



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Education for Sustainable Development Newsletter

Welcome to the December issue and 13th publication of the Department of Education newsletter on **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)**. We would like to thank all of those who have contributed. We hope that you enjoy this edition and will find inspiration, ideas, useful links and resources to help you to play your part in sustainable development.

ESD in County Laois and Leitrim – Calling All Educational Institutions!

Do you attend, work for or collaborate with an educational establishment or institution in **County Laois or Leitrim** that is taking action for sustainable development? Would you like to win funding for ESD work for your institution and project?

If you would like to share what you are doing in the area of sustainable development and have it featured in future editions of the ESD Newsletter, please get in touch with ESD@education.gov.ie. You will receive a €500 One-For-All voucher if we publish your piece!

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1. ESD to 2030 updates

a. ESD to 2030 - Funding Call for Schools

The Department issued a funding call for schools in the September issue of the ESD Newsletter with a total fund of €500,000 available to support schools on their sustainable development journey. We received 129 applications from primary and post-primary schools with over €550,000 allocated to projects ranging from school gardens to teacher CPD to Poetry for Climate Action and Climate Justice.

A full list of grantees is now available on the ESD to 2030 webpage and we wish all the schools the best of luck with their projects. We look forward to hearing more about how the projects worked out and how the schools get on with developing their Sustainability Policy Statements. We look forward to featuring some of this work in future editions of the ESD Newsletter.

One of the projects, Poetry for Climate Action and Climate Justice in Our Lady Queen of the Apostles National School in Clondalkin, Dublin 22, is one of five projects internationally, that has been selected by the Ministry of Education of United Arab Emirates, in partnership with the Office for Climate Education and ALEF Education, to be presented at the Teachers COP during COP 28. Well done and best of luck on the presentation!

See Teacher's COP in Section 8 of the Newsletter for more details.

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b. Solar Panels for Schools Programme

On 23 November 2023, the Department of Education announced the **Schools Photovoltaic Programme**.

The first phase of the Schools Photovoltaic Programme, which includes over 1,600 schools in the following areas: Co. Clare, Co. Donegal, Dublin City Council Area, Co. Galway, Co. Kerry, Co. Kilkenny, Co. Leitrim. Co. Limerick. Co. Offaly, Co. Waterford and Co. Wicklow, opened for applications on 30 November 2023. All schools in the first phase will be contacted by the Department, and invited to apply from that date.

The intention is to include a further eight counties in phase two in Q2 2024 and the remaining eight counties in Q4 2024. It is intended that all eligible schools across the country will have the opportunity to apply to the scheme by the end of 2024.

Key dates for Phase 1 are as follows:

30 November 2023	Applications invited from over 1,600 schools
1 February 2024	Deadline for schools to register for the programme
15 March 2024	Deadline for schools to submit quotations to the Department

30 May 2024

Target date for completion of phase 1 PV installations

Further details including an overview of the programme and technical FAQs are available on the website at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/562dd-schools-photovoltaic-programme/>.

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c. ESD to 2030 - First Progress Report

The first progress report on ESD to 2030 has now been published and is available to read [here](#).

The Report details the wide range of work underway under the five priority areas for action in ESD to 2030 and includes lots of Case Studies detailing some of the amazing initiatives taking place in Education right across the country, all supporting sustainability.

Read the Report on our ESD to 2030 webpage here: [gov.ie - National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie/en/publication/562dd-schools-photovoltaic-programme/)

d. Eighth National Annual Forum on Education for Sustainable Development

The **Eighth Annual National Forum on ESD** took place on 1 December 2023 on the Technological University Dublin campus in Grangegorman. Speakers included Mohammad Naeem, UN Youth Delegate, Arjen Wals, Professor of Transformative Learning for Socio-Ecological Sustainability at Wageningen University in the Netherlands and Lord David Puttnam, British Film Producer, Educator and Environmentalist. Breakout sessions focused on Transforming Learning; Partnerships for ESD; Sustainable and Inclusive Learning Environments and a Creative Thinking for Climate Action workshop for young people facilitated by The Big Idea. We also had a number of student stands from the Early Learning and Care, Schools and Tertiary sectors highlighting some of their ESD projects

The full programme and presentations can be found [here](#).



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e. Sustainability Toolkit

Don't forget to check out the ESD to 2030 **Sustainability Toolkit** consisting of a self-assessment sustainability audit, sustainability guidelines and a sustainability policy statement template. Celebrate and share what your school is doing to support and promote sustainable development by developing your schools Sustainability Policy Statement and

check out the A – Z in the guidelines for some great ideas to take action for sustainability!
The toolkit is available [here](#).

ESCI held an information session on ESD and the Sustainability Toolkit on 24 October 2023. A recording of the event is available at: [ESCI - Education Support Centres Ireland - Primary and Post Primary Teacher events courses and webinars Ireland](#)

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f. ESD CPD for Teachers

You can find a list of ESD related CPD provision on the ESD to 2030 webpage. If you or your organisation provide CPD for teachers on ESD related topics, please send us the details, and we will add your programme(s) to the list.

Don't forget, the Refund of Fees Scheme for Teachers now covers ESD related programmes. See [gov.ie - Teacher Fee Refund Scheme 2023 \(www.gov.ie\)](#)

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g. SDG Posters

The Department issued two copies of a poster of the **17 Sustainable Development Goals** to all schools in September 2022, as well as a flyer with information on Ireland's new **National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development: ESD to 2030**, and how to access resources for schools.

If you require additional copies of either the poster or flyer, please email ESD@education.gov.ie.

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2. ESD Around the Country – Kildare

a. ESD at Scoil Bhríde, Kilcullen, Co. Kildare

“Hello from Scoil Bhríde in Kilcullen, County Kildare. We are currently into year two of developing our school garden. We are a school of 650+ pupils and the children love planting/growing with their class teacher. In 2022, we received an ESD grant to help renovate our school garden. We got some advice from garden and biodiversity expert Paddy

Madden and decided we needed to completely renovate as a lot of our raised beds were rotten and the garden was on a slope.

With help of ESD funds and school funding, we were able to completely renovate and put in a new surface. We put in weed membrane, hardcore and Ballymore dust to stop the garden becoming over grown with weeds. We then put in five new raised beds and we grew garden peas, mangetout peas, sugar snaps, potatoes, scallions, lettuce, strawberries etc.

We now just received another ESD grant and we are so excited to finish our school garden. We are going to put in five more raised beds, a New Zealand compost bin, a fence, a herb table and more. Here in Scoil Bhríde, we find huge health benefits for our children and it is great for creating sustainability awareness amongst our pupils.

Below are pictures of before and after...

From this:



To this!"

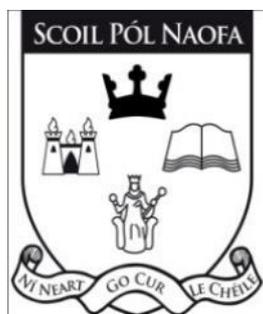


Editor's note: Congratulations to Scoil Bhríde, great to see the progress made through ESD funding! A €500 One-For-All voucher to support ESD projects is on its way to you.

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3. School Updates

a. ESD at St. Paul's, Castlrea, Co. Rocommon



“The boys in St. Paul's are dreaming of a green Christmas...

Christmas is one of those times where there is plenty of waste and plenty of plastic Christmas decorations.

The 6th class boys decided they would try and change this by making sustainable, environmentally friendly Christmas decorations as part of the JEP project . The boys made unique, handcrafted , eco friendly decorations by using recycled wood and materials we already had in our pencil cases . These Christmas decorations promotes sustainability through handmade produced products.

We are encouraging our parents to shop local by organising to sell our decorations at the local Christmas fair”



Editor's note: Congratulations to St Pauls, a great idea for Christmas! The school win a €500 One-For-All voucher to support their ESD projects.

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4. Competitions

a. December ESD Newsletter Competition – Win a Visit to a National Parks for your Class



Ireland's National Parks provide unique opportunities to be at one with nature; the purest of experiences in nature giving emotions of awe, wonderment, feelings of connectedness and peacefulness. See <https://www.nationalparks.ie/> for your nearest National Park.

The National Parks run lots of nature inspired workshops and events throughout the year. With a strong focus on conservation, biodiversity and sustainability, there are events tailored to all ages and interests. Events include guided walks, nature trails, nature-inspired art competitions, insect hunts, bird-spotting challenges, and many more. Guided walks and

hikes take place across all the parks, in addition to park-specific events such as stargazing, regular nature based walks, talks and workshops.

