Green Entrepreneurship and Green Jobs Toolkit

A Practical Guide for Youth, Sustainability, and Innovation

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Co-funded by the European Union.

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Participating Organizations

Youth4Planet

YEKGD (Türkiye)

European Social Innovation Institute

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Preface

The Green Entrepreneurship and Green Jobs Toolkit was developed within the Erasmus+ KA210 project coordinated by Youth4Planet (Luxembourg), together with YEKGD (Türkiye) and ESIT vzw (Belgium).
This publication is part of a broader movement empowering young people to imagine, design, and implement solutions for a sustainable future.

The Toolkit was co-created through a process of collective learning and creativity. Youth workers, educators, and young participants from various backgrounds contributed examples of green practices, local innovations, and personal initiatives. These contributions became the foundation for a practical, inspirational resource designed to help others take action.

This Toolkit is not only a record of what was achieved during the project, it is an open invitation. It encourages readers to continue this journey, to share their own practices, and to keep the spirit of collaboration alive across borders. Sustainability, after all, grows stronger when shared.

Introduction

The world is changing rapidly environmentally, socially, and technologically. Young people today stand at the intersection of these transitions, facing global challenges but also holding immense potential for leadership and innovation.

The Green Entrepreneurship and Green Jobs Toolkit was created to turn that potential into practice. It brings together inspiring examples, creative exercises, and real-life stories that demonstrate how sustainability can become an everyday reality in education, employment, entrepreneurship, and civic life.

Each section explores a theme: from renewable energy and sustainable food systems to art, culture, and circular economy practices. The examples come from across Europe, many of them developed or highlighted by participants in this very project. Together, they show that climate action and creativity can go hand in hand and that local actions can shape global impact.

How to Use This Toolkit

This Toolkit is designed as a living learning companion not just a text to read, but a guide to explore, reflect, and create with.
You can use it individually or as part of group workshops, youth exchanges, or training activities.

Step 1 - Discover
Each practice showcases a real-life example of sustainability or green entrepreneurship. Read it for inspiration and note what makes it unique.

Step 2 - Reflect
The Learning Point section highlights key insights and takeaways that can help you understand the broader relevance of each example.

Step 3 - Explore Facts
The Did You Know? section provides data and references connecting each practice to global sustainability goals and EU priorities.

Step 4 - Apply and Experiment
The How to Apply section turns ideas into action, offering hands-on examples you can adapt to your own organization, school, or community.

Step 5 - Think Further
Each Think Further question invites readers to connect local ideas with bigger systems to imagine how individual actions can grow into collective transformation.

Step 6 - Create Your Own Practice
Finally, this section invites you to innovate. Use the previous examples as a springboard to design your own sustainable action, workshop, or initiative.

Tip: The Toolkit is flexible. You can explore themes in order or jump directly to topics that connect with your organization's goals or local realities.

Co-Creation and the Padlet Contribution Space

This Toolkit is the result of collective creativity - ideas, experiences, and best practices shared by participants during the project. Many of the examples originated from an online idea board (Padlet) where young people uploaded initiatives from their communities.

You can visit and contribute to this ongoing collection of good practices here:
Green Practices for the Toolkit - Padlet

Join the movement:

Share your local story, project, or idea about sustainability, green jobs, or circular practices. Your contribution might become part of the next edition of this Toolkit - keeping it alive and evolving with each new generation of changemakers.

About the Project

Green Entrepreneurship and Green Jobs: Empowering Youth for a Sustainable Future

This Toolkit was created as part of the Erasmus+ KA210 Youth project “Green Entrepreneurship and Green Jobs”, led by Youth4Planet (Luxembourg) in cooperation with YEKGD – Yeni Nesil Gençlik Derneği (Türkiye) and ESIT vzw (Belgium). Together, the partners explored how young people can transform environmental awareness into meaningful action, combining entrepreneurship, creativity, and collaboration to build greener futures.

The project encouraged participants to think beyond traditional education and employment pathways - to imagine new, sustainable models of work that serve both people and the planet. Through international activities, workshops, and co-creation processes, participants contributed real examples of innovation, which became the foundation of this Toolkit.

The result is not just a publication, but a practical learning tool that brings together the spirit of Erasmus+, the creativity of young changemakers, and the global urgency of environmental transition.

About the Partners

Youth4Planet (Luxembourg) - Applicant Organization
https://youth4planet.com

Youth4Planet empowers young people to tell stories that change the world. Its mission is to ignite creativity and social responsibility through storytelling, media, and sustainability education. The organization helps youth express their ideas through film and digital content, promoting environmental literacy and civic engagement.

Within this project, Youth4Planet coordinated the development of the Toolkit and contributed its expertise in visual storytelling, digital learning, and sustainability communication ensuring that every page inspires both understanding and action.

YEKGD - Yeni Nesil Gençlik Derneği (Türkiye)
https://yekgd.org

YEKGD focuses on youth empowerment, active citizenship, and non-formal education. Based in Türkiye, the organization implements projects that connect young people to environmental awareness, social inclusion, and entrepreneurship opportunities. In this partnership, YEKGD engaged local youth groups and educators, gathering field-based experiences and practical insights from Türkiye. Their contribution helped shape the Toolkit's interactive methods and examples of grassroots green practices.

ESIT vzw (Belgium)
https://esitvzw.org

ESIT vzw is a Belgian organization working in the areas of sustainability, training, and social innovation. It supports individuals and communities in developing eco-friendly lifestyles and green employment pathways.
ESIT hosted the youth workers' training, where the first draft ideas for this Toolkit were tested and refined. Their input ensured that the Toolkit serves not only as an informational guide but also as a training-ready educational tool adaptable for workshops and community learning spaces.

From Project to Practice

The Green Entrepreneurship and Green Jobs project was designed not only as an exchange of knowledge but as a living laboratory where ideas were tested, developed, and transformed into real tools for learning. The Toolkit you are reading grew directly from those experiences.

Throughout the project, youth workers, educators, and young participants from Luxembourg, Türkiye, and Belgium came together to explore one central question: How can we turn environmental awareness into meaningful work and sustainable lifestyles?

Their collaboration took shape through trainings, workshops, and creative challenges, where participants identified existing green practices and imagined new ones. These ideas were documented, discussed, and refined during and after the youth workers' training hosted by ESIT vzw (Belgium) and the Youth Camp organized by Youth4Planet. Many of the practices you'll find in this Toolkit - from urban gardening to green art movements - were collected on a shared Padlet platform, where contributors uploaded real projects from their local communities.

This digital exchange created a mosaic of innovation that reflects Europe's diversity: different contexts, same commitment to sustainability.

A Blend of Inspiration: From Local Action to Global Innovation

The Toolkit includes a diverse mix of practices - from small community projects to large-scale company initiatives.

Some ideas were created and implemented directly by youth groups and , while others highlight professional enterprises and green start-ups already operating successfully across Europe.

This intentional mix shows that sustainability happens at every scale.

By exploring both local and industry-level examples, readers can connect small everyday actions with broader trends in green business, circular economy, and sustainable employment.

To reflect this diversity, the Toolkit uses two guiding icons:

- **Community Practice,** grassroots or youth-led initiatives that can be easily replicated locally.
- **Professional Innovation,** established enterprises demonstrating sustainability in business or production.

Each example whether local or professional carries a lesson that can be adapted to new contexts, encouraging readers to bridge inspiration with action.

How the Toolkit Evolved

How the Toolkit Evolved

Idea Gathering, Participants contributed over a dozen real or inspired practices via Padlet, highlighting examples from local communities, universities, NGOs, and sustainable enterprises.
Peer Reflection, These ideas were discussed in group sessions, with youth workers identifying their educational and entrepreneurial value.

Knowledge Synthesis, The project team analyzed recurring themes, renewable energy, circular economy, sustainable food, and creative engagement which became the Toolkit's main chapters.

Co-Creation, Each practice was rewritten in a structured format (Learning Point, Did You Know, How to Apply, Think Further) to make them usable by other educators and youth organizations.

Toolkit Launch and Distribution, The final version was presented during the Youth Camp, shared digitally for open access, and designed to remain adaptable for future contributions.

A Living Resource

This Toolkit is not a closed book, it is meant to grow with you.
Every idea here can inspire a new project, a classroom activity, or even a start-up.
Readers are invited to extend the content with their own green initiatives and share them through the project's ongoing Padlet:
Green Practices for the Toolkit - Padlet

By doing so, you become part of a growing community of changemakers connecting learning, creativity, and sustainability across Europe.

Toolkit Overview - Your Map for Action

This Toolkit is designed to help you learn, reflect, and act for a sustainable future. Each page connects real examples with creative ways to make change happen wherever you are.

Explore it like a map: start anywhere, follow your curiosity, and connect ideas across themes.

Learning Point: Every example begins with a key insight a simple idea that captures what makes the practice meaningful and replicable.

Did You Know? Short facts, data, and policy links connect the local example to global environmental goals helping you see the bigger picture.

How to Apply: Concrete steps and activity suggestions show how to adapt the idea for your own youth group, classroom, or organization.

Think Further: Guiding questions invite you to reimagine and scale up the idea turning awareness into creativity and long-term change.

Create Your Own Practice: Your space to innovate. Use the examples as inspiration, then design and share your own sustainability initiative with others.

The Toolkit

is flexible explore it in order or by theme: Cities, Energy, Food, Creativity, and Social Impact. Each section stands alone but together they tell one story: that green ideas grow stronger when shared.

From Ideas to Action

The following chapters take you into the heart of this Toolkit where inspiration meets real-life application.
Each section focuses on a different theme, yet all share a common thread: how creativity, collaboration, and local initiative can shape a more sustainable world.

As you explore the next pages, you will find:

Cities that are reimagining mobility, energy, and community life.

Energy innovations that power change through learning and participation.

Food systems that connect tradition, innovation, and circular thinking.

Creativity and Culture as forces that transform awareness into action.

