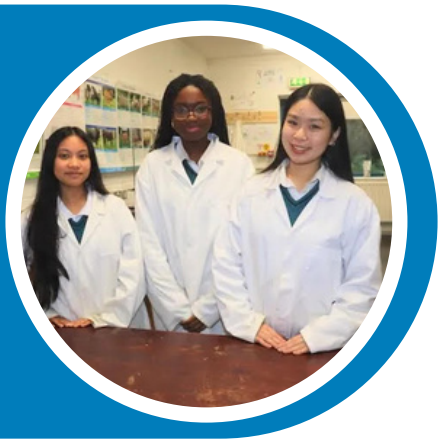
20260154 - Keep the Coast Clear

G11

Glanmire Community College

Senior

Our project focused on eco-entrepreneurship branch and raising coastal pollution awareness among younger students. We discovered that many first-year pupils had limited knowledge and interest in this growing issue and how this can have serious consequences for their future. To address this, we gradually did practical tasks with first years to increase their knowledge. One week we did quizzes with all first-year classes to assess their knowledge. After calculating the classes average score, poor results highlighted and a need for change. In response, we designed eye-catching posters showing the impact of littering and simple ways to protect the environment. We hosted an informative workshop with a variety of stalls to inspire students to care for our oceans and take responsibility for change.



20260283 - Orange You Curious?

G12

Mercy Secondary School

Senior

Our project, "Orange You Curious? Purifying contaminated wastewater using orange peels" aims to solve part of the ongoing water crisis in the Global South and wider world by purifying fast fashion wastewater using adsorption, inspired by SDGs 6 & 12. The issue of a lack of clean, sanitary water was recognised, as fast fashion wastewater causes life-threatening diseases. We created an effective, simple device that purifies wastewater using orange peels, commonly found in developing countries. The device runs on solar power, taking advantage of the Global South's hot climate. We spread awareness of our project on RTÉ 2FM and at BT/Stripe YSTE (2025, 2026), and will be presenting it on Horizons Radio Kerry, and the Science for Development event this March.

20260334 - Solar Powered Robot River Skimmer for Oil-Based Pollution Removal

St Andrews College

G13

Senior

Water pollution is one of the most pressing environmental challenges. Most of the oil that ends up in the ocean does not come from major spills, but from smaller rivers and streams that lead into the sea. However, there are currently no cleanup technologies that are both inexpensive and easy to maintain, specifically designed for smaller waterways. My project aimed to address this gap by developing an inexpensive, solar-powered river skimmer capable of removing oil from water. I designed a low-cost, low-maintenance robot river skimmer that can be used by anyone, regardless of resources. By empowering local communities with a tool that prevents pollution before it spreads, my design can help reduce the long-term damage to aquatic ecosystems.

WATER

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

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

20260059 - Waste Reduction

G14

Coláiste Bríde

Senior

Our ECO UNESCO project focuses on waste, with a strong emphasis on water conservation, linking to SDGs 6, 12, and 13. Water is vital in everyone's lives and must be protected. In Enniscorthy, we have witnessed the effects of floods firsthand, highlighting the importance of conservation. Our plans include putting up posters around the school to educate students and staff, and we partnered with Enniscorthy Tidy Towns, who generously donated water butts for our project. First-year classes will be assigned bathrooms to check taps and toilets for leaks. We will also run engaging activities in CSPE and PE classes and created a pamphlet with practical ways to reduce water waste.

20260280 - When the Wind Blow, Where the Plastic Go?

G15

Ramsgrange Community School

Senior

Our project develops a solution to the problem of coastal pollution. We investigated the effects of extreme weather on the amount of litter present on coastlines, which allowed us to discover that not only was there a drastic increase in the amount of litter after storms, but also that a shocking amount of this litter was solely fishing equipment. As a result, we developed a solution by creating biodegradable fishing gear out of recycled cotton. We brought awareness to our solution by contacting our County Council and asking them to consider this project on a larger scale. Additionally, we raised awareness by running a workshop in our school, to educate our peers on how to create their own biodegradable rope.

ENERGY

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

20260046 - Power From Play

St John the Baptist's College

Junior

H1

This project proposes an idea by two students, Cormac and SeanÓg, to generate renewable energy on a football pitch using piezoelectric tiles. The plan is to place strong tiles under high traffic areas such as the goal mouths, midfield line, and touchlines. When players run, jump, and change direction, the pressure on the tiles creates small amounts of electricity. The energy produced would be collected and stored in a battery system. This stored energy could then be used to power the pitch floodlights during evening training sessions and matches. Although each step produces only a small charge, the combined movement of players over time could generate useful energy, reducing electricity use, costs, and carbon emissions.