To win a guided nature based walk of one of the National Parks of Ireland for your class, answer the following question:

What are the six National Parks of Ireland?

Send you answer, your name, the name of your school and which class to ESD@education.gov.ie by 5pm on Friday, 19 January 2024 to be in with a chance of winning.

September Competition Winner – Presentation, Kilkenny

Congratulations to Presentation Secondary School Kilkenny, winners of the September 2023 ESD Word Search Competitions for Schools!

"At Presentation Secondary School, we were delighted to learn about our recent success in the ESD Competition, where we were generously awarded a Garden Planter as the prize. This valuable addition to our campus is poised to play a pivotal role in our CSPE education and broader school-wide active citizenship initiatives, as we aim to integrate sustainability education. The planter will serve as a hands-on learning tool, allowing students to actively participate in cultivating plants and fostering an understanding of environmental responsibility and sustainable practices. Currently, our students are thoroughly enjoying the process of planting and decorating the planter, creating a vibrant and engaging space that embodies the principles of sustainability. This initiative not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of our school but also instils a profound sense of environmental stewardship among our students, paving the way for a more sustainable future."



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b. ECO-UNESCO – Young Environmentalist Awards 2023 and 2024



Registrations are now open for the Young Environmentalist Awards 2024!

The Young Environmentalist Awards is ECO-UNESCO's flagship programme, which awards and recognises young people who take environmental action. The programme was

established in 1998, making this year extra special as it marks its 25th year anniversary. With a range of supports and guidance, the programme allows young people to undertake projects in a range of categories, including biodiversity, waste, water and transport.

Over the years, the programme has developed and adapted to the evolving interests and aspirations of young individuals. In recent years, biodiversity has become the most popular category, capturing over 20% of all project submissions in 2023. Projects in this category have tended to focus on efforts such as planting native trees, encouraging insect repopulation, or preserving existing wildlife. Additionally, young people involved in the programme appear to have a particular interest in acting and raising awareness of waste and how to reduce and reuse it, being the second most popular category of the programme.

The Young Environmentalist Awards aims to be as inclusive as possible, by curating and hosting events all over the island of Ireland. In 2023, ECO-UNESCO hosted four regional ECO-DENS, with over 800 young people attending from 70 schools and presenting their projects to a panel of judges.

In 2023, the overall winners of the Young Environmentalist Awards in the Senior category were the Glanmire Community College, Co. Cork with their project Waning Water Standards that tied into Sustainable Development Goal Fourteen, Life Below Water. Their project aimed to spread awareness about preserving Ireland's rivers. Their project educated students on river pollution in Ireland, but also outlined what they can do as individuals to help prevent river pollution such as using environmentally friendly cleaning products, doing a river clean-up and consuming organic foods.

The overall junior winners were from Mercy Secondary School, Co Kerry with their project Mounthawk Student Climate Conference 2022. The project aimed to hold a climate conference in their school to discuss the environment on global food systems, fast fashion, energy, transport, and water, and to produce action ideas and resolutions. The conference covered multiple SDGs from number 2, Zero Hunger to number 7, Affordable Clean Energy.

The overall super junior winners were the Butterfly Mosaic from St Coleman's NS Ballindaggin, Co, Wexford. Their project focused on the Irish Butterflies. They were surprised to learn that 18% of Irish Butterflies are under threat of extinction. They used art and the medium of collage and mosaic as one of their tools to achieve the butterfly mosaic.

Visit [ECO-UNESCO - Ireland's Environmental Education and Youth Organisation \(ecounesco.ie\)](https://ecounesco.ie) to see some of the projects that won in last year's Young Environmentalist Awards.

In 2024, ECO-UNESCO will be celebrating 25 years of the Young Environmentalist Awards. So have decided to extend the deadline to submit an action project to the 2024 Young Environmentalist Awards to **Wednesday, 20 December**.

Registrations for this milestone year of the Young Environmentalist Awards are still open. Register today at [Young Environmentalist Awards - ECO-UNESCO \(ecounesco.ie\)](https://ecounesco.ie)

The ECO-UNESCO website has many resources that will help along the way of one's YEA journey. The Six Steps to Success programme unpacks all aspects of creating an action project from start to finish. Enrol your group on this FREE programme today!
<https://learn.ecounesco.ie/courses/6-steps-to-success/>



SEAI sponsorship of the Energy Award at the ECO-UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards 2024!

The SEAI is supporting the Energy Award in ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA) as it recognises and rewards young people who raise environmental awareness and improve the environment.

The YEA is a fun and exciting way to empower young people to become global citizens, to build awareness of environmental issues in the community and promote local actions and lifestyle changes to protect the environment. SEAI sponsoring the Energy Category of the Young Environmentalist Awards is an important step in the SEAI's role as leaders in sustainable energy education in Ireland.

This year ECO-UNESCO are celebrating the 25th year of the YEA programme with over 60,000 young people from all over the island of Ireland having taken part since it began in 1999.

The YEA Energy category, which SEAI is sponsoring, accepts submissions for action projects that look at how to reduce the environmental impacts of our energy use.

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c. Irish Aid Our World Awards 2023 – 2024



The Our World Irish Aid Awards is an educational program designed for third to sixth class pupils. The program offers curriculum-linked material to teach pupils about the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Irish Aid's initiatives aimed at reducing global poverty, hunger, and humanitarian need.

Through four Lesson Plans and the annual Pupils' Magazine, pupils are invited to submit creative entries based on what they have learned from the educational resources. All submissions will be in with a chance to be featured in the Global Goal Getters Magazine and will be considered for the 2024 Our World Irish Aid Awards National Final. This year's Our World Irish Aid Awards will focus on the theme of Food For Life, reflecting on the work Irish Aid does to help end world hunger and poverty, tackle climate change and make sure everyone in the world has equal access to education, clean water and healthcare.

The entry format is wide open and pupils are invited to create submissions based on the work of Irish Aid, the theme 'Food for Life', the countries in focus or the Sustainable Development Goals. **The final deadline for entries is 8 March 2023.**

Find the latest news on the Our World Irish Aid Awards on www.ourworldirishaidawards.ie and social media channels:

Facebook: @ourworldawards

Twitter: @irishaidawards



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d. Hamdan Prize for Teachers

The Department of Education as the National Commission for UNESCO in Ireland, can nominate up to five projects for the **Hamdan Prize 2023/ 24 for Teacher Development**

including initiatives that “represent an outstanding contribution to the fundamental objectives of UNESCO and the UN in the field of quality education for sustainable development”.

For more details and an application form, see [Department of Education – Call for Nominations for the Hamdan Prize 2023-24](#)

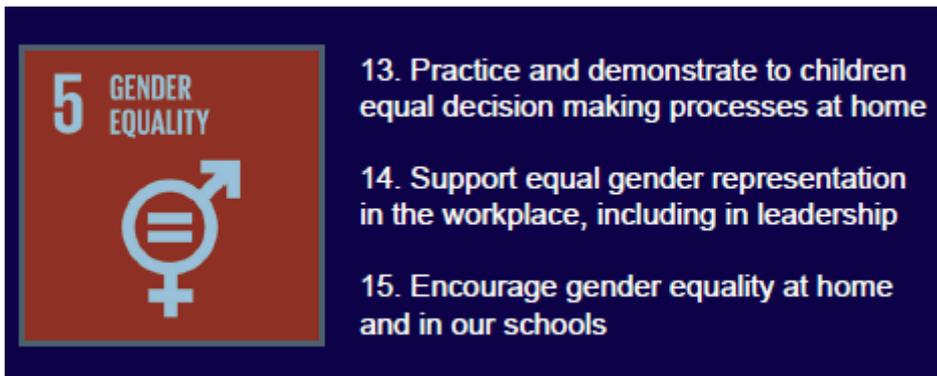
Nominations may also come from national organisations in official partnership with UNESCO. A full list is available on the UNESCO website.

