



2026-2027 YRE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION CRITERIA

26/27 YRE International Competition Criteria

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FOR ALL SUBMISSIONS

ALL THE SUBMISSIONS SHOULD:

- Include the following information: 1) Name of author(s), 2) Age of author(s) on day of submission to the National Competition, 3) Name of registered school or group, 4) Country of residence, 5) Title of entry, 6) Student reflection on the process of creating the entry 7) Link(s) to dissemination
- Fulfil the Format & Structure criteria for its category.
- Must be disseminated by the students and proof of that needs to be submitted as well as links
- Be in written and/or spoken English or must have English subtitles.
- Focus on real and current local issues with links to the global context.
- Allow for the students own decision- making and voice to be recognized clearly
- Present possible and constructive solutions supported by credible sources e.g., local stakeholders, experts, academic research, etc.
- Include a credit role, footnotes, or a bibliography with the sources of images, video footage, music and information not created by students.
- Include a reflection on the idea, process, intention and learning of the investigation, the communication, the creation of the entry and the whole learning process.

Together with every submission, students will answer: "In your own words, describe why you choose the topic and highlight the process you followed to develop the communication entry. To help you share your thoughts, you can try to answer the following questions." These questions are meant to encourage students to reflect on the complete process, reinforcing that the competition values the educational journey as much as the final submission.

Helping open questions:

- Why did you choose this topic?



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- Why is this issue important to you and your community?
- What process did you adopt to develop your journalistic piece?
- What did you hope people would understand after seeing, reading or listening to your work? What impact did you want to create?
- Why did you choose this communication format?
- Who did you want to reach?
- How did you communicate with your work? (e.g. exhibition, workshop, local newspaper, municipality, social media, community event, school presentation...)
- What happened after sharing your work? Did you receive feedback, start conversations or inspire action?
- What was the biggest thing you learned during this project

Students will also have the possibility to upload supporting materials that illustrate the development of their work. Their purpose is to provide additional context where useful and help make the students' learning process more visible.

All entries need to show proof of student dissemination:

Dissemination must be carried out by the student(s) themselves and should reflect the intended message, audience and purpose of their work.

Evidence of this dissemination must be provided with the international submission.

National Operators, schools and educators are strongly encouraged to further amplify students' work, for example, through websites, newsletters or social media. However, this should complement rather than replace student-led dissemination.

Promotion carried out solely by the National Operator, school or educator will therefore not count as evidence that the student has completed Step 4 of the YRE methodology and only give extra points, when complementing student-led dissemination



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ARTICLE

Articles should clearly explain why the issue matters, connect it to broader global contexts, and propose feasible, constructive solutions. Submissions may use various formats, including traditional newspaper-style articles, interviews, online blog posts, or long-form social media stories (for example, Substack, Medium, Instagram, or Facebook posts).

Try this category if you enjoy writing, interviewing, and telling stories. Format

and Structure

- Maximum 1,000 words (after translation into English). (5% margin allowed)
- Title no more than 140 characters

Submissions:

- Traditional articles: Microsoft Word document.
- Blog/social posts: public link if disseminated online.
- Include 1–3 original or non-original images (photos, illustrations, or diagrams) with captions (max 20 words) and source attribution.

Must include:

- Introduction (what is the issue and why is it urgent?)
- Body (facts, quotes, solutions)
- Conclusion (key takeaway, impact, or call to action)
- Clear answers to: Who? What? Where? When? Why?

How?

- Bibliography
- Student led dissemination

Audio-Visual Enhancements (Optional)



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You can add links to voice notes, interviews, or explainer content as embedded links or QR codes, as long as the main text remains central.

Honest and Unbiased Reporting

- Use credible sources for facts and statistics.
- Quotes must be real and properly attributed.
- All sources must be cited:
 - Traditional articles: footnotes and a References list.
 - Blogs or social posts: attribution tags and linked references.

Remember this is not an academic essay. Incorporating direct interviews or statements from knowledgeable individuals is encouraged and increases credibility.

Constructive and Well-Rounded Perspective

- Explore historical, economic, social, or political dimensions.
- Show links between local issues and global themes (e.g., climate change, biodiversity).
- Include feasible and practical solutions. Try to highlight examples of youth leadership or youth led solutions whenever possible. Propose ways for other young people to get involved or lead similar efforts.
- Reflect diverse perspectives (e.g., different ages, genders, Indigenous voices).

Originality and Independence

- The article must be original in content and or approach.
- Participants are expected to conduct fieldwork and research beyond their school (interviews, visits, observations).
- Your voice should be clear. Editing help is acceptable, but the ideas and structure must be yours.