Social Impact practices that bring inclusion, empowerment, and shared responsibility to sustainability.

Each example was chosen not only for what it achieves, but for what it can inspire you to create next.

You will see how small actions grow into movements how a bike ride becomes a statement, how waste becomes art, and how learning turns into leadership.

So, take a moment to reflect on your own environment.
What stories, spaces, or possibilities could become the starting point for your next green idea?

Let’s begin with Cities that are finding new ways to live, move, and grow sustainably.

Section 1:
Sustainable Cities & Mobility

Urban areas present both significant environmental challenges and unique opportunities for change. With more than 75% of Europeans now living in cities, urban centers play a decisive role in shaping our environmental future.

Across Europe, young innovators, entrepreneurs, and local authorities are demonstrating that cleaner mobility, greener design, and smarter use of public space can transform cities into living classrooms for sustainability. From reimagined transport systems to upcycled public art, today's urban changemakers are proving that creativity and climate action can share the same street.

With transport responsible for nearly a quarter of the EU's greenhouse-gas emissions, the transition to sustainable mobility is more urgent than ever. Initiatives such as electric public transport, cycling and pedestrian networks, and urban sharing systems are not only improving air quality but also creating green jobs and strengthening community bonds.

The examples collected in this section, from Antalya's electric bus network and WeWatt's energy bikes, to Velosophie's eco-tourism model, Solidarity Network Vienna's circular urban practices, and wpd's renewable energy leadership show how sustainability and innovation are redefining city life. Each initiative demonstrates that when environmental awareness meets action, cities become places to learn, collaborate, and thrive.
From local mobility experiments to industrial-scale renewable energy systems, the following examples show that sustainable cities grow through both small community initiatives and major technological transitions each reinforcing the other. Together, they illustrate a shared truth: the future of our cities depends on how we move, connect, and care for the spaces we call home.

Reflection Prompt - Think Like a Green Urbanist

Before exploring the examples in this section, take a moment to reflect:

- What small change could make your neighborhood more sustainable a shared bike system, a repair space, or a green roof?
- How can young people work with municipalities to design eco-friendly and inclusive public spaces?
- What would a "climate-neutral" version of your city look like by 2030?

BiciMAD - Electric Bike Sharing for Urban Sustainability (Madrid, Spain)

Concept: BiciMAD is a city-wide electric-bike sharing network in Madrid that replaces short car trips with e-bikes powered by renewable energy. The service uses integrated digital booking and payment systems, making sustainable urban travel highly practical and appealing to citizens. This initiative demonstrates how relatively small, tech-driven transport ideas can scale into city-wide systems that reduce emissions and create green jobs.

Learning Point:

Sustainable Mobility as a Service Sustainable transport is most effective when it is electric, **accessible**, and **integrated** into daily life. BiciMAD shows that public infrastructure combined with smart technology is a catalyst for behavioral change, making the green choice the easiest choice.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Valuing Ideas:** Recognizing shared e-mobility as a key solution to urban traffic and pollution.
- **Mobilising Resources:** Leveraging public-private partnerships to manage and maintain a complex fleet of bikes and charging stations.
- **Taking the Initiative:** Being the early adopter or champion of cycling culture in your city.

Did You Know?

- Traffic & Climate GoalsTransport accounts for approximately **25% of all EU greenhouse-gas emissions**.
- The European Green Deal aims for climate neutrality in the EU by 2050, requiring a 90% reduction in transport emissions by that date.
- E-bike sharing services save a city thousands of metric tons of CO_{2} annually, significantly improving local air **quality and public health**.

BiciMAD - Electric Bike Sharing for Urban Sustainability (Madrid, Spain)

How to Apply:

Launch a "Green Route Challenge"

Map the Need: Identify a common, short car-commute route (e.g., school-to-train station, community center-to-market) that could be easily done by bike.
Organize a Campaign: Partner with local schools or municipal bodies to host a "Bike-to-Work" or "Bike-to-School" campaign week, encouraging participants to use non-motorized transport.
Digital Tool Tip: Use a free mobile app (like Strava or Google Maps) to track routes. Create a virtual challenge where teams compete to log the most "zero-emission kilometres" traveled, promoting healthy competition.
Measure Your Impact:

- Kilometers Traveled: Total distance covered during the campaign (to estimate carbon savings).
- Participant Feedback: Survey participants on barriers and benefits to cycling (e.g., "Do you feel safe on existing bike paths?").
- Behavioral Change: Track how many participants continue cycling/e-biking once the campaign ends.

Inclusion Check: What about mobility challenges? Organize a "Bike-For-All Day" with adapted bicycles (e.g., tricycles, cargo bikes, handcycles) to ensure that people with diverse mobility needs can participate in the experience of clean urban travel.

Think Further:

Evolving Sustainable Mobility

- *How could bike tourism (like the Velosophie example) and bike-sharing evolve into a broader model of sustainable mobility, connecting local producers, artists, and green startups into one continuous cycling route that tells a story of your region's sustainability journey?*
- *How might youth organizations work with city councils to prototype **"Pop-Up Bike Lanes"** or repair corners to make cycling safer and more visible in urban centers?*
- *What new **digital tools** could be created to monitor the state of bike-sharing infrastructure, making maintenance and repairs more efficient and creating new green tech jobs?*

Green Roofs & Urban Gardens (Madrid, Spain)

Concept: Community gardens and rooftop farms in Madrid turn unused surfaces into productive green spaces. Residents and schools share these gardens, learning about biodiversity, composting, and healthy eating. This initiative brings food production back to cities and strengthens community ties.

Learning Point:

Closing the Loop in the City

Urban gardening is the most tangible entry point to the **circular economy**. It not only provides local, healthy food but also transforms urban waste (compost) and unused space (rooftops/courtyards) into valuable resources, fostering both **ecological knowledge and community collaboration**.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Mobilising Resources:** Identifying, securing, and transforming unused urban space into a productive asset.
- **Planning & Management:** Managing planting cycles, water systems, and volunteer schedules.
- **Sustainability:** Designing systems for water reuse and nutrient cycling (composting).

Did You Know?

Cooling and Conserving in Urban Areas

- Studies show that **green roofs** can lower surrounding air temperatures by 2°C and extend a building's roof life by more than **40%**.
- A single 100 m^2 urban garden can produce enough vegetables for **one family for an entire year.**
- Green spaces reduce **stormwater runoff,** filtering pollution and conserving local water sources.

Green Roofs & Urban Gardens (Madrid, Spain)

How to Apply:

Launch a "Learning Garden" Pilot
Spot the Space & Secure Tools: Convert a section of a youth-center courtyard or rooftop into a mini-garden, focusing on soil regeneration and water conservation.
Integrate Circularity & Learning: Use the space to teach circular practices such as water reuse and composting. Link the garden directly to kitchen waste management in your facility.
Digital Tool Tip: Use a free plant identification app (like Seek or PlantNet) to engage youth in learning about local biodiversity and healthy eating.
Measure Your Impact:

- Compost Diverted: Track the volume (or kg) of food waste successfully turned into compost.
- Produce Yield: Measure the total volume or value of edible produce harvested.
- Knowledge Gain: Conduct a simple pre/post-survey on participant knowledge of biodiversity and composting.

Inclusion Check: Combine urban gardening with social inclusion by inviting diverse groups such as refugees or seniors to co-garden. This skill exchange fosters intergenerational learning and social cohesion, addressing equity.

Think Further:

Scaling Up Community Resilience

- *How could your local learning garden evolve into a **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)** micro-enterprise for the neighborhood, providing job skills and local, affordable produce?*
- *What partnerships could your organization create with city housing agencies to mandate or incentivize **green roof installations** on new buildings, scaling the climate benefits across the city?*
- *Could youth teams collaborate with botanists and climate experts to identify and cultivate **native, drought-resistant species** suitable for future urban climate conditions, turning the garden into a living lab for climate resilience?*

Electric Buses for Clean Public Transport (Antalya, Türkiye)

Concept: Antalya introduced electric buses to replace its diesel fleets, significantly reducing local pollution and fuel costs. This initiative demonstrates how municipalities can lead by example in transitioning to renewable mobility, setting a precedent for private initiatives to follow.

Learning Point:

Infrastructure Drives Green Jobs

Green public transport improves public health, saves energy, and sets the foundation for a sustainable economy. This transition proves that large-scale environmental action generates demand for n**ew green tech jobs** in maintenance, manufacturing, and electrical infrastructure.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Financial & Economic Literacy:** Calculating the cost savings (fuel, maintenance) and long-term return on investment (ROI) of electric vs. diesel fleets.
- **Vision:** Championing a major infrastructural shift despite initial investment challenges.
- **Spotting Opportunities:** Identifying new career paths in electrical engineering, battery management, and charging infrastructure development.

Did You Know?

Quantifiable Emissions Reduction

- Quantifiable Emissions ReductionReplacing a single diesel bus with an electric one can reduce **carbon** emissions by about **50 tons per year.**
- Transport accounts for approximately **25% of EU greenhouse-gas emissions**. The European Green Deal aims for a 90% reduction in transport emissions by 2050.
- .The transition to electric public transport directly contributes to **cleaner air in urban centers**, reducing respiratory illnesses and improving overall public health.

Electric Buses for Clean Public Transport (Antalya, Türkiye)

How to Apply:

Design an Eco-Mobility Network

Simulation Game: Youth groups can design a simulation game in which participants plan an eco-mobility network for their town, choosing routes, vehicle types (e-buses, trams, e-bikes), and charging locations.
Lobby for a "Green Route Day": Collaborate with your municipality or youth organization to pilot a "Green Route Day" one day a month when only electric or human-powered transport is promoted.
Digital Tool Tip: Use online calculators (like the U.S. EPA's Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator) to convert estimated fuel savings into tangible environmental metrics (e.g., "equivalent trees planted").
Measure Your Impact:

- Emission Savings (Simulated/Actual): The reduction in tons of carbon or liters of fuel not consumed during a pilot or simulation.
- Citizen Participation: Track the number of citizens/students participating in the "Green Route Day" campaign.
- Incentive Effectiveness: Survey citizens on what incentives (e.g., cheaper tickets, improved routes) would make them choose green transport over private cars.

