

PRESS RELEASE · TOKYO, 30 APRIL 2025

Global Youth MIDORI Platform 2025 Call for Applicants for International Training Programme

The United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) and the AEON Environmental Foundation (the Foundation) are pleased to announce that applications are now open for the Global Youth MIDORI platform (GYM) 2025 International Training Programme, to be held online in August.

GYM is a joint programme launched by UNU-IAS and the Foundation in 2024 to enhance the capacity of youth to address global environmental challenges such as biodiversity loss and climate change, and establish a platform for young individuals. It enhances the knowledge and skills necessary for youth to meaningfully participate in international decision-making processes, developing the capacity of young leaders to build a sustainable society both locally and globally.

An intensive three-day online training will be held in August, with a speech contest on the final day. The contest will select four winners, and the top two will have the opportunity to participate in the 2025 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP30¹) in Belém, Brazil, as part of the delegation of the United Nations University. GYM also offers various learning, capacity building and networking opportunities to all participants for their long-term development as youth leaders.

Application Guidelines

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Date & Time | 4–6 August 2025, 09:00 – 17:30 (JST) |
| Format | Online |
| Language | English |
| Eligibility | <p>The call is open to eligible applicants from all countries. Candidates must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be currently enrolled in a university undergraduate programme (as of 1 May 2025),• be proficient in English and be able to follow discussions and actively participate, and• have experience in or be currently engaged in actions to address climate change and/or biodiversity loss. <p>For further details, please refer to the application guidelines</p> |
| Number of participants | 15 students |

¹ Please note that the conference is subject to change in case of unforeseen circumstances.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Fee | Free |
| How to apply | Please complete the online application form |
| Application period | 1–30 May 2025 (JST) |
| Information Session | 8 May 2025, 16:00 – 17:00 (JST), online Please register in advance. |

Background

Global Youth MIDORI platform (GYM)

GYM was launched in 2024 to enhance the capacity of youth to develop solutions for global challenges, establishing a platform for youth. This programme consists of (i) international global training with a speech contest, (ii) participation in international conferences for selected winners of the speech contests, and (iii) activities to develop a platform for youth. GYM is a pioneering initiative in Asia, providing comprehensive support for youth, including opportunities to participate in international conferences and long-term capacity development. GYM will contribute to expanding meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes across countries.

The 1st GYM International Training was held online on 5–7 August 2024, with 18 undergraduate and postgraduate students from eight countries in Japan and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. After the lectures and discussions on global environmental issues, including biodiversity loss and climate change, participants presented proposed ideas in a speech contest. The top 2 awardees were invited to participate in the 2024 UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP16) in Cali, Colombia, where they contributed to discussions to accelerate meaningful youth participation at an official side event. In addition, the GYM 2024 participants took part in various other activities. Further details on GYM 2024 activities are available at the following links:

1. Side Event Spotlights Youth Capacity Building for Climate and Biodiversity
<https://unu.edu/ias/news/side-event-spotlights-youth-capacity-building-climate-and-biodiversity>
2. Elevating Youth Voices for Global Biodiversity Action (CBD COP16 Side Event)
<https://unu.edu/ias/news/elevating-youth-voices-global-biodiversity-action>
3. Challenges to Youth Engagement in Global Policymaking
<https://unu.edu/ias/news/challenges-youth-engagement-global-policymaking>

AEON Environmental Foundation

The AEON Environmental Foundation was established in 1990 by Takuya Okada (currently Honorary Chairman and Advisor of AEON Co., Ltd.) as Japan's first independent corporate foundation focusing on the global environment, in line with AEON's basic principles "Pursuing peace, respecting humanity, and contributing to local communities, always with the customer's point of view as its core." Since its establishment, the foundation has implemented a variety of projects, such as tree planting, grant and assistance programmes, as well as environmental education and award programmes. Currently the

foundation is working to create new *satoyama* forests with the aim of building a more sustainable future for local communities in Japan.

United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)

UNU-IAS was established in 2014 as an institute of the United Nations University (UNU). Its mandate is to produce evidence-based knowledge and solutions to inform policymaking and address priority issues that are of concern to the United Nations, its People, and Member States. Based in Tokyo, Japan, UNU-IAS integrates expertise across four thematic areas: governance for climate change & sustainable development, biodiversity & society, water & resource management and innovation & education. The institute also offers master's and doctoral degrees, postdoctoral fellowships, and intensive short courses, in close collaboration with leading universities in Japan and other countries. Additionally, UNU-IAS contributes to activities promoting youth engagement such as the Japan Youth Environmental Activity Contest for high school students. UNU-IAS recently launched a postgraduate degree specialization on the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Media Contacts

For media inquiries directed to UNU-IAS in English or French: Ms. Anne Lecroq, Media & Engagement Associate (anne.lecroq@unu.edu)

For media inquiries directed to UNU-IAS in Japanese: Ms. Tomoyo Tanno, Communications Associate (tanno@unu.edu)

For media inquiries directed to the AEON Environmental Foundation in Japanese or English: Mr. Amano (y_amano@aeonpeople.biz), tel: 043-212-6022