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Notes

AI-generated text is not permitted. However, AI tools may be used for grammar checks, formatting, or translation. Where AI has been used, students should explain how it was used; why it was used; which parts remain entirely their own work and how AI supported, rather than replaced, their investigation or creative process. If AI-generated content is detected without transparent reference, points will be deducted.

Indicate if translation tools were used.

Original photos from the article may be considered for the Photo of the Year Award.

Each YRE National Office may submit up to three national articles into the YRE International Competition, one per age group: 11–14, 15–18, 19–25.

Articles may also be entered as part of the International Twinning category.



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ONE TAKE PHOTO

This category invites you to capture a truthful, powerful moment related to an environmental issue or solution. The photo must be candid and unposed, like a snapshot of reality.

Try this category if you enjoy observing life and telling stories through images.

Format and Structure

- Submit one original photograph (.JPEG or .PNG, 150–300 DPI).
- Title (max 140 characters)
- Short description (max. 100 words)

Description:

- Either provide a description (maximum 100 words) plus an optional caption (maximum 20 words) or a single description (maximum 120 words).
- The description and caption should explain:
 - What is happening?
 - Why it matters.
 - What the environmental link or message is
 - Suggested solutions.
 - If relevant, describe any youth leadership or community greening activities depicted.

The Photo Must Be:



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- Candid/unposed- not staged or manipulated.
- Technically clear (composition, lighting, sharpness).
- Use of AI generation (text or visuals) is not permitted. AI might be used for basic correction editing such as brightness, contrast, cropping and for grammar check, corrections and translation. If AI has been used for anything, students should explain how it was used; why it was used; which parts remain entirely their own work and how AI supported, rather than replaced, their investigation or creative process. If AI-generated content is detected without transparent reference, points will be deducted.
- If any data or quotes are used in your description or caption must be cited with credible sources (footnotes or references list).

Constructive and Well-Rounded Perspective

- Show links between the local story and global context (e.g., pollution, climate, biodiversity).
- Include a suggested action, even if small or symbolic. Entries that capture youth-led or community-led environmental improvements are encouraged.
- Explore social, economic, or cultural dimensions where possible.

Originality and Independence

- The photograph must be original and unique in subject or perspective.
- Participants should conduct fieldwork or spend time observing the scene.

Notes

This is a truth-telling category: no posing, no effects beyond basic corrections. One

Take Photo entries may also be considered for the Photo of the Year Award.



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Each YRE National Office may submit one national one take photo entry into the YRE International Competition: age 11-25.



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STAGED CAMPAIGN PHOTO

This category is for participants who want to create a powerful visual message about an environmental issue. You may stage, edit, or design your photo using creative tools, but the base image must be your own.

Try this category if you enjoy design, visual storytelling, and campaigning.

Format and Structure

- Submit one edited/staged photo (.JPEG or .PNG, 150–300 DPI).
- Title (max 140 characters).
- Description (max 100 words) explaining:
 - The issue
 - Your message
 - The call to action- this could inspire youth leadership or greening efforts in your community.
- The image must be visually high-quality (composition, clarity, contrast).

Creative Freedom and Use of AI

- You may use AI tools, filters, text overlays, and photo editing apps.
- Edits must support the message and not distort facts.
- Be transparent about any enhancements.
- Where AI has been used, students should explain how it was used; why it was used; which parts remain entirely their own work and how AI supported, rather than replaced, their investigation or creative process. If AI-generated content is detected without transparent reference, points will be deducted



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Honest and Transparent Messaging

- Facts and statistics must be from credible sources, cited in a References list or footnote.
- Quotes must be real and attributed.
- Ensure the final message is clear, ethical, and responsible.

Constructive and Well-Rounded Perspective

- Highlight a local issue connected to global themes. Entries that promote youth-driven initiatives or show the positive impact of greening local spaces are strongly encouraged.
- Include a clear call to action within or alongside the image.
- Reflect inclusive perspectives where possible.

Originality and Independence

- The concept and execution must be your own.
- Collaboration is allowed, but you must lead the creative process.
- Fieldwork or research to inform your message is encouraged.

Notes

- AI use and creative editing tools are encouraged if used responsibly and referenced transparently.
- Entries may also be considered for the Image of the Year Award.
- Each YRE National Office may submit one national staged campaign photo entry into the YRE International Competition: age 11-25.

PHOTO STORY

The Photo Story category invites you to tell a chronological story of environmental change, challenge, or community action through a series of original photographs. Each image must represent a unique moment in the narrative, not just different angles of the same scene.