Inclusion Check: How accessible is the vehicle and route? Ensure your simulation prioritizes routes and vehicles that offer universal access (ramps, designated spaces) for people with disabilities, promoting an inclusive transport system.

Think Further:

Ownership and Policy

- What incentives (e.g., tax breaks, priority lanes) could make such green transport initiatives attractive to both citizens and local businesses, accelerating the shift away from fossil fuels?
- How could the lessons learned from electric public transport be applied to other municipal services, such as waste collection or last-mile delivery, to create a fully climate-neutral city?
- How can youth organizations influence policy to ensure that investment in electric buses also prioritizes the local assembly or maintenance of vehicles, directly creating local, sustainable green jobs?

WeWatt Energy Bikes (Brussels, Belgium)

Concept: At locations like Brussels train stations, **WeWatt energy bikes** allow travelers to charge their phones, laptops, or tablets by pedaling. This innovation turns waiting time into an active **energy-awareness opportunity**, making the abstract concept of energy production tangible, fun, and healthy.

Learning Point:

Energy Made Tangible

Sustainability is most engaging when it's **interactive** and **personal**. WeWatt proves that simple, smart design can transform passive waiting into active energy generation, directly connecting personal effort (pedaling) with immediate benefit (a charged phone), making energy literacy hands-on.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Valuing Ideas:** Recognizing a gap in public space (waiting time) as an opportunity for fitness and energy production.
- **Creativity:** Redesigning a common object (a bike) for an innovative, non-traditional purpose (generating electricity).
- **Mobilising Resources:** Connecting human power (physical activity) to technological needs (charging devices).

Did You Know?

The Power of Pedals

- Human pedaling can generate **50–150 watts of electricity**, which is enough to power a laptop or rapidly charge multiple phones while raising heart rate and awareness at the same time.
- The EU is actively promoting **active travel** (like cycling) to reduce transport emissions, which currently account for approximately 25% of the EU's total greenhouse-gas emissions.
- Integrating exercise with daily activities (like charging devices) promotes both **environmental health and social well-being**.

WeWatt Energy Bikes (Brussels, Belgium)

How to Apply:

Organize an "Energy-Bike Challenge"

Pilot the Tech: If full WeWatt bikes are inaccessible, research building a small, low-cost pedal-powered charging station using basic dynamos or old exercise bikes.
Organize a Challenge: Run an "Energy-Bike Challenge" at a youth event, training, or local festival. Teams compete to generate the most energy within a set time.
Digital Tool Tip: Integrate a simple wattmeter or a phone app that visualizes the electricity generated in real-time. This turns the physical effort into measurable, digital data for impact reporting.
Measure Your Impact:

- Energy Generated (Wh/kWh): Total watt-hours of electricity generated during the event.
- Participant Engagement: Number of participants and the average heart rate change (to highlight health benefits).
- Awareness Score: Conduct a rapid survey on energy awareness (e.g., "Do you know how many watts a laptop uses?") before and after the experience.

Inclusion Check: How can non-cyclists participate? Introduce an adjacent learning station where participants can manage the "energy grid" (distributing generated power) or use non-physical tasks (like calculating energy demands) to contribute to the overall challenge.

Think Further:

Powering Community Spaces

- What other everyday activities from swinging on a park bench to walking through a turnstile could be creatively redesigned to generate or save small amounts of energy for public use?
- Could your youth center or municipality install a pedal-powered charging station in a public library or park, creating a **permanent, visible symbol** of sustainable, decentralized energy?
- How can youth-led teams develop a **social enterprise model** around pedal-power, for example, by renting out and operating energy bikes to power local events or concerts?

Velosophie - Sustainable Travel Experiences (Luxembourg)

Concept: Velosophie combines **eco-tourism with local culture** by offering guided cycling tours that highlight artisans, local producers, and natural sites. By centering travel around low-impact cycling, this business model reduces emissions while supporting local economies and showcasing regional sustainability journeys.

Learning Point:

Experiences are the New Green Economy

Tourism is most sustainable when it is **low-impact, local, and educational.** Velosophie demonstrates that the market rewards authenticity and responsible travel, proving that businesses can profit by focusing on quality experiences over high volume.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Valuing Ideas:** Identifying the demand for slow-paced, environmentally conscious travel alternatives.
- **Networking:** Building partnerships with sustainable local artisans, restaurants, and accommodation providers.
- **Financial & Economic Literacy:** Developing a pricing model that reflects high-quality, sustainable service rather than mass-market cost-cutting.

Did You Know?

Reducing the Footprint

- Tourism accounts for about 8**% of global greenhouse-gas emissions,** but **bike tourism can cut that footprint by over 60%** compared to standard travel.
- Eco-tourism models reinvest profits locally, typically resulting in **twice the net income** compared to standard mass tourism.
- Organizing bike routes strengthens the public call for improved local cycling infrastructure and accessibility.

Velosophie - Sustainable Travel Experiences (Luxembourg)

How to Apply:

Map Your Local Eco-Ride

Identify Local Allies: Organize a community eco-ride that specifically visits sustainable local businesses, such as organic farms, repair cafés, or eco-friendly artisan workshops5.
Develop a Narrative: Design the route to tell a compelling story about your region's sustainability challenges and successes, using the journey itself as a learning tool.
Digital Tool Tip: Use a simple mapping tool (like Google My Maps) to plot a detailed "Sustainable Circuit," tagging each local ally with their mission and hours of operation. Share the map digitally to make the route permanent.
Measure Your Impact:

- Local Economic Impact: Document the number of local businesses supported and the amount spent by the group on local, sustainable products.
- Carbon Savings: Calculate the estimated carbon saved by choosing cycling over driving a comparable distance.
- Participant Feedback: Collect testimonials on how the experience changed their perception of tourism and local consumption.

Inclusion Check: Is the route suitable for everyone? Select routes that prioritize safety, use flat or paved terrain, and consider the possibility of using electric-assist bikes (e-bikes) to ensure people of varying fitness levels and ages can participate.

Think Further:

Integrating Green Infrastructure

- How could bike tourism evolve into a broader model of sustainable mobility, connecting local producers, artists, and green start-ups into **one continuous cycling** route that tells a story of your region's sustainability journey?
- Could youth teams collaborate with municipal planners to **audit and improve** the safety and signage of local cycling routes, turning a tourism initiative into a piece of community infrastructure development?
- What form of t**okenized certification** or digital badge could reward local businesses for participating in an eco-tourism network, making their commitment visible to eco-conscious travelers?

Create Your Own Practice: Design Your Green City Corner

Goal:

Empower Green Urbanists to design **measurable, sustainable**, and **inclusive** solutions for local urban challenges.
Step into the role of a Green Urbanist and apply the principles of the circular economy and social innovation learned in this section.

Step 1: Identify Your Urban Challenge and Skill Focus

- Choose one issue that matters in your community for example, **mobility, waste reduction, air quality,** or **energy efficiency**.
- Observe how this challenge affects daily life and what local opportunities might exist for improvement.
- **Skills Focus (EntreComp):** Identify which entrepreneurial skill is most needed to solve this challenge (e.g., Vision to imagine the climate-neutral city; **Spotting Opportunities** to find an unused space).

Step 2: Brainstorm an Inclusive Micro-Solution

- Imagine a small, youth-led initiative that could make a visible difference for instance, a **repair café**, a **bike-sharing corner,** or a **green mural project**.
- Ask: **How does this ensure inclusion?** Design your solution to be accessible for all, involving diverse groups (e.g., seniors, people with disabilities, or refugees) in the design and management phases.

Step 3: Map Allies and Resources (Mobilising Others)

Sketch how your idea could happen:
- **Who** would you collaborate with (municipality, schools, NGOs)?
- What are the existing **assets** (spaces, equipment, skills) you can leverage?
- How can you ensure the initiative stays **sustainable over time?**

Step 4: Prototype, Measure, and Share

Turn your idea into a simple model, storyboard, or pilot campaign. Small pilots often lead to real community transformations.
Measure Your Impact: Before sharing, define 2 key metrics to track the success of your pilot:

Environmental Metric: (e.g., predicted tons of carbon saved by promoting cycling, kg of waste diverted by a repair café).
Social Metric: (e.g., number of citizens engaged, number of intergenerational skill-share exchanges facilitated).
Present it during your next youth workshop or Erasmus+ exchange, and invite feedback.

Think Further: Scaling the Impact

- HHow could your idea scale up connecting with other neighborhoods, cities, or even countries?
- Could it become part of a wider **"Green City Network"** where young people exchange practical sustainability models?
- What support or funding might be available from **Erasmus+**, local councils, or eco-innovation programs to scale your idea?

Idea Seed: Could a single green bench in your city tell stories about sustainability through QR codes?

Section 2:
Renewable Energy & Circular Economy

Across Europe, a new generation of changemakers is redefining how we produce, consume, and imagine resources. The shift toward renewable energy and circular business models is not just a technological transition it's a mindset revolution. Instead of extraction, waste, and short-term profit, today's green entrepreneurs focus on reusing, regenerating, and renewing.

From waste-to-energy technologies and solar innovation in schools, to bio-based materials and community energy cooperatives, these examples show that sustainability can fuel both creativity and prosperity. Each initiative challenges the linear "take-make-dispose" model, proving that the economy of the future will be circular, local, and powered by clean energy.

For youth, these developments open exciting pathways from learning how solar panels work, to experimenting with compostable materials, to founding start-ups that turn coffee waste into candles. Renewable energy and circular design are no longer abstract ideals; they are hands-on opportunities to innovate, educate, and build careers that align with environmental values.