Further Information on the Hamdan Prize is available here: [UNESCO-Hamdan Prize for Teacher Development](#)

5. Programmes, Resources and CPD

a. Three Simple Actions – SDG 5, Gender Equality

Below are three simple daily actions you can take to support SDG 5: Gender Equality



5 GENDER EQUALITY

13. Practice and demonstrate to children equal decision making processes at home

14. Support equal gender representation in the workplace, including in leadership

15. Encourage gender equality at home and in our schools

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b. Irish Schools Sustainability Network - Teaching Nature CPD



Teaching Nature CPD - Irish Schools Sustainability Network

The Irish Schools Sustainability Network are offering free place-based training in Ardscoil na Mara, Co. Waterford exploring an Environmental Leadership Development Programme.

Dates: 15 Jan, 7 Feb, 13 March, 29 April, 8 May

Time: 9.30 - 15.00

Objectives

Get up to speed on what is happening with biodiversity.

Observe a model for teaching nature.

Explore practical nature engagement activities in the outdoor classroom.

Meet other teachers and share best practice.

Places are limited. To book a place email aoifedenton@ardscoilnamara.ie

The Irish Schools Sustainability Network (ISSN) is a community of teachers and students driving meaningful change in the Irish Education System. In collaboration with Education Support Centres Ireland (ESCI) and a diverse network of partners, we provide teachers with information and tangible skills through our [Continuing Professional Development \(CPD\) schedule](#).

Our annual [Climate and Nature Summit](#) provides students and teachers with a series of free dynamic workshops to support them in having informed and meaningful conversations on the climate and ecological crisis with the whole school.

There are a variety of free, workshops and resources for primary and post-primary such as Our ['5 Minutes of Sustainability'](#), [Bitesize Biodiversity](#), and our [Environmental Influencer](#)

[course](#) to empower teachers and students with the knowledge and tools they need to take climate action.

To join the network or to find out more visit www.issn.ie



There was a wealth of resources, ideas and knowledge. I look forward to incorporating this into my teaching

TEACHING NATURE

LIMITED SPACES – 1 DAY CPD

LOCATION ARD SCOIL NA MARA, TRAMORE, CO. WATERFORD

DATES 15 JAN, 07 FEB, 13 MARCH, 29 APRIL, 08 MAY

TIME 9.30-15.00

PRIMARY AND POST PRIMARY

LEARN ABOUT BIODIVERSITY - EXPLORE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES - OBSERVE THE ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN ACTION - CONNECT WITH FELLOW TEACHERS TO SHARE BEST PRACTICE

TO REGISTER EMAIL -
AOIFEDENTON@ARDSCOILNAMARA.IE

FREE



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c. ESCI – CPD Update



The Autumn ESD CPD schedule, a collaboration between **ESCI** (Education Support Centres Ireland) and **ISSN** (Irish Schools Sustainability Network), has been a great success. A wide variety of workshops and webinars were provided by ISSN together with EcoEd4All, futurefocus2, The Globe Program, NYCI and SEAI. The very positive feedback from teachers confirmed that it was the go-to CPD for ESD.

The Bitesize Biodiversity workshops continued this autumn. On Mondays, a collective group of teachers provide a 15 minute workshop on one living thing, a plant, a mammal, insect or a bird. A set of resources is provided for use in the classroom. Check out the resources here,

<https://padlet.com/WaterfordTeachersCentre/bitesized-biodiversity-cpd-dlgv9ol5ab8opii9>

<https://padlet.com/WaterfordTeachersCentre/bitesized-biodiversity-cpd-7xpvclpha5dwwugv>

An exciting Spring Schedule of ESD CPD is ready and will provide lots of practical support for schools, students and parents.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/113w6vM7zkCnyJJnla1UtcvDI7UkWI12d/view?usp=sharing>

Once again, this is an ESCI collaboration with ISSN together with their partners, Global Action Plan, Kilfarrasy Eco Centre, The Nature Hub Forest School and Kinsale Community School.

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d. Green Schools – Climate Change and Sustainable Development



Climate Change and Sustainable Development

CPD for Post-Primary Teachers

Last week, the Green-Schools Global Citizenship team facilitated a CPD training session in Dublin, engaging 19 secondary school teachers in an important discourse on Climate Change and Sustainable Development. The daylong immersive workshop explored the complexities of climate change, resilience, climate justice and steps for developing climate initiatives.

A highlight of the day was the hands-on design thinking process that facilitated critical thinking and encouraged collaborative idea generation in which the teachers created their own prototypes. From swap shops curbing fast fashion, to knitting clubs promoting integration, and community garden markets promoting local produce.

As well as becoming more confident and skilled in addressing Climate justice topics with their students, the design thinking process supported the teachers to embrace project based learning, incorporating many different teaching styles, to support their students in developing a response to the Climate Crisis.

The impact of the training was evident through the testimonials shared by the teachers in which they commented on the effectiveness, accessibility of resources and the empowering nature of the training.

'Pace was good and materials/slides are very appropriate for student use'

'Thank you so much, you have given me more confidence to do project work'

The teachers are now tasked with facilitating the Climate Change and Sustainable Development workshop with their students which will culminate in a final event, providing an opportunity for students to showcase their ideas, projects and answers to the climate crisis.

This training was made possible by the Department of Education's ESD

Grant and was facilitated by the Green-Schools Global Citizenship team.



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e. Climate Smart – Coming to Cork!

Will your school become Climate Smart?

Join over 1600 students and 50 schools to learn about climate change and flooding adaptation in Ireland with the free TY Unit, Climate Smart.

With links to geography, maths, science, technology, politics, planning and active citizenship from a local to global scale, Climate Smart takes an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning about why we need to adapt to climate change and how we can do this. Structured as a series of seven workshops consisting of videos, quizzes and other hands-on activities which are focused on a key challenge from climate change in Ireland, flooding, Climate Smart is flexible and can be adapted to class timetabling needs. Culminating in a serious web-game, iAdapt, students get to put their knowledge into practice through an engaging format. In this final game, students act as mayor of Dublin city and must prepare, consult and implement plans to protect the city from flooding, all while keeping their citizens happy and staying within budget.

Now with a Cork Expansion!

To continue the success of Climate Smart, we are delighted to launch a new version of the iAdapt game, set in Cork! Set up as the Mayor of the city and lead the People’s Republic to a resilient future! To support this expansion, we are offering ten schools in Cork free, in-person workshops from the Climate Smart team.

To find out more about Climate Smart, how to get involved and upcoming teacher information sessions, email climatesmart@eeu.antaisce.org

Explore the platform at www.climatesmart.ie

Follow socials [@climatesmart_ie](https://twitter.com/climatesmart_ie) (twitter) [@climate_smart](https://www.instagram.com/climate_smart) (Instagram).



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f. Tiny Forest Schools Programme



Helping schools become more environmentally sustainable through the power of Tiny Forests

Living Woodlands is a Limerick-based social enterprise dedicated to creating community woodlands while at the same time offering businesses a genuine way of becoming more environmentally sustainable. This is achieved this by connecting local businesses who want to sponsor the creation of Tiny Forests with schools in their area.

What are Tiny Forests?

Tiny Forests bring the benefits of native woodlands into the heart of our cities and urban spaces. They are based on the world-renowned Miyawaki method and involve the planting of over 600 native trees (with 12-15 different native species) on a plot about the size of a tennis court. The trees grow up to ten times faster than normal tree-planting initiatives and this makes them particularly suitable for schools and colleges.

Why plant one?

Tiny Forests offer schools a way to mitigate the effects of climate change by sequestering carbon as they grow, as well as increasing biodiversity and native wildlife habitats. They can also be an important educational resource as each one has an outdoor classroom where students actively learn about the biodiversity in front of them and the importance of protecting our native tree, plant and animal species. Also, the students help plant the trees creating a sense of stewardship for 'their' forest and hopefully for the environment in general.

Living Woodlands is currently looking for schools in the north Munster area who would like a Tiny Forest on their grounds. According to John Galvin, one of the founders, "It's amazing how many businesses want to help and see the benefits of supporting community and educational projects that protect the local and wider environment". Having planted three Tiny Forests with schools and community organisations last year, the benefits and enthusiasm are already apparent. Vivienne Hogan, principal of Thomond Community College has seen the advantages first-hand;

"We can't express enough how wonderful the Tiny Forest project has been for our school. It's like a little slice of nature magic right in the heart of our urban surroundings. Not only has it brought a burst of biodiversity to our campus, but it's also opened up a whole new world of nature education for our children. It's hands-on, organic learning at its best, and we're so grateful for this enriching experience."