20260072 - Switch and Save

Avondale Community College

Junior

H2

We set up our club and brainstormed ideas together, after this two of us presented our options to the principle, we then landed on the most doable option. We got into groups and Surveyed different year groups to see if they knew anything about electricity and how important it is for your day-to-day life. We also asked them if they knew any ways that could reduce the electricity use in the school. We made people aware about how they've been using a lot of electricity and ways they could reduce it.

20260305 - A Novel and Sustainable Insulation Material for Irish Dwellings

C.B.S. Roscommon

Senior

H3

Using scientific methods, we explored sustainable insulation solutions suitable for Irish dwellings, with a strong focus on environmental responsibility and public education. Our project aimed to raise awareness of natural, locally sourced alternatives by investigating the insulating properties of different types of sheep wool. We evaluated thermal performance, breathability, moisture management, flammability and lanolin content. Galway sheep wool proved to be the most effective insulator, while Connemara Blackface wool performed least effectively. Through hands-on experiments and peer engagement, we highlighted the benefits of sheep wool, including its fire-resistant and biodegradable qualities. By sharing our findings with classmates and the wider community, we demonstrated that sheep wool is a sustainable and practical alternative to commonly used fibreglass insulation in Irish homes.

20260175 - LightUp Kolkata: Solar Lights from Recycled Materials

Coláiste Treasa

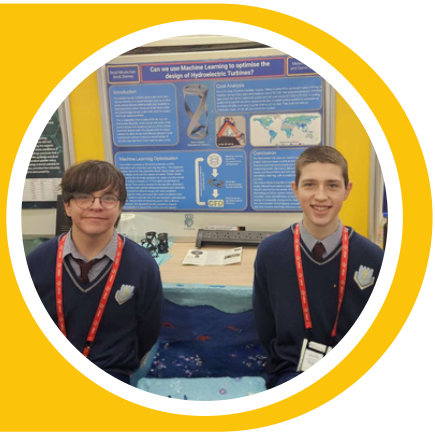
Senior

H4

We are students from Coláiste Treasa in Kanturk, where Transition Year students learn about global inequality and the environment through real experiences. Each year, some students visit the slums of Kolkata, India, where many families live without electricity. This makes it difficult for children to study or do homework at night. To help, we designed simple solar lights using jars, recycled solar panels, and old batteries from devices. Families in Kolkata could learn how to build and maintain these lights themselves using recycled materials. In our community, we collected used batteries, panels, and jars to build lights to bring with us in March. Our project raises awareness about recycling, sustainability, and global inequality while helping improve education opportunities.

ENERGY

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



20260306 - Machine Learning to optimise the design of Hydroelectric turbines
Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál
Senior **H5**

Renewable energy systems around the world often rely too heavily on a single resource such as wind or solar, and as climate patterns shift, that reliability is becoming less certain. However, small-scale hydro and tidal energy remain underused, even in regions with huge natural potential. This is especially clear in parts of Africa, e.g. the Democratic Republic of the Congo has some of the world's largest river systems, but one of the lowest electricity access rates. Our project aims to design software to allow cheap and effective design of rural hydropower turbines to enable the electrification of remote areas that have never had this opportunity.

20260242 - Phantom Energy
Mountmellick Community School **H6**
Senior

Our project is aimed to reduce energy usage in our school. We investigated how much energy was being used by measuring energy levels around the school with an energy meter device that our Green Schools committee won for us. This helped us learn how much energy was wasted every day and why saving energy is important for our school. A key moment that inspired us to do this was when a teacher told us that laptops and projectors were left on during the Christmas break. This showed us how easily energy can be wasted when people are not paying attention. Through this project, we learned that small changes, like turning off devices when not in use, can make a big difference.

20260298 - The Battery Battle: Which Powers Better- Rechargeable or Disposable
Meánscoil na mBráithre Criostaí
Senior **H7**

This project compares rechargeable and disposable batteries to assess their performance, cost, and environmental impact. We tested both types under similar conditions by measuring voltage output, lifespan, and efficiency in devices such as flashlights and remote controls. Rechargeable batteries were tested over multiple charge cycles, while disposable batteries were used until fully depleted. We also examined waste production and resource use linked to each type. Although rechargeable batteries cost more at the start, they proved more economical over time because they can be reused. They also generate less waste. Disposable batteries were cheaper initially but less sustainable, as they required frequent replacement and created more environmental impact overall.

20260278 - The osmotic power plant and its global implication
Colaiste Mhuire **H8**
Senior

Osmotic power is a relatively new method of generating electricity. It is fully renewable, clean, and reliable. This project focus on the method used by the Fukuoka District Waterworks Agency (FDWA) method of using osmotic power as it is overall better for the environment compared to the other methods and has a higher net power generation. It also focuses on where it would be best used, along with its possible impact on Ireland. While the technology has improved since being conceptualised, it still has a long way to go but the innovations required are and, in some instances, have been developed, with a future power plant near the Rhône River having the potential to power 1.5 million houses.