The following examples including Boson Energy's waste-to-hydrogen innovation, Traceless's compostable biomaterials, Sunvolution's educational solar systems, and community renewable projects across Europe highlight how technology and imagination can work together to decarbonize economies and empower people.

Reflection Prompt - Think Like a Circular Innovator

- What kind of "waste" could become a resource in your community?
- How could your organization integrate renewable energy into daily activities?
- What would a circular economy look like if designed by young people more collaborative, digital, or community-based?

wpd - Harnessing the Wind (Bremen, Germany)

Concept: Founded in 1996, wpd started as a local start-up in Bremen and has grown into one of Europe's largest wind-energy developers, operating in more than 25 countries. It employs over 3,700 people and has installed thousands of turbines generating more than 6,000 MW of power. This demonstrates that scalable renewable-energy enterprises can start small; what matters is persistence and vision.

Learning Point:

Scale Through Vision

The success of wpd shows that the transition to green energy is not just a technological shift but a major economic opportunity. It confirms that the future economy will be powered by **clean energy** and driven by entrepreneurs who turn environmental vision into profitable, job-creating infrastructure.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Vision:** Developing a long-term plan to move beyond fossil fuels to large-scale clean energy generation.
- **Resource Mobilisation (Financial):** Securing massive investment for large-scale energy projects (onshore and offshore wind farms).
- **Sustainability:** Applying technical knowledge (engineering, logistics) to maximize renewable energy output and grid integration.

Did You Know?

Emissions Avoidance

- Wind energy now supplies **17% of the EU's electricity,** helping to avoid around **250 million tons of carbon annually.**
- The renewable-energy sector could employ **38 million people globally by 2030,** indicating a significant future for green career paths.
- Over **85% of renewable-energy employers in Europe report skills shortages,** highlighting a demand for trained young professionals (IRENA Skills Report 2024).

wpd - Harnessing the Wind (Bremen, Germany)

How to Apply:

Host a "Green Tech Career Day"

Expert Workshop: Youth organizations can invite local green-energy experts (engineers, project managers, technical schools) to conduct hands-on workshops about wind or solar energy, helping participants connect global change to local career paths.
Job Mapping: Ask participants to research the job titles and required skills for roles within a company like wpd (e.g., wind turbine technician, environmental consultant, grid integration specialist).
Digital Tool Tip: Use free online tools or calculators to simulate wind farm potential in your local area, analyzing variables like wind speed and land availability. This connects geographical data to economic planning.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Career Interest:** Track the number of participants who express a new or increased interest in a STEM or Green Tech career after the workshop.
- **Skills Acquisition:** Use a simple quiz to measure the knowledge gain in energy literacy (e.g., Watts vs. Watt-hours, carbon avoidance).
- **Partnership Success:** Track if any new internship or mentorship agreements are established between the youth group and a local green business.

Inclusion Check: Are career paths accessible to all? Partner with vocational schools and organizations supporting underrepresented groups in STEM (e.g., women in engineering, low-income youth) to ensure diverse participation in green job workshops.

Think Further:

Democratic Energy Ownership

- How could **citizen cooperatives** own shares in local renewable projects (solar fields or wind turbines), making the transition both ecological and democratic?
- Could your city, school, or organization create a **"solar mentorship" program** where experienced technicians guide youth teams to design and install small renewable systems for community spaces, combining education with real social impact?
- What policy changes could encourage large energy developers like wpd to invest more heavily in the **education and training** of young people in the regions where their projects are installed?

Boson Energy - Waste to Hydrogen (Luxembourg)

Concept: Boson Energy utilizes plasma gasification to convert unsorted waste into **green hydrogen** and heat, capturing carbon in the process. This advanced technology transforms pollution into clean energy, exemplifying a circular, carbon-negative model.

Learning Point:

Zero-Waste Energy Systems

Circularity applies not only to materials and products but also to **energy systems.** Boson Energy demonstrates that radical green innovation can simultaneously solve two major challenges: managing waste that can't be recycled and generating carbon-neutral fuel (hydrogen).

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Valuing Ideas:** Recognizing mixed, unsorted waste as a valuable resource rather than a costly disposal problem.
- **Sustainability:** Designing processes that minimize environmental harm and actively recapture emissions (carbon capture).
- **Technical Literacy:** Integrating complex technologies like plasma gasification with modern energy demands (hydrogen).

Did You Know?

The Hydrogen Economy

- Hydrogen is projected to meet **20% of global energy demand by 2050,** creating **30 million green jobs** worldwide.
- Technologies like plasma gasification operate at extremely high temperatures, which allows them to safely process waste streams that are otherwise difficult or impossible to recycle.
- The EU is investing heavily in the "Hydrogen Backbone" infrastructure to support large-scale industrial and transport decarbonization.
-

Boson Energy - Waste to Hydrogen (Luxembourg)

How to Apply:

Include a "Green Tech Inspiration Corner"

Green Tech Showcase: Include a "Green Tech Inspiration Corner" in youth trainings to showcase innovations like Boson Energy and demonstrate what's possible when creativity meets science.
Model Simulation: Organize a simple simulation where participants map the waste streams from their school or center and then design the hypothetical infrastructure needed to turn that specific waste into heat or energy for the building.
Digital Tool Tip: Use online resources (diagrams, explainer videos) to visually demonstrate complex processes like plasma gasification and carbon capture to simplify the learning process.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Knowledge Gain:** Measure the increase in youth awareness regarding complex circular processes and clean energy generation technologies.
- **Idea Generation:** Track the number of new, feasible waste-to-resource ideas generated by participants for their own communities.

Inclusion Check: How can all backgrounds contribute? Organize multi-disciplinary teams for the simulation, ensuring those with creative and communication skills are valued alongside those with scientific or technical knowledge.

Think Further:

Decentralizing Energy from Waste

- How might small communities or municipalities adopt waste-to-energy concepts like Boson Energy's on a local scale for instance, transforming neighborhood waste into energy for public buildings or transport hubs?
- What new **green jobs** are created specifically in the hydrogen logistics, safety, and distribution sectors that young people could train for now?
- Could youth groups partner with local industrial sites or waste management companies to identify a specific, high-volume waste stream that could be the basis for a future **waste-to-resource start-up?**

Traceless - Compostable Innovation (Hamburg, Germany)

Concept: Traceless transforms agricultural plant leftovers into 1**00% compostable, bio-based materials.** Their products resemble and function like plastic but decompose naturally, marking a milestone for the circular economy. The core idea is that green innovation can be attractive, profitable, and entirely harmonious with nature.

Learning Point:

Design for Regeneration

Waste is a resource waiting for imagination. Traceless demonstrates that true sustainability means designing products from the start for their end-of-life. By using agricultural by-products, they prove that the economy can be circular, local, and regenerative, turning what was once waste into a high-value material.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Valuing Ideas:** Identifying low-value waste streams (agricultural leftovers) as a source of high-value, patentable material.
- **Creativity:** Prototyping and designing products that mimic conventional materials (like plastic) but are environmentally superior.
- **Sustainability:** Mastering the scientific process of bio-material production and natural decomposition.

Did You Know?

Plastic Waste Crisis

- Europe produces over 2**5 million tons of plastic waste each year,** but less than 40% is recycled.
- Materials that are genuinely **100% compostable** can safely return nutrients to the soil, supporting the regenerative farming economy.
- The EU is pushing for greater use of bio-based and biodegradable materials through the European Green Deal's focus on sustainable product policy.

Traceless - Compostable Innovation (Hamburg, Germany)

How to Apply:

Host a "Bio-Materials Lab"

Spot Local Waste: Identify a common local bio-waste stream from a nearby farm, university, or café (e.g., grain husks, coffee grounds, fruit peels).
Host a Lab: Host a "materials lab" at your youth center, where local bio-wastes can be used to experiment with and create small, sustainable material prototypes (e.g., mixing materials with natural binders to form simple blocks or packaging).
Digital Tool Tip: Use online 3D modeling software (like Tinkercad) to design packaging or a product concept that could be made from the new bio-material, linking science with design skills.
Measure Your Impact:

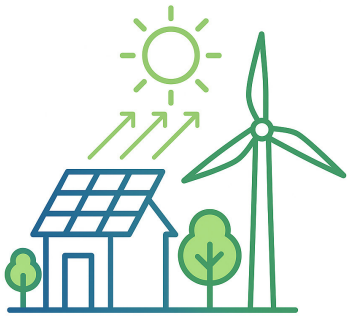
- **Waste Diverted:** Track the quantity (kg) of local bio-waste successfully used in material prototypes.
- **Decomposition Rate:** Conduct a simple decomposition experiment to compare your prototype against conventional plastic.
- **Innovation Potential:** Track the number of unique, feasible product ideas generated using the new material.

Inclusion Check: Who designs the future? Partner with a local vocational school or makerspace to ensure youth who may not be pursuing university-level science can gain hands-on technical skills in material production and green manufacturing.

Think Further:

Creating Regional Circular Hubs

- Could local entrepreneurs or schools collaborate to turn agricultural by-products like grain husks or fruit peels into new materials or packaging solutions, creating **regional circular-economy hubs** that reduce waste and inspire innovation?
- How can youth organizations advocate for local businesses (cafés, shops) to prioritize the use of these innovative bio-based materials, creating a local market demand?
- What form of **investment or grant funding** would a youth-led bio-materials start-up need most to scale its idea from the lab to commercial production?



Renewable Energy Systems - Community Power

Concept: All over Europe, schools, farms, and youth centers are installing small solar or wind systems to power daily activities. These decentralized projects lower bills, cut emissions, and build local **energy awareness.** This idea proves that renewable energy is most effective when people can see, interact with, and understand it.

Learning Point:

Energy Democracy is Local

The energy transition is ultimately about **ownership** and **decentralization**. Community-owned renewable systems democratize energy production, moving power (literally and figuratively) from distant corporations to local citizens, fostering financial savings and social trust.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Financial & Economic Literacy:** Calculating energy consumption, savings, and the ROI (Return on Investment) for community projects.
- **Mobilising Resources (Non-Financial):** Organizing community investment and securing public land/roof space for installation.
- **Technical Literacy:** Gaining basic knowledge of system components (inverters, batteries, panels) and maintenance.