For more information please visit www.livingwoodlands.com



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g. Gardening Courses for Teachers – Spring 2024

Spring Course on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD): Growing Organic Vegetables and Caring for Wildlife.

Topics covered

February 21 st	4-6 pm	Benefits of gardening; Soils; Composting; Plan of work for classes; Growing new potatoes-bed/bag; Mangetout peas in biodegradable pots; Making biodegradable pots; Lightbox; Organic deterrents. Suppliers of open-pollinated seeds
February 28 th	4-6 pm	Rationale for growing organic vegetables; Growing organic peas, carrots, marrowfats; Growing scallions, beetroot, lettuce, salads indoors; Growing onions and tomatoes.
March 6 th	4-6pm	Growing herbs; Rotation of crops; Gardening for bees and butterflies; Friends and foes in the garden; Home-made fertilizers; Wormery
March 13 th	4-6 pm	Green manures for summer beds; Managing a class in a school garden; Sowing vegetable plants outdoors; Analysing wildlife potential of the grounds of Village Centre; Taking softwood cuttings.
March 16 th	11-1pm	Guided walk of the Botanic Gardens by Paddy Madden

Location

Ardclough Village Centre, Ardclough, Co. Kildare and Botanic Gardens.

Cost

€50 per teacher/school; Minimum 15 persons; Maximum 20 persons.

Course Presenter: Dr. Paddy Madden

Paddy was a primary teacher and a lecturer in a College of Education for over four decades. He is an advocate of wildlife and organic gardening. In 1984 he established the first school wildlife garden in Ireland and later wrote a book entitled, *'Go Wild at School'*. This book, now in its 3rd edition, demonstrates how to garden in tune with the earth. Paddy became a 'Heritage in School Specialist' in 1999 and since then he has visited nearly 600 schools around the country teaching pupils and teachers about the natural world and gardening. In 2010 he co-founded an organisation called 'SEED' which aims to establish organic school gardens in every school.

The course was designed to cater for the many teachers who want to engage in sustainable practices in their schools because they believe that teaching by example is the best method of embedding sustainable mind-sets in their pupils. The course enables teachers and their pupils to grow organic fruit and vegetables in season, to compost kitchen and garden waste, to encourage pollinators, to limit food and product miles, to communicate good sustainability practices to parents, other schools and the wider community, to reduce plastic waste, to promote organic suppliers of seeds, to reduce eco-anxiety.

For more details and course dates, see: <https://www.engagewithnature.ie/>



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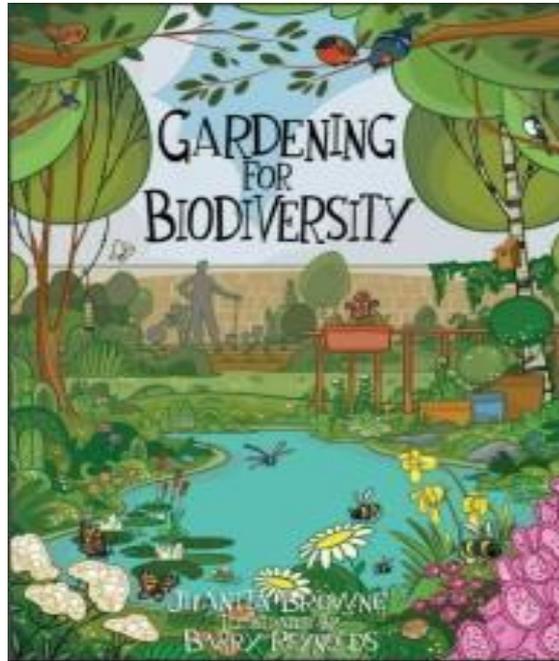
h. Gardening for Biodiversity

Gardening for Biodiversity is a free booklet from the Local Authority Heritage Officer Network to help everyone to help wildlife in their gardens. The booklet was produced by Local Authority Heritage Officers across Ireland, with help from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Heritage Council.

Offering practical advice on turning your garden into a haven for wildlife. The guide outlines actions that can be taken to improve gardens for birds, bees, butterflies, bats and more with all kinds of projects suitable for everyone. From just leaving a corner of your garden to nature to building a birdbath, there are clear instructions and step-by-step drawings by illustrator Barry Reynolds.

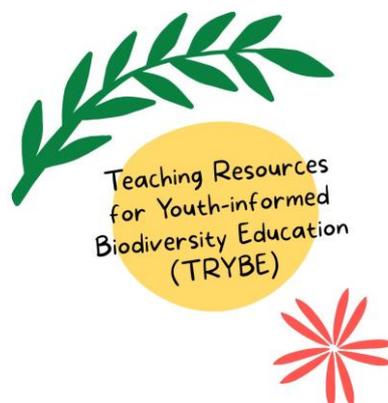
Gardening for Biodiversity is funded by the Department for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht as part of an initiative to encourage projects under the National Biodiversity Action Plan

Download the PDF here: <https://laois.ie/wp-content/uploads/Garden-Wildlife-Booklet-WEB-17MB.pdf>



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i. Biodiversity Resources for Primary and Post-Primary Schools



The Children & Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity have recently published a set of education resources for primary and post-primary schools on biodiversity under the TRYBE project, coordinated by MaREI, a legacy project from the Children's Assembly. The Teaching Resources for Youth-informed Biodiversity Education (TRYBE) was an initiative which sought to engage and empower the younger generation with knowledge to understand the value of biodiversity and to address the critical challenges of biodiversity loss. TRYBE co-designed and co-created educational resources (targeting children and young people age 8-16) based on the outcomes and recommendations of the Children & Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss. TRYBE was funded through Science Foundation Ireland's Discover call and coordinated by the MaREI Centre at UCC in partnership with researchers at DCU and educators from Biodiversity in Schools.

These resources were co-created with children involved in the [Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss](#). Last year, the Assembly published 58 Calls to Action which included a call for enhanced education around biodiversity in Ireland. Inspired by this, TRYBE (Teaching Resources for Youth-informed Biodiversity Education) was formed, led by UCC and DCU and supported by the Biodiversity in Schools programme and the Irish Schools Sustainability Network, and funded by **Science Foundation Ireland**.

The [Biodiversity Activity Book](#) has lots of fun activities to get children and young people engaged with their natural environment. The magic of this book is that every activity was *designed by children, for children!* You can now download or request a copy of the Biodiversity Activity Book here: <https://cyp-biodiversity.ie/resources/>. There is also a downloadable [Biodiversity Activity Calendar](#) for ideas on monthly activities. The activity book will also be available in Irish from next week and further resources (including a series for second level) will be published in the coming weeks.

Watch this short [video](#) made by the children involved to find out more about the Assembly and how this Biodiversity Activity Book was created!

You can find the resources here: [Resources - Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss \(cyp-biodiversity.ie\)](#)



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j. Wise Water – Programme for Primary



WiseWater uniquely designed an environmental and wellbeing programme for primary (5th and 6th class) and post primary (transition year) students. The WiseWater wellness programme supports active citizenship along with physical, mental and social wellbeing by teaching young people about the inter-connected relationship between water and keeping well. Delivered in person, WiseWater brings the magic of water into the classroom where students can experience and develop a new relationship with water. Through innovative and multisensory activities the unique educational programme vividly demonstrate the properties of water. Each workshop seamlessly integrates the correlation between maintaining a healthy water environment and sustaining personal well-being. The program blends community engagement through outings to local water sources with citizen science initiatives. Sustainability is prioritized, using water as the medium for teaching and implementing ESD values of interconnectedness and interdependence with Earth's ecosystems.

WiseWater recognises the importance of hope. Through celebrating our environment and focusing on positive change, active hope ripples throughout WiseWater. With the simple but powerful message that 'every drop counts' young people are empowered that every action can make a positive difference.

At the heart of WiseWater is a dynamic initiative designed to rekindle a profound connection between young minds and the natural world. It aspires to cultivate a relationship where innate instincts of care and a sincere determination to protect the water environment can naturally flourish and thrive.

To find out more about the programme as well as other projects or to collaborate with WiseWater please visit www.wisewater.ie.

WiseWater has successfully delivered the programme to several schools and have gratefully received ESD funding in 2023 to bring the programme to a small number of schools free of charge.