Try this category if you enjoy visual storytelling, documenting projects, or connecting events into a clear sequence.

Format and Structure

- Submit 3–5 original photographs (.JPEG or .PNG, 150–300 DPI).
- Title (max 140 characters).
- Provide a description (max 100 words) explaining:
 - The main theme or issue
 - The story arc
- Each photo must include a caption (max 20 words) explaining:
 - What it shows
 - How it fits into the sequence
- All images must be of high visual quality (composition, lighting, sharpness).

Honest and Unbiased Reporting

- Photos must reflect real-life events without staging or manipulation.
- Basic corrections (brightness, contrast, cropping) are allowed if they do not alter reality.
- No AI generation, filters, or posed shots. If AI has been used for anything else (like editing, grammar checks or translation), students should explain: how it was used; why it was used; which parts remain entirely their own work and how AI supported, rather than replaced, their investigation or creative process. If AI-generated content is detected without transparent reference, points will be deducted.
- Facts and quotes must come from credible sources and be cited.



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Constructive and Well-Rounded Perspective

- Show the context behind the issue (historical, social, cultural, or ecological).
- Link the local story to global themes.
- Include a solution or next step. Entries that document youth-led greening projects or environmental improvements in communities are encouraged.

Originality & Independence

- Each image should contribute uniquely to the story.
- Repetition or slight variations of the same shot will not score well.
- Fieldwork and observation are strongly encouraged.

Notes

This is a story, not a gallery, each photo must advance the narrative. If

AI or excessive editing is detected, points will be deducted.

One photo from the photo story category may also be considered for the Photo of the Year Award.

Each YRE National Office may submit one national one photo story entry into the YRE International Competition: age 11-25.



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LONG-FORM REPORTAGE VIDEO

This category invites you to produce a mini-documentary or video news report about a real-world environmental issue. Your video should combine research, interviews, field footage, and narration, like a segment you would see on TV or YouTube.

Try this category if you enjoy investigative storytelling and filmmaking.

Format and Structure

- Maximum length: 3 minutes (excluding credits).
- Must be filmed in landscape (horizontal) format.
- Title (max 140 characters)
- Accepted file formats: .mp4, .mov (suitable for YouTube).
- Structure should include:
 - Introduction (present the issue)
 - Body (context, causes, interviews, data)
 - Conclusion (insights or solutions)
- High-quality visuals and audio are required:
 - Sharp footage and clear composition
 - Clear narration/dialogue with minimal background noise
- Use a microphone or quiet space where possible.

Honest and Unbiased Reporting

- Facts and statistics must come from credible sources.
- Quotes and interviews must be real and properly attributed.



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- At least 70% of footage and audio must be original.
- All sources must be cited in a credit roll or References list.
- No AI-generated footage, voiceovers, or deepfakes. If AI has been used for anything, students should explain: how it was used; why it was used; which parts remain entirely their own work; how AI supported, rather than replaced, their investigation or creative process. If AI-generated content is detected without transparent reference, points will be deducted.

Editing, Tools and Independence

- All editing must be done by participants.
- Use apps or tools (CapCut, Adobe Rush, InShot, iMovie) to enhance production.
- Basic editing (subtitles, transitions, overlays) is encouraged.
- Your video must reflect your own creative decisions and effort.

Constructive and Well-Rounded Perspective

- Explore social, economic, cultural, or political aspects of the issue.
- Link the local story to global environmental challenges.
- Include a solution or response.
- Try to feature diverse voices, especially from community perspectives.
- Whenever possible, showcase youth leadership in environmental action, including examples of greening initiatives and collective improvements of local spaces.

Originality and Independence

- Your video should be original in topic and or approach.



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- Fieldwork and research beyond the classroom are required.

Notes

A landscape format is required, otherwise video will not be accepted.

Long-form reportage videos with over 70% of visuals and or audio that are not original will not be accepted.

Each YRE National Office may submit up to three national long-form reportage videos into the YRE International Competition, one per age group: 11–14, 15–18, 19–25.

Long-form reportage videos may also be entered as part of the International Twinning categories.



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SHORT-FORM CAMPAIGN VIDEO

This category invites you to create an impactful 60-second video campaign that raises awareness, promotes sustainable values, or inspires your audience to act. Videos can be staged, scripted, or creatively edited for impact. This format is ideal for platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, or Snapchat. This format is intended to:

- capture attention immediately;
- concise storytelling;
- strong visual rhythm and pacing;
- audience awareness;
- clear calls to action;
- communication styles commonly used across social media platforms.