Did You Know?

The Environmental Payoff

- Installing a 10kW solar rooftop can save **12 tons of carbon per year,** equivalent to planting **600 trees.**
- Community-owned renewables often generate higher rates of public support and faster adoption compared to large, centralized commercial projects.
- The European Union promotes **Energy Communities** that allow citizens to collectively produce, consume, store, and sell their own renewable energy.

Renewable Energy Systems - Community Power

How to Apply:

Organize a "Solar Day" and Feasibility Study

Hands-on Demo: Organize a "Solar Day" in your organization: measure local sunlight intensity, build mini solar-powered toys, and discuss how the community might transition to renewable energy.
Feasibility Study: Form a youth team to conduct a simple feasibility study for your organization's rooftop. Calculate your building's current electricity consumption and estimate the size of the solar array needed to cover 50% of it.
Digital Tool Tip: Use free online solar calculator tools (available from many national energy agencies) to estimate potential energy yield and annual savings based on your geographical location.
Measure Your Impact:

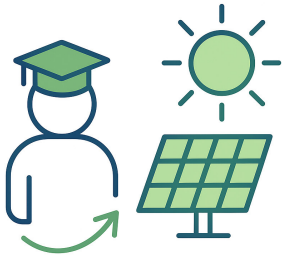
- **Energy Literacy:** Measure the increase in participants' understanding of key terms like "kilowatt-hour" and "net metering."
- **Financial Savings (Projected):** Calculate the projected annual utility cost savings achieved by covering 50% of the building's consumption.
- **Actionable Plan:** Track if the feasibility study leads to a formal proposal for management or local funding.

Inclusion Check: Who benefits from the savings? Design a community solar model where a portion of the financial savings generated is directly allocated to support youth from low-income families (e.g., funding training or educational materials).

Think Further:

Moving from Awareness to Ownership

- How could your community take the next step from awareness to **ownership** for example, by forming a local energy **cooperative** where citizens collectively invest in and benefit from shared solar or wind installations?
- Could youth teams be trained as **"energy auditors"** to help local schools and community centers reduce their energy demand before installing renewable systems?
- What policy changes could simplify the legal and administrative process for youth groups or NGOs wanting to install their own **micro-scale renewable energy systems?**



Sunvolution - Learning through Solar Action

Concept: Sunvolution helps schools and universities install solar systems using refurbished panels and batteries, while also training students as "**solarteurs".** This approach connects education, empowerment, and renewable entrepreneurship. The core idea is that green education is most impactful when it generates both knowledge and jobs. It turns classrooms into renewable-energy labs.

Learning Point:

Green Education Creates Employability

True green education creates **employability**. Sunvolution demonstrates how to integrate technical skills training directly into the learning environment, proving that knowledge that powers both minds and machines is the knowledge most valuable for the sustainable transition.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Learning Through Experience:** Gaining practical skills (installation, maintenance, electrical safety) through real-world, hands-on projects.
- **Technical Literacy:** Mastering concepts of energy efficiency, voltage, output, and grid integration.
- **Networking:** Building connections with solar technicians, manufacturers, and clients (schools/community centers).

Did You Know?

The Skills Gap

- Over **85% of renewable-energy employers in Europe report skills shortages,** indicating a significant demand for trained young professionals.
- The renewable-energy sector could employ **38 million people globally by 2030,** many in education-linked projects.
- Training students to install and maintain solar systems using **refurbished panels** directly promotes the circular economy by extending the life of technology.

Sunvolution - Learning through Solar Action

How to Apply:

Create a "Solar Mentorship" Program

Host a "Solar Demo Day": Partner with technical schools or local technicians to co-teach a short workshop on energy literacy, focusing on kilowatts, efficiency, and consumption. Let participants measure voltage and calculate savings.
Solar Mentorship Program: Create a "solar mentorship" program where experienced solar technicians guide youth teams to design and install small renewable systems for community spaces, combining education with real social impact.
Use Refurbished Equipment: Source and work with refurbished or second-hand solar panels and batteries where possible to integrate circular economy principles into the learning process.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Financial Savings (Actual):** Track the actual monthly utility bill reduction achieved by the solar system installed during the training.
- **Skill Certification:** Track the number of students who receive a formal certificate or micro-credential related to solar maintenance.
- **Career Pathway:** Track how many participants secure an internship or job interview in the green tech sector within six months.

Inclusion Check: Who benefits from the savings? Design a community solar model where a portion of the financial savings generated is directly allocated to support youth from low-income families (e.g., funding training or educational materials).

Think Further:

Establishing "Solar Hubs"

- Could schools and youth centers form regional **"solar hubs",** where trained students support nearby communities in installing and maintaining renewable systems transforming education into a hands-on service for a greener future?
- How could a basic solar installation toolkit, designed and documented by youth teams, be replicated and shared across a wider European youth network?
- What policy changes could grant students academic credit for their real-world contributions to community solar projects?

Willhaben - Second-Hand Platform (Austria)

Concept: Willhaben is one of Europe's most active circular-economy platforms, allowing users to buy, sell, and donate second-hand items. Its **"for free" section** encourages sharing over ownership. The platform is a prime example that **digital circularity** is as important as physical recycling; online platforms can foster robust cultures of reuse.

Learning Point:

Digital Tools for Physical Reuse

Digital platforms are the **scaling engine** of the sharing economy. Willhaben demonstrates how making the act of buying, selling, or donating second-hand goods **easy, accessible, and fast** is the most effective way to encourage users to extend the life of products and reduce their carbon footprint.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Spotting Opportunities:** Identifying the market gap for reliable, local, peer-to-peer exchange of goods.
- **Ideas into Action:** Translating a circular economy concept into a user-friendly, profitable digital product.
- **Digital Literacy:** Mastering online safety, transaction protocols, and effective listing/marketing of goods for quick reuse.

Did You Know?

Reducing the Carbon Footprint

- Extending the life of products by just **nine months** can reduce carbon footprints by **20–30%.**
- Digital platforms facilitate the reuse of millions of items, significantly diverting materials like furniture, electronics, and clothing from landfills.
- The platform's **"for free" sections** directly strengthen social solidarity by making essential household goods accessible to low-income individuals at zero cost.

Willhaben - Second-Hand Platform (Austria)

How to Apply:

Initiate a "Swap & Share" Program

Pilot a Local Exchange Group: Initiate a **"Swap & Share" program** in your youth organization, school, or neighborhood (e.g., using a dedicated social media group or online bulletin board) to trade materials, clothing, or creative resources for upcoming workshops.
Define Digital Safety: Teach participants how to use digital platforms safely for exchange, focusing on secure communication and local logistics.
Digital Tool Tip: Prototype your own basic **digital sharing platform** perhaps a simple app or social media group where young people can exchange skills, materials, or event equipment to strengthen a local culture of reuse.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Reuse Rate:** Track the number of items successfully exchanged through your digital platform or swap event.
- **Estimated Savings:** Calculate the estimated monetary value saved by participants using second-hand items instead of buying new.
- **Platform Engagement:** Measure the number of repeat users and the overall volume of items listed over a set period.

Inclusion Check: How do you ensure equitable access? Partner with a local library or community center to provide digital literacy training to seniors or low-income families so they can safely and easily participate in online sharing and access free resources listed on the platform.

Think Further:

Integrating Physical and Digital Circularity

- How might your organization or community develop its own digital sharing platform (a simple app or social media group) where young people can exchange skills, materials, or event equipment to strengthen a local culture of reuse?
- Could digital platforms be linked with physical spaces (like public lockers or designated municipal swap zones) to simplify the logistics of handing over large second-hand items?
- What new **green jobs** could be created around digital circularity, such as roles in inventory management, repair documentation, or peer-to-peer delivery services for second-hand goods?

Create Your Own Practice: Close the Loop!

Goal:

Design a small-scale, measurable, and replicable circular economy or renewable energy project inspired by the principles in this section.

Turn inspiration into action by designing an innovative solution that turns local "waste" into a valuable resource.

Step 1: Spot the Waste Stream and Skills Gap

- Look around your community and identify one common local waste stream for example, **food leftovers, textiles,** or **packaging materials**. Observe where it comes from and how it's currently managed.
- **Skills Focus (EntreComp):** Analyze the challenge to determine which skill is needed most (e.g., **Spotting Opportunities** to find the resource; **Technical Literacy** to understand the transformation process).

Step 2: Reimagine the Resource and Ensure Inclusion

- Brainstorm creative ways to transform that waste into something new a useful product, a community service, or a learning activity.
- **Inclusion Check: Who will be involved in this loop?** Design the project so that all members of your community (e.g., different age groups, people with varying skill sets) can safely contribute to collecting, transforming, or utilizing the new resource.

Step 3: Find Your Ally (Mobilising Resources)

- Partner with a **municipality, school, NGO, or local business.** Collaboration makes your idea more realistic, visible, and sustainable.
- Map the resources your allies possess (e.g., space, funding, expertise) that can support your prototype.

Step 4: Prototype, Measure, and Present

- Develop a short proposal or pilot plan. Summarize your mini-project in three presentation slides or a short video (1–2 minutes).
- **Measure Your Impact:** Define **2 key metrics** for your project before you start to track its success:

Resource Efficiency: Track the quantity (kg or volume) of waste successfully diverted or energy generated.
Financial Metric: Calculate the estimated cost savings or potential revenue from the new resource/product.
Share it with your peers or during your next Erasmus+ activity, and gather feedback for improvement.

Think Further: Scaling the Loop

- How could your local project grow into a **micro social enterprise** or sustainable **community campaign**?
- Could several youth groups from different countries collaborate to exchange circular ideas and showcase their prototypes online?
- What support or funding might be available from **Erasmus+**, local councils, or eco-innovation programs to scale your idea?