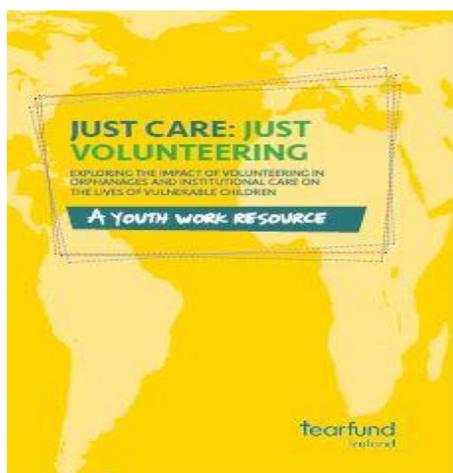
WiseWater is a transformative experience designed with lifelong learning tools to empower students, teachers, and school communities.

As interest is growing in the programme please contact us at to book your school for the 2024/25 academic year.

WiseWater is dedicated to making every drop count in the need of a wave of change.

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k. Just Care: Just Volunteering – Youth Work Resource



Eight out of every ten children living in orphanages and residential care institutions around the world today have at least one living parent. While access to education is a key driver for children being placed into orphanage care, this pits the child's right to education against their right to family life. Further, the demand created by foreign funding and volunteering in residential care settings results in children being unnecessarily separated from their families and communities.

'Just Care: Just Volunteering – Exploring the impact of volunteering in orphanages and institutional care on the lives of vulnerable children' is a youth work resource that uses an informal approach through human rights education to explore the impact of volunteering in orphanages and institutional care on the lives of vulnerable children.

It can be downloaded at: <https://developmenteeducation.ie/resource/just-care-just-volunteering/>

- **Curriculum Subjects:** Civic Social and Political Education, Transition Unit, Education for Sustainable Development, Religious Education, Social Environmental and Scientific Education
- **Topics:** Children's Rights, Colonialism, Religion, Volunteering
- **SDGs:** 1. No Poverty, [3. Good Health and Well-Being](#), 4. Education, 11. Sustainable Communities, [General introduction to SDGs](#)

This resource has been developed by Tearfund Ireland and others working in the field as part of the *Comhlámh End Orphanage Volunteering Campaign*. The campaign calls for an end to

orphanage volunteering and the promotion of care reform strategies which help families stay together and keep children out of institutions.

This campaign is part of a growing global movement, informed by the voices of care leavers from the Global South, and supported by United Nations bodies, civil society groups, and children's rights advocates.

Educators are invited to show their support for this global care reform movement by taking the [Put Children First: End Orphanage Care](#) pledge and using the Just Care: Just Volunteering resource to educate themselves, their students, and those around them about the harm caused by orphanage volunteering and institutions.

For further information on the campaign please contact fiachra@comhlamh.org or visit <https://bit.ly/ComhChildrenFirst>. To arrange a Just Care: Just Volunteering workshop for educators contact enquiries@tearfund.ie.

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I. Rediscovery Centre - Education Workshops



The Rediscovery Centre is here to support schools across the country with a large variety of curriculum-linked, engaging workshops for their students, offering hands-on enquiry and experiential learning.

At the Rediscovery Centre, education for sustainable development requires active participation, collaboration, and understanding. While covering many subjects, all of workshops are anchored in the principles of the Sustainable Development Goals. Spanning 90 minutes, workshops utilise STEM thinking and creative activities to explore societal challenges and propose practical solutions.

The workshops, accommodating up to 30 participants, are available nationwide and can be delivered onsite at schools, at the innovative centre in Ballymun, or virtually online. Each session is carefully curated to provide a comprehensive experience, featuring engaging activities that promote a deep understanding of the topic. The workshops culminate in a feedback session, encouraging students to share their newfound knowledge and insights.

Engineering Week

We offer specialised workshops for themed weeks and days throughout the year, such as Engineering Week taking place from 18 to 24 February 2024. Recognising the substantial environmental impact of the industry, the workshops actively involve young minds in activities that highlight the importance of sustainable building and engineering practices, aiming to inspire the next generation to play a crucial role in building a better world.

For primary schools, the engineering workshop includes interactive activities such as K'Nex constructions and building earthquake-proof houses. Students not only develop essential skills like mathematics and problem-solving but also cultivate a genuine interest in engineering. In our sustainable engineering workshop for secondary schools, students delve into an engineering design challenge, gaining practical insights into sustainable engineering concepts.

Booking

For booking inquiries and comprehensive details of workshops, please don't hesitate to contact the rediscovery Centre. Visit www.rediscoverycentre.ie/education to learn more.



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m: SEAI – Energy Saving Courses for Schools in 2024



Are you interested in reducing your school's energy costs?

Sign up today for a free training course to find out how you could save money by better managing your school's energy use.

Course participants are guided step-by-step through the energy management process from understanding bills and energy use in the school to developing and implementing an energy saving plan.

Schools that attend courses may be eligible for an Advice, Mentoring and Assessment (AMA) service, a school visit to identify energy saving opportunities and with three months mentoring support.

Book a course now!

Courses will be held online and will consist of three sessions of 2 hrs each - 10am to 12pm. The school can nominate any representative to attend e.g. member of staff or of the Board of Management.

Course 4	Wed 24/01/24	Wed 07/02/24	Wed 21/02/24	To register click here
Course 5	Tue 06/02/24	Tue 20/02/24	Tue 05/03/24	To register click here
Course 6	Thu 08/02/24	Thu 22/02/23	Thu 07/03/24	To register click here

Delivered under the Energy in Education programme developed by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) in partnership with the Department of Education.

For queries, contact energyineducation@seai.ie

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n: SEAI's Energy in Ireland – Resource for Schools

SEAI's new 'Energy in Ireland' videos have been created for 12 – 15 year old students and their educators. The data on the videos is based on SEAI's annual 'Energy In Ireland 2022' report which presents the latest official statistics on Ireland's Energy Use. These new videos make high-level statistics on Ireland's energy transition and climate policy accessible for young people. This initiative is an on-going collaboration between the SEAI Statistics and SEAI Education & Youth Teams with external input from teachers and education specialists.

Watch the videos at:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_CB9_aTPxOMwOLIUqbDAAwlR0vzN53HU

The videos have been designed to be used in the classroom environment or to be watched independently.

Also included are quizzes that students can engage with after watching the videos that are on the dedicated webpage:

www.seai.ie/community-energy/schools/post-primary-school/energy-in-ireland/

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o. WorldWise Global Schools Programme for Post-Primary



Meeting the needs of the present, without compromising those of the future, sets schools firmly at the heart of sustainability. WorldWise Global Schools (WWGS), Irish Aid's Global Citizenship Education (GCE) programme for post-primary schools, works with schools to build sustainability both in and beyond the classroom. The whole-school approach of WWGS invites school stakeholders to understand the root causes of global injustice, to raise awareness and to take action. Schools address issues ranging from fast fashion to unfair trade, health care inequalities and the effects of climate change on people and the planet. Resulting actions have included setting up swap shops, writing to TDs and using school gardens to explore topics such as food waste, land grabs and monoculture crops. WWGS offers individual support to schools as well as workshops, CPDs and resources, both online and physical, for teachers and management. Find out more on the WWGS [website](#). For upcoming events, see [here](#).

All post-primary schools can now apply for a WWGS Global Passport Award, the EU-recognised quality mark that celebrates their work in GCE. This self-assessed and externally-audited accreditation gives a framework to integrate GCE into the whole school community. To apply, simply complete a form detailing the school's GCE work over the last three years. The deadline is 26 January 2024 and schools can register [here](#). Once registered you will receive log-in details and you can work on your application to become a Global Passport holder.



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6. HEI Sector



a. EPA-IUA Campus Living Labs Project

The EPA-IUA Campus Living Labs Project (Campus Living Labs) is a two-year partnership project between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Irish Universities Association (IUA). The IUA is the representative voice of Ireland's research intensive, enterprise engaged, public universities: DCU, Maynooth University, TCD, TU Dublin, UCC, University of Galway, UCD and University of Limerick.

Recognising that university campuses are exemplary ecosystems to test and trial effective interventions for waste management and recycling, the ambition of this project was to deliver evidence to inform campus sustainability programmes and advance activities that will introduce systemic change in preventing waste and increasing recycling on campus.

Through Campus Living Labs, several pilot schemes were implemented across IUA member universities including:

- an online, interactive educational tool "The Waste Game" aimed at students to support waste prevention & recycling knowledge and behaviour,
- a reusable coffee cup trial to reduce the use of disposable coffee cups,
- trialling a measurement tool to reduce food waste,
- staff focussed campus workshops on bulky item reuse,

- student centred bike repair clinics and textiles repair demonstrations.