Try this category if you enjoy social media content creation and creative advocacy.

Format and Structure

- Maximum length: 1 minute (excluding credits).
- Must be filmed in portrait (vertical) format.
- Title (max 140 characters).
- Accepted formats: .mp4, .mov (suitable for YouTube).
- Must include a clear, visible call to action at the end.
- Visual and audio quality:
 - Sharp visuals, smooth editing
 - Clear narration or on-screen text
 - Low background noise (subtitles recommended)



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Honest and Credible Messaging

- Campaigns may be stylised, symbolic, or performative, but all factual content must come from credible, cited sources.
- Participants must create at least 70% of the visuals and audio themselves.
- AI-generated video, faces, or voice cloning are not allowed. If AI has been used for anything, students should explain: how it was used; why it was used; which parts remain entirely their own work; how AI supported, rather than replaced, their investigation or creative process. If AI-generated content is detected without transparent reference, points will be deducted. If detected, points will be deducted.
- Use editing apps and creative tools responsibly; messages must be ethical, and evidence based.

Editing, Effects and Creative Freedom

- AI-enhanced tools, filters, transitions, music, animations, and visual effects are welcome but need to be referenced transparently.
- Apps like CapCut, Canva, VN, TikTok editor, and Adobe Rush can be used.
- The final creative control, editing, and voice must belong to the participants.

Constructive and Well-Rounded Perspective

The video should address:

- An environmental issue or behaviour
- Why it matters (local context)
- What the audience can do (global relevance)
- The message should be clear, motivating, and inclusive. Solutions can be small (daily habits) or larger (policy awareness)—just make them relatable.
- Campaigns that spotlight youth-led actions or promote green communities are especially encouraged.

Originality and Independence



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- The video must be original in topic and or approach.
- Fieldwork and research beyond school are strongly encouraged.

Notes

A portrait format is required, otherwise video will not be accepted.

Short-form reportage videos with over 70% of visuals and or audio that are not original will not be accepted. AI tools are encouraged for editing, provided content remains ethical and accurate and the use of AI needs to be referenced transparently.

Each YRE National Office may submit up to three national short-form reportage videos into the YRE International Competition, one per age group: 11–14, 15–18, 19–25.



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PODCAST

The Podcast category invites you to produce an engaging 5-minute audio story exploring an environmental issue, experience, or solution. You can record interviews, reports, discussions, or personal reflections.

Try this category if you enjoy podcasting, radio, and storytelling through sound.

Format and Structure

- Submit a 5-minute audio segment for judging.
- Also submit the full-length podcast (any duration).
- Title (max 140 characters).
- Accepted formats: .mp3, .wav, .mp4 (audio/video), YouTube link, or SoundCloud link.
- Submissions consist of audio only. Where the spoken language is not English, students should submit a simple video containing:
 - a static visual (for example a solid background, the YRE logo or a single image); and
 - synchronised English subtitles that follow the spoken audio.

Structure:

- Introduction (hook your listener)
- Body (insights, interviews, reflections)
- Conclusion (takeaway or solutions)
- Sound quality:
 - Clear voices and steady pacing
 - Music and effects balanced so narration remains audible.
 - Minimal background noise (use a mic or quiet space if possible)



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Honest and Transparent Content

- Facts, quotes, and statistics must come from credible sources.
- Using real interviews and direct quotes is strongly encouraged.
- All sources must be cited in a References list.
- At least 70% of the audio must be original, recorded by the participants.
- AI-generated voices or audio are not allowed. AI tools may be used for editing, transcription, or sound balancing.
- If AI has been used for anything, students should explain: how it was used; why it was used; which parts remain entirely their own work; how AI supported, rather than replaced, their investigation or creative process. If AI-generated content is detected without transparent reference, points will be deducted.

Editing, Tools and Independence

- Participants must edit the podcast themselves.
- Tools like Audacity, GarageBand, Anchor, Adobe Audition, or Descript are encouraged.
- Use royalty-free music and properly credit any sound effects.

Constructive and Well-Rounded Perspective

- Explore the social, cultural, historical, or political context of the issue.
- Show how local action connects to global challenges.
- Feature stories of youth leadership in environmental action and examples of greening communities wherever possible.
- Reflect inclusive values and aim to inspire or empower listeners.
- Provide a clear takeaway or solution. Encourage listeners to act, especially through youth-led or community greening efforts.

Originality and Independence



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- Your podcast must be original in topic and or approach.
- Fieldwork, interviews, and research beyond the classroom are encouraged.