Idea Seed: “What if your youth center had a ‘Green Energy Corner’ powered entirely by recycled materials?”

Section 3:
Sustainable Food & Agriculture

Food connects people to the planet more directly than any other activity. The way we grow, process, and share food shapes not only our health, but also our climate impact, biodiversity, and sense of community.

Across Europe, a new generation of young farmers, entrepreneurs, and educators is transforming agriculture into a sustainable, community-driven, and innovative sector. From regenerative farms that rebuild soil health, to digital start-ups reducing food waste, these initiatives prove that food systems can nurture both people and the planet.

Sustainable agriculture is no longer confined to rural fields it's thriving in urban gardens, school programs, and youth-led cooperatives, where technology and tradition meet. By combining creativity with ecological awareness, young people are developing green business models that support local economies, promote climate resilience, and celebrate cultural heritage.

This section showcases practical examples from community-supported agriculture and regenerative farming, to urban gardens, composting systems, and food innovation start-ups illustrating how food can become a platform for green entrepreneurship, education, and social impact.

Reflection Prompt - Think Like a Food Innovator

- Where does your food come from, and what footprint does it leave behind?
- How could your community shorten the distance between producers and consumers?
- What role could young people play in transforming local food systems into engines of sustainability?

Terra Cooperative Community-Supported Agriculture (Luxembourg)

Concept: Terra Cooperative unites farmers and citizens to share the risks and rewards of sustainable food production. Members pay an annual fee, receive weekly organic produce, and participate in harvesting and workshops. This model demonstrates that food sustainability is strongest when producers and consumers **co-create the system together.**

Learning Point:

Co-Creation of Food Systems

Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) empowers consumers to become active partners in the food system, fostering **mutual responsibility and trust** between the farm and the table. It reduces the financial risk for farmers and promotes food literacy and seasonal eating for members.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Mobilising Resources:** Securing financial support (annual fees) and labor (volunteer work) directly from the community.
- **Networking:** Building robust, long-term relationships between producers and urban/suburban consumers.
- **Planning & Management:** Forecasting crop yields, managing distribution logistics, and coordinating membership enrollment.

Did You Know?

EU Scaling Local Food

- More than **4,000 Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) projects** now exist in Europe, connecting over **1 million people** directly with local farms.
- CSA schemes eliminate reliance on industrial supply chains, drastically reducing the f**ood miles** and cooling requirements associated with grocery store distribution.
- Participation in CSAs can increase consumption of seasonal vegetables and fruit, contributing directly to local public health and biodiversity awareness.

Terra Cooperative Community-Supported Agriculture (Luxembourg)

How to Apply:

Start a "Micro-CSA" Pilot

Start a "Micro-CSA": Youth organizations can start a **"micro-CSA"** by growing high-demand items like herbs, microgreens, or edible flowers in a small space (like a courtyard or balcony garden).
Community Sharing: Share the weekly harvest through community boxes, farmers' markets, or by directly supplying your organization's kitchen or canteen.
Digital Tool Tip: Use a simple online subscription or ordering form to manage membership and communicate weekly produce availability and volunteer opportunities, mimicking the management structure of a larger cooperative.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Local Sourcing Rate:** Track the percentage of your organization's ingredients sourced directly from your garden or a partner farm.
- **Cost Savings:** Calculate the estimated cost savings compared to purchasing the same produce from a commercial supplier.
- **Volunteer Hours:** Track the number of youth and community hours dedicated to co-creation (harvesting, workshops) to quantify social capital generated.

Inclusion Check: How do you ensure equitable food access? Partner with the local cooperative to offer subsidized membership slots or a donation system that allows low-income families or food banks to receive fresh organic produce regularly.

Think Further:

Cooperative as a Platform

- Could your organization's kitchen or canteen source a reliable percentage of its ingredients directly from local regenerative farms, integrating the CSA model into its procurement policy?
- How could the cooperative model be applied beyond food, for instance, by creating a **"Community-Supported Energy (CSE)"** project where citizens jointly own solar panels?
- How can digital tools be used to facilitate **skill-sharing workshops** (e.g., preservation, cooking seasonal produce) among CSA members to increase food literacy?

Better Soil - Regenerative Agriculture (Germany)

Concept: Better Soil teaches farmers and food retailers how to rebuild **soil health** through carbon farming and biodiversity methods. Its founder began as a youth activist and now collaborates with major retailers like ALDI and Lidl. This professional innovation proves that restoring soil health means restoring climate balance and food security.

Learning Point:

Carbon is Life

The climate solution lies literally beneath our feet. Regenerative agriculture moves beyond simply reducing harm; it actively **restores** ecosystems. This model shows that business success can be measured by **ecological net gain** improving soil health, increasing biodiversity, and sequestering carbon.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Sustainability:** Understanding and applying methods that maximize ecological benefits (e.g., composting, minimal tillage, cover cropping).
- **Networking:** Building partnerships between farmers, scientists, major food retailers, and the youth sector.
- **Vision:** Championing a system change from conventional to regenerative agriculture as a core business model.

Did You Know?

- ***Soil as a Climate Sink***
- Healthy soils can store up to **three times more carbon** than the atmosphere, making regenerative farming a key climate solution.
- Regenerative practices increase the soil's ability to absorb water, improving resilience against both **droughts and floods.**
- The EU's Farm-to-Fork strategy promotes soil health as foundational to achieving sustainable food production.

Better Soil - Regenerative Agriculture (Germany)

How to Apply:

Organize a "Soil Health Day"

Test and Compare: Organize a **"Soil Day"** in schools or youth centers. Collect soil samples from different areas (e.g., a park, a garden, a conventional farm field).
Hands-on Workshop: Use simple equipment to test the samples for **moisture** retention, composition, and pH level. Compare local biodiversity (e.g., counting earthworms and insects) and discuss how local agriculture affects the planet's life cycle.
Digital Tool Tip: Use a mobile app to catalogue the biodiversity found in the soil samples, linking local findings to larger global ecological databases.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Knowledge Gain:** Track participants' increased understanding of carbon farming and the role of soil in the water cycle.
- **Advocacy Output:** Measure the number of policy proposals or presentation slides created by youth on how local authorities can incentivize regenerative farming.

Inclusion Check: How do you ensure youth in rural areas are supported? Partner with rural schools and farming cooperatives to ensure that training reaches youth who are actively engaged in the future of agriculture, providing them with technical skills and entrepreneurial guidance.

Think Further:

Funding the Future of Soil

- Could your organization create a **"Soil Health Fund,"** where citizens invest a small amount (like carbon offsets) directly into local farms committed to regenerative transition?
- How could young innovators develop **low-cost digital monitoring tools** (e.g., DIY moisture sensors) to help small farmers track and report their soil health progress?
- Imagine a regional **"Better Soil Certification."** How could youth audit and promote local products that meet high standards for soil health?

Urban Gardening - Green Cities in Bloom (Hamburg, Germany)

Concept: Hamburg's urban gardening movement turns empty city lots, rooftops, or courtyards into shared food gardens managed by volunteers and schools. These spaces produce local food, build community, and provide education about climate and biodiversity. This demonstrates that urban agriculture reconnects people with food and nature, even in the most industrialized environments.

Learning Point:

Reclaiming Urban Space

Urban gardening shows that **local food security** and **community building** are intertwined. By converting unused urban surfaces into productive green spaces, communities actively manage resources, mitigate the city's "heat island effect," and create accessible learning environments.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Mobilising Resources:** Identifying and securing temporary or permanent access to unused public or private land.
- **Sustainability:** Applying techniques like composting, water harvesting, and plant care.
- **Networking:** Building collaborative relationships with schools, volunteers, and local authorities.

Did You Know?

Cooling and Conserving in Urban Areas

- A single **100 m² urban garden** can produce enough vegetables for one family for an entire year.
- Green roofs can lower surrounding air temperatures by **2°C** and extend a building's roof life by more than **40%.**
- The gardens provide education about **climate and biodiversity** to the public.

Urban Gardening - Green Cities in Bloom (Hamburg, Germany)

How to Apply:

Create a "Learning Garden" Social Enterprise

Pilot the Space: Partner with local authorities or schools to create a "learning garden". It can serve as both an environmental education site and a small social enterprise (selling herbs or compost).
Integrate Composting: Link your garden directly to the practice of Community Composting to close the nutrient loop, using food scraps from the host location or a nearby café.
Digital Tool Tip: Use a shared digital calendar or a simple project management tool (like Trello) to coordinate volunteer shifts, planting schedules, and water duties among participants.

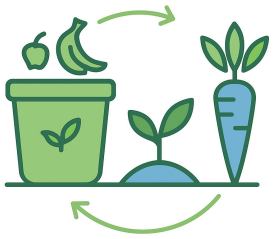
Measure Your Impact:
- **Area Greened:** Track the square meters of formerly unused or paved land converted into a garden space.
- **Produce Yield/Value:** Track the kilogram of vegetables harvested, or the monetary value of herbs sold/donated (to measure social enterprise potential).
- **Community Hours:** Track the number of volunteer hours dedicated to building and maintaining the garden (to measure social capital).

Inclusion Check: Who gardens with you? Actively reach out to groups often isolated, such as seniors or refugees, to share traditional gardening knowledge and build intergenerational ties through co-gardening.

Think Further:

Building a City-Wide Network

- Could your city's unused rooftops, courtyards, or balconies become part of a wider **digitally-mapped urban farming network** where resource needs (soil, water) and produce surpluses are shared efficiently?
- How could urban agriculture be linked to **educational curricula**, granting students credit for participating in the construction and management of school or community gardens?
- What policy changes could allow youth groups to easily secure and transform temporary vacant lots into sustainable garden projects before they are commercially developed?



Community Composting & Local Food Loops

Concept: Community composting transforms food waste into valuable fertilizer, effectively **closing the nutrient cycle** between households and gardens. Youth groups can manage neighborhood composting points and use them to educate others about waste reduction. This practice is the simplest example of the circular economy – turning waste into renewal.