Insights and resources have been developed through Campus Living Labs and are available here: <https://www.iua.ie/campuslivinglabs>

Play 'The Waste Game': <https://thewastegame.iua.ie/>

Campus Living Labs is aligned with the implementation of the SDGs for Ireland, particularly Goal 12 Responsible Consumption and Production and Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities.

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b. Global leadership for Sustainable Development – training at UL

University of Limerick Student Sustainability hub in partnership with UL Global has completed the first 'Global Leadership for Sustainable Development' training with a group of 21 visiting international students.

The six-week extracurricular pilot course invited participants to become actively engaged in developing solutions for societal challenges based on a 'mission-oriented' participatory approach informed by design and systems thinking.

The intensive course supported students learning in, about and for sustainability, so that they gained knowledge, skills and confidence to effect change. Workshops and seminars covered a range of topics related to specific Sustainable Development Goals, the theoretical underpinnings and evolution of the concept of sustainability. External speakers (such as Limerick Chamber of Commerce, Limerick County Council and UL Access Campus) and field trips (to Cloughjordan Eco-Village and sites of sustainability across the UL campus) further solidified students learning by providing a sense of the lived experience *for* sustainability.

Participants brought their new learning into ideation and co-creation workshops where they identified and proposed a Mission Project in line with UL's 2030 Framework for Sustainability that could tackle a specific issue.

Speaking about the course at a feedback session, learners highlighted how important the structure of the course was to their understanding of sustainability and ability to engage in practical solutions through co-creation and ideation activities. Participants also particularly appreciated the opportunity to identify a problem and work through to a potential solution in a structured fashion.

For example, one participant appreciated the opportunity to work on a group project over the duration of the course, and to see it evolve, saying *"we got to work together and create a project over six weeks. We saw it develop and come together over time."* While others mentioned that they enjoyed the social aspect of the course, saying *"The best thing was the amount of small group work. I liked the fact that it was for international students and allowed for me to connect and meet everyone in the program."*

Commenting on the outcome of the pilot course, Jack O'Connor, course coordinator, and Student Sustainability Lead, said *"I'm delighted that our students enjoyed and benefited from*

the course. We aimed to bring sustainability to life so that students could become active participants in solving some of society's greatest challenges. Within this, supporting a mission-oriented approach was important so that students felt a degree of ownership over their own projects and wider societal issues once they leave university.”

“We have learnt a lot from the delivery of this first iteration of the programme and look forward to the new cohort of students joining us next term thanks to the continued support of UL Global and the Centre for Sustainable Futures and Innovation at UL.”

Further information on the Global Leadership for Sustainable Development course can found here or by contacting sustainability@ul.ie



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c. DEMOCRAT Project - Education for Democracy across Europe



Dublin City University is a partner in the Horizon-funded [DEMOCRAT Project](#) which is investigating Education for Democracy across Europe. The project is working with young people, teachers, teacher educators and governmental and non-governmental organisations

to explore how education (in particular at primary and post-primary levels) can respond to societal challenges such as right-wing extremism, populism, digitalisation, misinformation and climate change. The project involves a Living Lab for Democracy where individuals and groups from across Ireland can come together to share their perspectives on democracy, discuss their experiences of learning and teaching about democracy, and develop their ideas for strengthening Education for Democracy through a series of collaborative action projects.

If you are interested in getting involved in the project please contact:

benjamin.mallon@dcu.ie, justin.rami@dcu.ie, or john.lalor@dcu.ie

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d. Embedding Education for Sustainable Development in the Curriculum – Module at TUS

Technological University of the Shannon (TUS)

Education for Sustainable Development

Level 09, 15 ECTS Module

The Centre for Pedagogical Innovation and Development (CPID) are pleased to offer a new Level 09, 15 ECTS module on *Embedding Education for Sustainable Development in the Curriculum*. This fully online module is available to educators in both Higher and Further Education. Please refer to the attached document for additional information. If you have any questions or require information about fees, please direct your inquiries to:

studentfees.midlands@tus.ie or the Fees Office, TUS, University Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

Start date is **8 January 2023 at 7pm**

Closing date for applications is **8 December 2023 at 5:00pm**.

If you wish to enrol in this module, [register here for ESD module](#)

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e. MSc in Outdoor Education, Sustainability and Wellbeing

As the first year of the **MSc in Outdoor Education, Sustainability and Wellbeing** draws to a close it has given space to pause and reflect on the beliefs that have fuelled the new MSc programme and helped sustain our undergraduate programmes here on the ATU Mayo Campus. Central to the Outdoor Education Programme in ATU Mayo Campus is a belief that outdoor education experiences can foster empathy for the natural world and create a deeper awareness of both our interdependence and interconnection with our environment. Outdoor experiences have the potential to challenge our existing paradigms of sustainability, well-being, and connection to place through engaging learners holistically. These beliefs are manifested by creating engagements and encounters that facilitate empathy, inspire engagement, challenge existing assumptions, and facilitate activism that is mutually beneficial to nature and society. Central to the philosophy of the programme has been a shift away from an emphasis on the benefits humans derive from engagement with nature and a move towards a more ecological view of the world. During the programme emphasis is placed on immediate and direct relationships with the environment to facilitate interconnectivity and inclusiveness and to enable students to witness their interdependence with nature. Understanding this interconnected relationship is critical with respect to the current environmental crisis; an interdependency which is crucial for our mutual flourishing. Sustainability is a recognition and embracing of our place within the biosphere and an acknowledgement of the need to accept our vulnerability and fragility within this system. This interpretation of sustainability recognises the need to adopt a stewardship role to maintain the delicate balance. These beliefs have provided the foundation out of which the three key modules for the programme have developed which are; Education for Sustainability; Nature, and Well-being and finally Experiential Education, Landscape and Place. Given the diverse and evolving nature of the issues considered in the programme, a traditional pedagogical approach would be insufficient in meeting the aims of this programme, which require the learner to be engaged on many levels. The programme development team developed a pedagogy which was experiential, transformational, and immersive. The final module of the MSc Programme involved a five-day journey on Lough Corrib with the participants creating experiences that interrogated our relationship with place, the ecology, local history, folklore, and food history. Denison and Oliver (2013) have advocated that such immersion education “develops passion and persuasive capacity in students providing personal experiences that are memorable and potentially life-changing”. And so it proved to be, with the journey along the beautiful Corrib creating experiences and insights that the students have taken with them into the research phase of the MSc.

If interested in the MSc in Outdoor Education, Sustainability and Wellbeing or in our undergraduate programmes please see: <https://www.gmit.ie/master-of-science-in-outdoor-education-sustainability-and-well-being>



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f. Other News and Updates from the HEA Sector



- **‘The Sustainability Challenge,’ webinar – Thursday, 26 October, 12:20 - 13:15**

The Centre for Engaged Research at DCU is hosting a webinar series entitled ‘The Power of Collaboration.’ As part of this series, DCU’s Sustainability Manager Samantha Fahy gave a talk on the climate and biodiversity challenge and the fundamental need for cross sectoral as well as cross societal collaboration in the development and deployment of solutions. This webinar was recorded and will be available on the [Centre for Engaged research website](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

- **“Connecting higher education, teacher training and schools to advance education for the digital and green transitions,” – Wednesday, 22nd November, 14:00 – 16:00**

This webinar has been organised by the OECD in collaboration with Ireland’s National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, as part of Strand 1 of the Education and Innovation Practice Community (EIPC), which seeks to strengthen the role of higher education in promoting the development of competencies for innovation in secondary education. The workshop will feature peer discussions among policy makers and practitioners from Ireland and internationally with the aim of

identifying key enablers and success factors in strengthening the collaboration between higher education and schools for the development of competencies for innovation. For more information, please contact François Staring (Francois.Staring@oecd.org). Please [click here to register](#).

1. Programmes:

- **Green Teams National Programme – 1, 15 and 29 November 2023, all sessions 09:45 - 12:30**

Developed through the EPA's Green Enterprise scheme, by South East Technological University and Consulteco, the Green Teams National Programme is the national programme for workplace environmental champions and green team members in Ireland. It is a taught and online training and support programme to help green team members in organisations 'upskill' their knowledge and help promote sustainable action in the workplace. Three morning sessions will be held in November. For more information, please [click here](#).

