



RCE Youth Publication 2026

Concept Note

Working title: Youth in Charge: RCE Leaders for Sustainable Futures

1. Background and scope

The Global RCE Network celebrated its [20th anniversary](#) at the 14th Global RCE Conference on 21-23 October 2025 in Okayama, Japan, which concluded with the adoption of “[The 2025 Okayama Declaration: RCEs’ Collective Commitment for Sustainable Futures](#).” This milestone document reaffirmed RCEs’ shared commitment to harnessing Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as a transformative force for societal change.

Among the declaration's five priority areas, ***Priority Area 3: Empowering and Mobilizing Youth Leadership***, recognizes the essential role of youth in shaping sustainable societies as co-creators of knowledge and action. The declaration calls for meaningful and inclusive youth participation in decision-making spanning planning, implementation, and evaluation of ESD initiatives.

In line with this commitment, the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) is developing a case-study publication, which aims to spotlight impactful **youth-led sustainability projects** from the Global RCE Network. In alignment with the [Pact for the Future](#) and related frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ESD for 2030, and [Youth Declaration on Transforming Education](#), this publication aims to demonstrate real-world examples of youth action that drives sustainable development on the ground.

UNU-IAS, therefore, invite submissions that reflect **meaningful youth engagement and leadership** in local ESD initiatives. The publication aims to empower young people around the world to advance their engagement and leadership in sustainability. It will serve as both a source of inspiration and a practical reference for policymakers, educators, and community leaders seeking to strengthen youth participation in building sustainable futures.



2. Basic information

- Working title: “Youth in Charge: RCE Leaders for Sustainable Futures”
- Published by: United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)
- Tentative Publication Date: **12 August 2026 (International Youth Day)**

3. Who can submit

The submission must be written by or collaboratively co-written with RCE youth representative(s). Please refer to the submission guidelines document for more information regarding eligibility and meaningful youth participation.

****Definition of youth:** The United Nations defines “youth” as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 for statistical purposes. However, the editorial team acknowledges that the definition of youth can vary substantially across the world. As such, this publication invites submissions from authors and co-authors **aged between 15 and 35** in line with common practice in sustainability programmes.*

Submissions are particularly encouraged from projects that:

- Position youth **as partners** or **as leaders** (see Figure 1 in Submission Guidelines)
- Are led by or engage young people from **underrepresented backgrounds**, including **Indigenous youth**
- Demonstrate successful cases of **intergenerational collaboration**
- Promote **gender equality** and are led by young women and girls
- Empower **young persons with disabilities**
- Utilize or explore the potential of **digital technologies and artificial intelligence** in advancing sustainability

Kindly note that inclusion in the **publication is not guaranteed**; the final selection will be made to ensure balanced thematic coverage, geographic diversity, and representation of varied approaches.

4. Submission Guidelines

Interested contributors are invited to submit their case studies by **2 February 2026**.

For detailed instructions on content, format, and eligibility, please refer to the Submission Guidelines document.

Submit your application to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YouthCallforSubmission>