Learning Point:

The Simplest Circular Loop

Composting makes the circular economy tangible: it's a zero-cost, high-impact practice that transforms what is often the most problematic waste (food) into the most valuable resource (healthy soil). It fosters **local resource management** and collective responsibility for neighborhood waste.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Sustainability:** Understanding the science of decomposition and nutrient cycling.
- **Mobilising Others:** Organizing neighbors and local businesses to participate consistently in the food loop.
- **Planning & Management:** Maintaining the composting site (turning, watering, monitoring temperature) and managing the distribution of the final product.

Did You Know?

The Cost of Food Waste

- The EU wastes almost **59 million tons of food each year,** costing €132 billion and generating **16% of all EU methane emissions.**
- When food scraps are composted instead of sent to landfills, they drastically r**educe methane** (a potent greenhouse gas) emissions.
- Compost enriches soil with organic matter, improving its structure and ability to retain water, which aids **climate resilience**.

Community Composting & Local Food Loops

How to Apply:

Run a "Waste to Growth" Workshop

Pilot a Site: Identify a suitable location (e.g., a youth center garden or school courtyard) and install several simple composting bins.
Run a Workshop: Organize a **"Waste to Growth" workshop**: collect fruit and vegetable waste from a community event or the center's kitchen and actively turn it into compost for the local garden.
Digital Tool Tip: Use a shared online calendar or communication channel (like WhatsApp or a community forum) to schedule compost drop-offs, track material levels, and notify participants when the finished compost is ready for pickup.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Waste Diverted:** Track the kilograms (kg) of food waste successfully diverted from landfill (to measure environmental impact).
- **Soil Quality:** Conduct simple tests to track the improvement in soil moisture retention and organic matter content where the compost is used.
- **Participation Rate:** Track the number of households or businesses consistently contributing their food waste.

Inclusion Check: Who can access the loop? Create a composting partnership with local cafés or restaurants that want to reduce their waste footprint. Use the resulting compost to support an Urban Garden initiative (like the one in Hamburg) that provides plots for low-income families or seniors.

Think Further:

Building a Local Nutrient Economy

- How can youth groups collaborate with municipalities to install **public composting infrastructure** across city parks, making participation seamless for all citizens?
- Could you develop a youth-led social enterprise that offers a **paid food waste collection and composting service** specifically for small local businesses?
- Imagine a **"Compost Token"** program: what form of non-monetary credit could be given to participants who contribute food waste, which they could then exchange for finished compost or seeds?

Youth as Food Innovators

Concept: Young entrepreneurs are finding new ways to merge technology with tradition from hydroponic microgreens farms to apps connecting surplus food to consumers. These approaches combine digital literacy, environmental awareness, and entrepreneurship to create greener, fairer food systems. Food innovation begins when youth rethink how food is grown, shared, and valued.

Learning Point:

Tech Meets Tradition

Food innovation is where **digital skills** meet **ecological wisdom.** It is the most direct path for young people to align their career values with sustainable development, creating models that are profitable, ethical, and climate-resilient.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Spotting Opportunities:** Identifying waste streams (e.g., spent coffee grounds, bruised produce) as valuable resources.
- **Creativity:** Designing new products (e.g., eco-packaging, upcycled snacks) or disruptive services (e.g., food-sharing apps).
- **Mobilising Others:** Building partnerships between farmers, software developers, and consumers to create a local food circle.

Did You Know?

EU Farming for the Future

- The EU's **Farm-to-Fork strategy** aims to reduce pesticide use by 50% and increase organic farming to **25% of total farmland by 2030.** Youth innovation is key to achieving this target.
- Globally, the food sector, from production to consumption, is responsible for approximately **one-third of total greenhouse-gas emissions.**
- Initiatives like **hydroponics and vertical farming** (often run by youth start-ups) use up to **95% less water** than traditional agriculture and can shorten transport distances to zero.

Youth as Food Innovators

How to Apply:

Run a "Food Entrepreneurship Pitch"

Identify a Local Challenge: Pinpoint one major local food issue e.g., a university canteen's food waste, a neighborhood's lack of fresh produce, or the high transport cost of a staple ingredient.
Develop an Eco-Solution: Brainstorm a creative response that closes the loop. This could be a one-page business proposal for an eco-café, a composting service, or a farm-to-table delivery partnership.
Digital Tool Tip: Prototype a basic food-sharing app concept using a free online tool (like Figma for design or Google Forms for a simulated marketplace) to connect local producers with consumers.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Potential Emission Savings** (by eliminating a supply chain step)
- **Financial Viability** (startup costs vs. potential revenue).

Inclusion Check: Who benefits from your innovation? Ensure your solution addresses affordability and accessibility, especially for low-income communities or food deserts. Could a portion of your product/service be donated or offered at a reduced cost (a solidarity-based circular economy)?

Think Further:

Scaling Innovation into a Network

- How could young innovators collaborate across borders to create a European **"green food tech"** network sharing ideas, prototypes, and mentorship to scale local sustainable food solutions into international impact?
- How can **digital tools** not only manage waste but also promote greater transparency in the food chain (e.g., blockchain for tracing origins) to build consumer trust?
- Imagine a local **food-waste start-up** fair hosted in your youth center: What kind of mentorship (legal, financial, technical) would youth innovators need most to turn their ideas into successful enterprises?

Create Your Own Practice: Design Your Local Food Circle

Goal:

Encourage readers to design a **measurable, circular,** and **sustainable** food system in their own community.

Apply the principles of regenerative agriculture and local food loops to build a fairer, greener food chain where you live.

Step 1: Identify the Challenge and Skill Focus

- Pinpoint one local food issue for example, **food waste, transport emissions, affordability,** or **sourcing**. Observe how it affects your community and who is already working on related topics.
- **Skills Focus (EntreComp):** Analyze the challenge to determine which skill is needed most (e.g., **Spotting Opportunities** to find waste streams; **Networking** to connect producers and consumers).

Step 2: Imagine an Inclusive Eco-Solution

- Brainstorm a creative response that could close the loop, such as a food-sharing app, a community compost project, a farm-to-table partnership, or an urban learning garden.
- **Inclusion Check: How does your solution address food equity?** Ensure the project makes healthy, sustainable food more accessible and affordable for low-income residents or uses educational content designed for all literacy levels.

Step 3: Build Your Network (Mobilising Others)

- Identify local allies: **farmers, markets, schools, cafés, NGOs, or municipal sustainability departments.**
- Collaboration makes your project more impactful and inclusive. Define the unique resources (e.g., financial, space, expertise) each ally brings.

Step 4: Prototype, Measure, and Test

- Develop one pilot idea (something small but tangible). Test it for a few weeks, gather feedback, and document your results. Even the smallest initiative can grow into a long-term community practice.
- **Measure Your Impact:** Define 2 key metrics to validate the success of your pilot:

Waste/Emissions Metric: Track the volume (kg) of food waste averted or the number of kilometers reduced in the local food chain.
Social Metric: Track the number of new consumers/producers connected via the initiative, or the number of healthy meals provided to a community group. Present your results to your peers or a local ally.

Think Further: Scaling the Food Circle

- Could your initiative become part of a l**ocal food hub or cooperative,** connecting multiple actors across your city or region?
- How could young people use **digital tools** to make local food systems smarter, fairer, and more circular (e.g., food inventory tracking, digital farmer's market portals)?
- What opportunities exist to scale your idea through **Erasmus+ exchanges**, local funding, or cross-border collaborations?

Idea Seed: “Could your next youth exchange grow its own herbs and cook zero-waste meals together?”

Section 4:
Eco-Creativity & Green Education

Sustainability needs storytellers as much as scientists. Facts and figures may inform, but it is creativity that moves people to care and act. When young people use art, design, and digital media to express environmental challenges, they transform awareness into emotion and emotion into collective action.

Across Europe, creative initiatives are redefining how we learn about the planet. From community murals and recycled art exhibitions to digital storytelling workshops and eco-media campaigns, young changemakers are proving that education can be hands-on, artistic, and deeply personal. These creative acts don't just spread messages they build empathy, belonging, and hope.

At the same time, green education is evolving beyond the classroom. Schools, NGOs, and cultural organizations are integrating environmental literacy, climate storytelling, and circular-design thinking into their learning programs. By blending imagination with knowledge, young people become both learners and leaders, turning sustainability into a creative mindset that shapes how they live, work, and collaborate.

This section presents examples such as Youth4Planet's climate storytelling projects, Splash Trash Art Movement, and Green Art for Awareness, which show how visual arts, filmmaking, and education can work together to inspire participation, innovation, and long-term engagement.

Reflection Prompt - Think Like a Creative Educator

- How can creativity make sustainability more engaging and inclusive in your community?
- Could art or storytelling become part of your organization's environmental education activities?
- What messages about the future would you share through a short film, mural, or performance?

CreatiVelo - Storytelling on Wheels (Luxembourg)

Developed by Youth4Planet, highlighted by project participants https://youth4planet.com/about/creativelo/ CreatiVelo is a solar- and pedal-powered mobile film studio that travels through communities, enabling youth to record and share their sustainability stories. By merging mobility, creativity, and renewable energy, it transforms streets into classrooms.

From Local Voices to Global Impact

CreatiVelo is more than a bike, it's a movement. Created by Youth4Planet, this solar-powered multimedia e-bike transforms mobility into creativity, turning streets, villages, and schools into interactive learning spaces. Through the CreatiVelo Action System, young people learn storytelling, media production, and teamwork while addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in their own communities.
Combining three key components a transportation system, an operating system for ActionTeams, and an online platform (Earthbeat app), CreatiVelo offers a complete ecosystem where learning, creativity, and sustainability come together. Youth teams co-create campaigns, record stories, run awareness events, and connect digitally with peers around the world. Every ride becomes a story in motion a pedal-powered classroom for change.