Should you wish to participate in the Green Teams National Programme or if you have any queries, please contact Brian MacNamee at info@greenteams.ie. Please note that a registration fee of €320 per person is payable, which covers the full (Core) programme, including all three sessions.

- **Technological University of the Shannon (TUS) *Embedding Education for Sustainable Development in the Curriculum*, new Level 9 course**

The Centre for Pedagogical Innovation and Development (CPID) at TUS are pleased to offer a new Level 9, 15 ECTS module on *Embedding Education for Sustainable Development in the Curriculum*. This fully online module is available to educators in both Higher and Further Education and will commence **at 19:00 on 24 January 2024**. Please refer to the attached document, '*Embedding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)*' for additional information, and queries may be emailed to studentfees.midlands@tus.ie. If you wish to enrol in this ESD module, please [register here](#) no later than **17:00 on Friday, 8 December 2023**.

2. Healthy Campus updates:

- **EOI sought for Development of an Evaluation Toolkit to support the Implementation of the Healthy Campus Charter and Framework**

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) is seeking expressions of interest from researchers with relevant expertise. The HEA encourages joint applications, including international partners. Joint applications will need to identify a lead institution for administrative purposes. Applications and queries related to applications should be submitted to healthycampus@hea.ie no later than **17:00 on Friday, 17 November**. For more information [click here](#) or see the attached call document '*Final HEA EOI Healthy Campus Evaluation Toolkit*.'

- **HSE Podcast – ‘Healthy Campus’**

The HSE’s weekly ‘HSE Health and Wellbeing’ podcast has released an episode discussing the work of ‘Healthy Campus’ in third-level institutions nationwide. Martina Mullin, TCD and Dr Teresa Hurley, TU Dublin share their insights and learning from their work on the ground with host Fergal Fox. The episode is available on [Podbean](#) and on the [HSE Health and Wellbeing YouTube channel](#).

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7. UN News



a. New UN Publications on Economic Growth and Sustainable Development

2023 State of Climate Services: Health (WMO)

As the world warms at a faster rate than at any point in recorded history, human health is on the frontline. Climate change threatens to reverse decades of progress towards better health and well-being, particularly in the most vulnerable communities. Scientific know-how and resources can help redress the balance, but are not sufficiently accessible or utilized, according to a new multi-agency report coordinated by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). WMO’s annual State of Climate Services report this year focuses on health. It highlights the need for tailored climate information and services to support the health sector in the face of more extreme weather and poor air quality, shifting infectious disease patterns and food and water insecurity.

<https://public.wmo.int/en/our-mandate/climate/state-of-climate-services-report-for-health>

Adaptation Gap Report 2023: Underfinanced. Underprepared; Inadequate investment and planning on climate adaptation leaves world exposed (UNEP)

Progress on climate adaptation is slowing on all fronts when it should be accelerating to catch up with rising climate change impacts and risks, according to a new United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report. Released ahead of the COP28 climate talks taking place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, the Adaptation Gap Report 2023: Underfinanced. Underprepared – Inadequate investment and planning on climate adaptation leaves world exposed finds that the adaptation finance needs of developing countries are 10-18 times as big as international public finance flows – over 50 per cent higher than the previous range estimate.

<https://www.unep.org/resources/adaptation-gap-report-2023>

The African fashion sector: trends, challenges & opportunities for growth (UNESCO)

On 26 October 2023 Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO's Director-General, unveiled a report arguing that the continent has all it takes to become one of the next global fashion leaders, if public decision-makers offer greater support to all those who work in the sector and play a role in the fashion ecosystem. The UNESCO analysis shows that the continent holds all the cards to become one of the next world fashion leaders. It is a major producer of raw materials - 37 out of 54 countries produce cotton -, an exporter of textiles to the value of \$15.5 billion a year, and an importer of textiles, clothing and footwear to the value of \$23.1 billion a year. There is a growing consumer trend on the continent for fashion Made-in-Africa, particularly among young people - the under-25s account for 50% of the continent's total population - and among the burgeoning middle class – which already make up more than 35% of the population - opening up new consumer markets. Africa is also experiencing very rapid growth in the digital sector, which is facilitating intra-African trade and the emergence of young talent. As evidenced by the 32 Fashion Weeks held each year, Africa is also brimming with talent in the fields of haute couture, crafts and clothing. A 42% increase in demand for African haute couture is expected over the next 10 years.

<https://doi.org/10.58337/PHDP8559>

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8. Other News

a. Reduce Your Use Campaign for Public Bodies



Public Bodies are asked to sign up to the Reduce Your Use campaign at <https://forms.office.com/e/tBtCcTYkfW>. The letter recommends sign up by the Energy Performance Officer (EPO) in the organisation. EPOs are appointed from senior Management, this role may be fulfilled by Climate and Sustainability Champion (if deemed appropriate by the organisation). EPOs when registered will then be provided with a list of recommended actions they can take. The correspondence also reminds Public Bodies of the Climate Action Plan, programme and targets.

The purpose of the campaign is to ensure that public sector bodies actively manage energy use and implement actions that reduce energy consumption in their organisation and implement energy awareness campaigns to ensure ongoing awareness and behavioural change amongst employees. Public bodies should maintain or go beyond the 15% energy savings in buildings achieved last year (when compared with 2019). There were some very good examples of energy savings under the 2022/23 Reduce Your Use campaign and SEA' has highlighted useful case studies on its website. OPW analysed energy savings in 29 buildings that implemented the Reduce Your Use campaign last year and estimated savings of circa 20% compared to the same period three years ago. The campaign raises awareness among staff in the public sector of behavioural changes they can make to reduce energy consumption and highlights key actions public bodies can take in relation to heating, lighting, electricity use at peak times, energy auditing and maintenance.

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b. BioBeo: Education for a developing Bioeconomy



Ireland's first, national Bioeconomy Action Plan was published in October 2023, during the annual Bioeconomy Ireland Week. The [Bioeconomy Action Plan 2023-2025](#) includes 33 actions, across seven strategic pillars, which aim to accelerate the development of Ireland's bioeconomy.

One of these key strategic pillar's centres around the area of 'Knowledge and Skills' within the bioeconomy. It recognises that further action is needed in education, as well as training and upskilling, to ensure we have an appropriate workforce for the bioeconomy, both now and in the future. Our primary, post-primary and third-level education systems have enormous potential to assist with this objective, by increasing the understanding, interest, and awareness of the bioeconomy at a young age. To achieve this, the integration of the bioeconomy into on curricula development at primary and post-primary school education is necessary

BioBeo

Paving the way for this is the BioBeo project. BioBeo is a Horizon Europe funded project involving a consortium of 15 European partner countries, including Ireland which is the leader of the education programme. University College Dublin and Maynooth University researchers Dr Tom Curran, Dr Máire Nic an Bhaird and Dr Laoise Ní Chléirigh coordinate the project at an Irish level.

The work of the BioBeo team has never been more relevant, given the mounting pressure on society to ensure that education for sustainable development is explicitly addressed in curricula, in response to the climate crisis.

Objectives

The primary objective is to create and implement an education programme that fosters increased societal engagement in themes related to lifestyle, circularity, and bioeconomy. The programme is centred around five key bioeconomy themes; Interconnectedness, Outdoor Learning, Forestry, Life Below Water and The Food Loop.

Maynooth University is leading the bioeconomy primary education movement ensuring it is embedded in their third level curricula via education modules and a Blended Intensive Programme based on the BioBeo project research. This is enabling student teachers to effectively unpack the bioeconomy concept with children in Ireland and across Europe for a better world.

In Autumn 2023, the BioBeo education programme commenced, bringing together 15 schools across the Netherlands, Belgium, and Ireland. This initiative seeks to develop bioeconomy education and to directly include all community members in the bioeconomy conversation that is urgently required from childhood to adulthood across the world.

In Ireland, the BioBeo primary education programme developed by the researchers of The Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education from Maynooth University is making strides in diverse schools, including inclusive, rural, urban, island, and Irish language settings. It engages fifth and sixth class children, their teachers, SNAs, parents/guardians and wider community members, offering six playful outdoor sessions on the intricacies and innovative creativity of the bioeconomy. PhD researcher James Lowry is co-researching with the school communities and exploring the Bioeconomy concept for the first time in Ireland. Even the BioBeo song is gaining popularity in primary schools across Ireland, debuting with a live rendition at the recent BioBeo partner meeting. The song can be accessed here - https://youtu.be/KIKU-xXNNZq?si=JzY3GD_h4U44X4mX.