Notes

The podcast is audio format only. Exceptional cases are if the voice is not in English. In that case, a static photo and synchronized subtitles are required.

AI tools may be used for editing and transcription but not for generating voices. Their use must be referenced transparently.

Each YRE National Office may submit up to one national podcast (visual or audio/ visual only) into the YRE International Competition: age 11–25.



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TWINNING / INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Twinning is defined by collaboration between different contexts and submissions can be in form of Article, Short form campaign video or Long form reporting video.

The format, structure and guidelines are the same as for the submissions under that format.

Only difference is:

- In the footnotes, the students need to explain how the collaboration process developed, how the communication was and how it took shape. How often did they talk? How were decisions made?

Examples of Twinning include:

- two schools investigating the same issue in different countries;
- students comparing local perspectives on a shared environmental challenge together, from their own local context;
- jointly designing investigations, collecting evidence and producing shared outputs.

Notes

There is no limit to how many International Collaboration entries YRE National Operators can submit to the international competition.



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OPEN FORMAT

The Open Format category invites you to communicate an environmental issue, investigation or solution through a format that does not fit within the existing Article, Photo, Video or Podcast categories.

The purpose of this category is to give you the freedom to choose the communication format that best fits your message, intended audience and way of expressing yourself.

Possible formats can include:

- Illustration or painting
- Creative writing
- Letters
- Comics
- Games
- Installations
- Digital or interactive storytelling
- Mixed media
- Musical creation (songs, musical video)
- AI-supported creative works
- Other innovative communication formats



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Try this category if your investigation has led you to a way of communicating that does not fit within the existing YRE formats.

Investigation and Communication

- The submission must address an environmental issue, experience or solution.
- The work should emerge from investigation, research and/or engagement with the issue, in line with the YRE methodology.
- The chosen format should have a clear communication purpose.
- Consider who you want to reach, what you want them to understand or do, and why your chosen format is an effective way to reach them.
- Solutions, positive action and youth leadership are strongly encouraged.

Originality and Independence

- The idea, message and creative decisions must belong to the participant(s).
- Students should demonstrate ownership of both the investigation and communication process.
- AI and other creative tools may be used where appropriate, but their use must be clearly declared and the final work must remain driven by the student's own ideas and decisions.

Notes

The Open Format category is not assessed on artistic or technical ability alone. Submissions will be considered primarily through their environmental relevance, investigation, student ownership, communication purpose, intended audience, solutions, reflection and alignment with the YRE methodology.

For the 2026-2027 pilot year, there is no submission limit for National Operators. All Open Format entries submitted nationally may progress to the International Competition.

The objective is not to judge artistic ability, but to recognise meaningful environmental communication that emerges from investigation, learning and youth leadership. The Open Format category would not introduce separate artistic assessment criteria. Instead, submissions would be reviewed through the same



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educational framework proposed for all YRE entries, considering: environmental relevance; student ownership; investigation and evidence; communication purpose; intended audience; solutions and positive action; reflection and learning; and alignment with the YRE methodology. This ensures that all entries, regardless of format, are evaluated against the same educational expectations while allowing students greater freedom to select the communication medium that best fits their message and audience.

There will be no ranked 1st, 2nd or 3rd place winners in this category. All entries will be recognised.



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LEARNING JOURNEY – RECOGNITION of following a High Quality process

YRE International recognises that a meaningful educational experience does not always result in the most technically polished final product. The Learning Journey Recognition provides National Operators with an opportunity to highlight entries that demonstrate an outstanding process of investigation, learning, student agency, intentional communication and reflection, regardless of the format or technical quality of the final work.

What should the entry demonstrate?

Entries should show particularly strong evidence of:

- Student ownership and agency
- Meaningful investigation and learning
- Engagement with different people, perspectives or sources
- Intentional communication choices
- Clear consideration of audience and purpose
- Reflection on the process and learning
- Connection between investigation, communication and action
- Alignment with the YRE methodology

Submission

Each YRE National Operator may nominate up to 3 entries for Learning Journey Recognition.

- Entries may come from any age group or submission format.
- The final entry should still meet the fundamental principles of YRE, but technical or production quality is not the primary consideration.
- The student's submission reflection and any supporting evidence provided should help demonstrate the learning journey behind the work.
- An entry does not need to be a national category winner to be nominated.



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Recognition

FEE Global will review nominated entries specifically through the lens of learning, agency, intentionality and reflection.

There will be no ranking or fixed number of winners. All nominated entries that demonstrate a particularly strong educational and reflective process will receive Learning Journey Recognition from FEE.