ECO-HEALTH & WELLBEING

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

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

20260180 - AQD17 H9

St Mary's Academy CBS

Junior

The idea is a device on the wall acting as a sensor monitoring air quality in a room. There will be set 3 colours of lights (green, yellow and red). These colours will indicate the quality of air in the room from good to poor. The internal circuit will consist of a co2 sensor, and a sensor programmed to monitor air quality. The device will be connected to a mechanical circuit attached to a window and based on the colour on the device; it will determine how wide the window will. We have been working on this invention, and I should say in my opinion are closer to success day by day.

20260063 - Garden to Plate H10

Rockbrook Park School

Junior

This project is about encouraging our school and our own communities to eat less processed food and to eat more healthily and to buy locally to also help decrease air miles. In this project we started an initiative around our school to encourage the entire school to try and eat more healthily and locally. We gave a speech at our assembly to encourage our school to eat healthier. We were growing healthy, organic vegetables in our garden and gave them to our fellow pupils so that they could try having an healthy lunch and not any processed, imported unhealthy food.

20260227 - Air Aware H11

F.C.J. Secondary School

Senior

Air Aware is our project focused on understanding how air quality in classrooms affects students' health and learning. Our project explores why poor air quality is not only an environmental issue, but also a serious health concern that can impact concentration, wellbeing, and overall performance in school. We are studying factors such as carbon dioxide (CO_2) levels and ventilation to see how safe and healthy classroom environments really are. As part of Air Aware, we will install CO_2 monitors in classrooms to regularly measure and track air quality. By monitoring this data, we aim to raise awareness and encourage improvements that create safer, healthier learning spaces for students.

20260186 - Down To Earth H12

Loreto Community School

Senior

Our project aims to educate people on the relationship between grounding and stress and energy levels. Many people say that they feel calmer, more focused or more energetic after spending time in nature. Some studies suggest that grounding may reduce stress hormones, improve sleep and increase feelings of well-being. This project will explore grounding in a scientific way by testing whether it has measurable effects on stress and energy in a group of people. We are measuring blood pressure and heart rate, and we will also carry out surveys about stress and sleep quality. We hypothesise that if people practice grounding regularly, then they will experience lower stress levels and higher energy levels compared to those who do not.

ECO-HEALTH & WELLBEING

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

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

20260150 - Knowing Nature

H13

St John Bosco Community College

Senior

Our project aims to raise awareness of the natural world around us while promoting wellbeing. We encourage people to take walks and enjoy fresh air, highlighting the positive effects this has on mental and physical health. Alongside this, we educate our school community about the birds, trees, and plants in our environment, helping people notice and appreciate local wildlife. By combining outdoor activity with environmental education, we hope to inspire students and staff to connect with nature, improve their wellbeing, and develop a greater understanding and respect for the world around them.

20260189 - Seasense: A seaweed based biosensor for early sepsis detection

St Columba's Comprehensive School

Senior **H14**

Our project focuses on creating an eco-friendly, seaweed-based biosensor for early sepsis detection using non-invasive body fluids. Sepsis is life-threatening and often diagnosed too late, so we wanted a faster, more accessible solution. We developed a gel biosensor using sodium alginate derived from seaweed, to form a stable hydrogel that can hold reagents and liquids. We also designed a cotton-based sensor using sodium alginate and chitosan, which we extended to detect sweat biomarkers as well as saliva. By using renewable, biodegradable materials, our project reduces medical waste while improving early diagnosis. We hope our work shows how sustainable materials can support both healthcare innovation and environmental responsibility.

20260153 - Sustainable & biodiverse Sensory Garden to Support Student Wellbeing

Mount St Michael

Senior **H15**

Our project transformed an underused and overgrown area of our school into a vibrant, inclusive, and environmentally valuable space. What was once filled with dense bushes and little biodiversity is now a multifunctional sensory garden that supports wildlife, student learning, and mental wellbeing. We added gravel seating areas, flower beds, a sensory trail, and a living willow fence. Gravel was chosen for practical reasons, as it prevents mud being brought indoors and is durable. Pollinator-friendly plants were selected with advice from an Irish plant specialist at Skibbereen Garden Centre. The garden includes textured paths, scented plants, and a water feature, creating a calm space, especially for students in St. Michael's special unit.

NOTES

ECO-UNESCO'S YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST AWARDS FUNDERS & SPONSORS

ECO-UNESCO would like to thank each of our funders and sponsors of the Young Environmentalist Awards 2026

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