Bí gá linn! There are exciting bioeconomy developments ahead.

#Irishbioeconomy #BithgheilleagarnahÉireann #Meitheal #SDGs #BioBeo

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c. Forest Schools



Nestled in a woodland near Kilcock in Co. Kildare is Forest School Ireland's basecamp and training venue. This time of year you can find children there from aged five to ten years wearing head-lamps for their evening session of Winter Forest After School. The sessions are choice-based where they can learn to safely light fires, use tools, make crafts and play. Adults can learn about Forest School there too, either at an introductory session or to train as a FS leader in association with Brigit's Garden's QQI Level 6 Forest School Leader special award.

Forest School Ireland's founder, Ciara Hinksman is the founding chair of the Irish Forest School Association and is a FS leadership course tutor. While learning about nature connection practices in the UK in 2010 she first came across the Forest School pedagogy. In

2012 she was asked to host FS Leadership courses in Ireland delivered jointly by two UK training companies, Circle Of Life Rediscovery and Huathe. At that time there was very little practical knowledge of FS in Ireland, luckily ten years later the awareness and interest in this pedagogy has grown exponentially.

What interests Hinksman is how FS can help our school's meet their priorities for wellbeing and ESD. FS programmes can support all learners, as it appeals to all learning types and the curriculum can come alive when taught through real life scenarios.

Hinksman says, "My connection to nature comes from playing in a small local woodland as a child. Years later, I ran a community-based woodland restoration project there to regenerate the locals relationship with this incredible wild space. My aim is to facilitate as many children as possible to connect to nature, so they in turn will want to protect these diminishing wild spaces and to promote the future growth of native woodlands". She is inspired by an Irish Times article written about academic David Sobel who promotes place-based education. During his visit to Ireland in 2012 he espoused the need to help children to learn to love the land before we ask them to save it and to reconnect to your local place to learn from there first.

Forest School Ireland offers CPD's for outdoor learning including introduction to Forest School courses as well as hosting internationally renowned guest tutors delving into topics such as working with trauma and anxiety in the outdoors, storytelling for nature connection and more.

Follow FSI at www.forestschoollreland.ie, www.instagram.com/forestschoollreland/ and www.facebook.com/earthforceeducation/



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d. SDG National Stakeholder Forum – November 2023



On 17 November, the SDG Unit held its final National Stakeholder conference of 2023 in the Aviva stadium. There were 150 in person attendants and over 100 on-line participants. In response to feedback, the theme for November was **Biodiversity and Community - Building Resilience While Leaving No One Behind**. Our morning panel included presentations from DRCD, NPWS and DFA and Dr. Cara Augustenborg presented on **Green Allies: Uniting Forces for Biodiversity and Climate Change**. There were additional contributions from **CSO** and **John Barimo, SDSN Ireland**. As part of our morning session we had two lived experience presenters - Deirdre de Bhailis who spoke on the Dingle Hub experience and Peadar Kirby who presented on Cloughjordan Eco Village and the communities approach to achieving a minimal carbon footprint. All presentations were informative and introduced plenty of talking points for the morning breakout session. The morning and afternoon online sessions were facilitated by Bobby McCormack, CEO Development Perspectives.

In the afternoon, the focus moved to an international perspective with Bobby McCormack, giving our audience plenty of food for thought for our afternoon breakout session. Our lived experience speakers from Vietnam and Papua New Guinea offered a fascinating insight into their local experiences working with the SDG's. The afternoon panel included Minister Ossian Smyth who received feedback from our breakout groups and contributed to the discussion of their findings. A much admired and appreciated addition to the day came from an exhibition by Junk Kouture. We were lucky enough to have ten award winning designs on site from students across the country. The imagination and creativity was outstanding.

Full details of presentations are published [here](#) and the report on the November forum will be available on Gov.ie in January.



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e. Climate Conversations 2023 – Webinar Series

The Climate Conversations webinar series 2023 ran for eight weeks from June-September. More than 4,000 people took part in the online survey. 12 workshops were held with groups who are vulnerable to the transition to carbon neutrality, or who are not yet taking part in the climate debate. 18 in-depth interviews took place with people across society who have taken on new and effective climate action projects.

More information including recordings of the webinars, along with presentation slides can be found at [gov.ie - Climate Conversations \(www.gov.ie\)](http://gov.ie - Climate Conversations (www.gov.ie))

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f. Teacher's COP

TeachersCOP is an international event created by the **Office for Climate Education (OCE)**, to highlight to global politicians and decision-makers the work of teachers, the challenges they face and the key role they play in the global climate response.

The Ministry of Education of the United Arab Emirates in partnership with the Office for Climate Education and ALEF Education selected 5 Educators Internationally and 25 Educators nationally to participate in the TeachersCOP during COP28 which took place on 10 December.

Poetry at COP28 by Paula Galvin

Paula Galvin, an Educator from Ireland's, project 'Climatry' was selected by the Office for Climate Education (OCE) in the Ministry of Education of the United Arab Emirates, as part of the Educator's voice initiative, to be presented at the Teacher's COP.

"Poetry is not usually associated with Climate Education! But on the 10th December at 4.00 Dubai time, I got the chance of a lifetime to present work about which I am deeply

passionate at TeachersCOP. My project Poetry for Climate Action and Climate Justice was selected from 386 projects around the world.

I was quite nervous presenting as it was being livestreamed across the world, as well as being translated into Arabic, Spanish and French! But I was conscious of my responsibility to the students and staff of Clonburris N.S to present the voice of 100s of students concerning the climate crisis.

The poem I chose to read was:

The Earth is poor

The Earth is screaming and crying for help

But her crying is muffled by the laziness and arrogance of all Earth's people

The Earth is poor

We have taken all her valuables

Without hesitation

Her seas are drowning in plastic

Her animals become extinct

The Earth has had enough

Hear her roar

My presentation received great praise with the project described as "a powerful way to give a voice to children"

"A magnificent project which uses creativity to explore climate action and to give hope"

Kottie Christie -Blick, a climate education consultant from New York, described it as " an amazing presentation on using the Arts to inspire climate action"

I hope to continue this work with schools, colleges of education and NGOs"

Find out more here: [TeachersCOP | Office for Climate Education \(oce.global\)](https://www.teacherscop.org/office-for-climate-education)

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g. OECD – Education Policy Outlook 2023

A copy of the report is available here: [Education Policy Outlook 2023: Empowering All Learners to Go Green | en | OECD](https://www.oecd.org/education/education-policy-outlook-2023-empowering-all-learners-to-go-green/)

In November 2023, the OECD published its Education Policy Outlook 2023 report themed “Empowering All Learners to Go Green”.

The report says that, “*In 2024, education and training systems have a ‘unique potential’ to build the foundations of equitable, sustainable societies. In the OECD National Survey for Comparative Policy Analysis 2023: Empowering Learners to go Green, 90% of participating systems identified environmental sustainability as a key priority for 2024.*

There is no trade-off between addressing the biggest challenge facing people and the planet and responding to other external shocks and long-term evolutions, especially since these will only become increasingly interdependent. This implies empowering lifelong learners, institutions and education systems with the agency required to act, today.

Building on the OECD’s Framework of Responsiveness and Resilience in Education Policy, survey responses from 36 education systems and international policy analysis, this report explores how education systems can: 1) translate learners’ awareness into environmental action; 2) provide learners with experiences to shape the green economy; and 3) position education as a strategic sector for the green transition.

By exploring these areas, the report aims to support countries to follow up on the goals established by the 2022 OECD Declaration on Building Equitable Societies Through Education. The report is part of the Education Policy Outlook series - the OECD’s analytical observatory of education policy.

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h. Climate Action Newsletter – November 2023 Issue



The November 2023 issue of the Government of Ireland’s Climate Action Newsletter ‘**Climate Action News**’ has now been published

To read features on Climate Action Plan progress, solar panels for schools, the communities working on climate, and how to acquire new green skills along with latest consultations, calls for research and events, see [LinkedIn](#), or you can sign up to receive the newsletter by email [here](#)

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We hope that you enjoyed reading this issue the Department's ESD Newsletter. If you wish to receive it directly into your inbox every quarter, please sign-up to the circulation list [here!](#)