How It Works

The Operating System: ActionTeams learn 21st-century skills through storytelling challenges co-creating, making, and sharing their own sustainability stories. The method is rooted in narrative thinking ("AND–BUT–THEREFORE") and helps youth articulate local challenges while imagining collective solutions.

CreatiVelo

The Transportation System: Each CreatiVelo bike functions as a mobile studio powered by solar energy and equipped with sound, video, and internet capabilities. With its 400-watt solar panel, 1000-watt battery, and detachable media modules, it allows young people to record, screen, and share stories even in areas without electricity.

The Online Platform (Earthbeat App): A global digital hub that connects ActionTeams, stores their stories, and documents their campaigns. Through this platform, stories from India, Luxembourg, Brazil, or Türkiye become part of a shared mosaic of youth-led sustainability.

Did You Know?

- Youth4Planet's CreatiVelo was first introduced after COP21 in Paris and has since appeared across Europe, India, Nigeria, and Brazil, linking storytelling to the SDGs.
- A single CreatiVelo unit can run for 10 hours on solar power, bringing digital literacy and sustainability education to regions without stable electricity access.
- The global Earthbeat app connects stories from thousands of young people, making it one of the few platforms that merges climate storytelling, creative learning, and youth-led SDG action.
- Studies show that story-based learning increases comprehension and motivation by up to 40% compared to traditional fact-based education (Journal of Educational Psychology, 2024).

Learning Point

CreatiVelo embodies the principle that education and innovation can move literally. It demonstrates how technology, storytelling, and renewable energy can merge into a powerful tool for empowerment. It transforms passive learning into active doing turning every journey into a space for discovery, dialogue, and documentation.

Idea Seed:
"What if every community had one solar-powered storytelling bike, traveling from school to school, turning local voices into global lessons on sustainability?"

CreatiVelo

How to Apply or Recreate the Workshop

The CreatiVelo workshop follows a **three-step co-creation process** that helps participants move from creative ideas to tested and refined sustainable solutions. It connects storytelling, entrepreneurship, and systems thinking, turning imagination into action.

Step 1 – Creation of Ideas & Story Reflection
ActionTeams begin by **creating ideas** for sustainable or socially relevant solutions. They learn to **reflect their concepts through filmmaking,** using the CreatiVelo mobile studio to turn ideas into short, powerful stories. This creative phase builds 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and digital storytelling helping participants articulate both the “why” and “how” of their idea.

How to Apply or Recreate the Workshop

Step 2 – Go Out onto the Marketplace
Participants **take their CreatiVelo into public space**, a market, festival, or community event. to present and test their ideas in real life. They collect **interest and feedforward** from citizens, peers, and local stakeholders. This open interaction becomes a living test environment, revealing how well the story connects with people and what potential it has for further development.

Step 3 – Reflection and Development
Back in the workshop setting, teams **reflect about the process,** what worked, what surprised them, and what they would improve. Guided by mentors, they **develop their ideas into proper business or community proposals**, combining creativity with realistic planning. This final stage links storytelling to entrepreneurship and long-term sustainability.

Think Further

How could your organization extend the CreatiVelo approach beyond the workshop?
Could the three-step cycle, creation, public testing, reflection, become a regular method for designing new sustainability or social-innovation projects?
Imagine forming a **local CreatiVelo network,** where youth teams continuously exchange stories, prototypes, and business ideas inspired by the **Donut Model**.
What new partnerships could emerge if municipalities, schools, and local entrepreneurs joined this process, turning storytelling into a **permanent ecosystem of circular innovation**?

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Splash Trash Art Movement - Turning Waste into Awareness (Istanbul, Türkiye)

Concept: The **Splash Trash Art Movement** turns marine litter into **public art.** Volunteers collect plastic waste from beaches and transform it into sculptures and installations that provoke conversation about ocean pollution. The core message is that art transforms environmental anxiety into creative empowerment.

Learning Point:

Art as a Catalyst for Action

Creativity is an essential language for sustainability, as it turns overwhelming data into powerful emotion. This movement demonstrates how a**rt can be a community catalyst**, inviting broad participation in environmental solutions and moving awareness into collective action.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Creativity:** Transforming discarded materials (waste) into valuable, aesthetic objects (art).
- M**obilising Others:** Organizing and managing volunteers for clean-up actions and public exhibitions.
- **Communication:** Using visual art and public installation to communicate complex environmental science effectively.

Did You Know?

The Ocean Crisis

- Every year, about **11 million tons of plastic enter the oceans** the equivalent of one truckload every minute.
- Studies show that community art projects can i**ncrease civic engagement by up to 30%,** especially among young people.
- By intervening and reusing waste, this movement directly supports the transition to a **circular mindset.**

Splash Trash Art Movement - Turning Waste into Awareness (Istanbul, Türkiye)

How to Apply:

Organize a "Trash-to-Art Day"

Organize a Combined Action: Organize a "Trash-to-Art Day": combine a local clean-up action (beach, park, or riverbank) with an immediate art workshop.
Create Installations: Focus the workshop on creating a collective installation or large sculpture from the collected waste that visually represents the scale of the pollution found.
Digital Tool Tip: Use a shared social media channel (e.g., Instagram, TikTok) to run a "Digital Traveling Exhibition" showing how local waste becomes local art. Use a shared hashtag to connect globally.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Waste Diverted:** Track the total kilograms (kg) of waste collected and the fraction of that waste repurposed for art (reused).
- **Public Awareness:** Measure foot traffic or online engagement (likes, shares, comments) generated by the art installations.
- **Volunteer Engagement:** Track the number of participants and the number of hours dedicated to the cleanup and creative activity.

Inclusion Check: Are all voices heard? Ensure the public art is placed in accessible community locations and translated or interpreted for participants and viewers who speak different languages or have different cultural backgrounds.

Think Further:

Scaling Creative Advocacy

- Could your youth group design a **traveling exhibition** showing how local waste becomes local art, moving between towns to inspire regional action?
- How can youth-led art initiatives evolve into **ongoing community platforms** where exhibitions, performances, and digital galleries continuously share creative messages about sustainability and social inclusion?
- What form of **micro-financing or grant** could youth groups secure to turn their waste-art pieces into a **social enterprise** (e.g., selling small upcycled items to fund clean-up efforts)?

Youth4Planet Storytelling for Sustainable Futures

Concept: Youth4Planet's educational model teaches young people to tell climate stories through **film and digital media.** Participants learn scripting, filming, and editing while reflecting on local sustainability issues. The model proves that **storytelling builds agency** young people who narrate change begin to lead it.

Learning Point:

Narrating Change Creates Agency

Sustainability needs **storytellers** as much as scientists. Storytelling is the most powerful method to transform complex facts and environmental anxiety into **emotion and collective action**. By creating media, youth become both learners and leaders, mastering the art of communication for impact.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Communication:** Mastering digital media, public speaking, and narrative structures ("AND-BUT-THEREFORE").
- **Creativity:** Developing scripts, visual concepts, and unique ways to present solutions and challenges.
- **Ideas into Action:** Translating complex local environmental problems into short, shareable, and actionable content.

Did You Know?

Impact of Video Storytelling

- Research shows that video storytelling can increase **pro-environmental behavior by up to 45%** compared with traditional lessons.
- The EU invests over **€100 million annually** in green-education and climate-communication projects under Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe.
- Youth4Planet's model directly supports the **"Creative & Culture"** force, which helps communities internalize ecological values.

Youth4Planet Storytelling for Sustainable Futures

How to Apply:

Launch a "One-Minute Stories of Hope" Challenge

Integrate Assignments: Integrate short film or social-media assignments into trainings for instance, a "one-minute stories of hope" challenge focusing on a local sustainable practice.
Focus on Solutions: Teach the **"AND-BUT-THEREFORE"** narrative structure (Situation, Problem, Solution/Goal) to ensure stories don't just state a problem but actively showcase a positive way forward (like CreatiVelo does).
Digital Tool Tip: Encourage participants to use simple smartphone cameras and free editing apps to democratize production, and publish their content under a shared hashtag on platforms like YouTube or TikTok.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Engagement:** Track the reach and engagement of the videos (views, shares, comments) to measure public interest.
- **Knowledge Transfer:** Measure how many viewers/peers successfully identify the local solution presented in the video.
- **Creative Output:** Track the number of students who successfully complete a high-quality video project.

Inclusion Check: Are all stories represented? Actively seek out participants from different socioeconomic or cultural backgrounds and offer simple translation or subtitling support so their local stories can be accessed and valued by the wider European network.

Think Further:

Building a Global Climate Archive

- How could storytelling evolve into a **long-term movement** where youth from different countries co-create a **digital archive of climate stories,** sharing their local challenges and successes to inspire collective global action?
- Could youth-created climate films be officially endorsed or screened by local **municipal environmental offices** to inform policy and public discourse?
- What training and mentorship are needed to turn talented youth storytellers into **green media entrepreneurs** who can earn a living creating content for NGOs or sustainable businesses?

Art, Culture, and the Circular Mindset

Concept: Artistic expression normalizes sustainable lifestyles. From eco-fashion shows to recycled-material installations, cultural events help communities internalize ecological values. Culture can make sustainability visible, emotional, and aspirational.

Learning Point:

Cultural Shift for Climate Action

Culture is the most powerful tool for achieving a **circular mindset.** It connects emotions with action an inclusive language that crosses barriers. By using recycled materials or focusing on green themes, art and culture move sustainability from a policy issue to a **shared community value.**

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Creativity:** Developing artistic concepts that transform waste or address environmental themes.
- **Communication:** Using performance, visuals, and music to convey complex scientific ideas more effectively than data alone.
- **Ideas into Action:** Organizing and curating cultural events (festivals, exhibitions) to promote ecological values.

Did You Know?

The Green Culture Economy

- Creative industries represent **4.4%** of **EU GDP.** Integrating sustainability could generate **2 million new green-culture jobs by 2030.**
- Art made from waste (like the Splash Trash Art Movement) directly supports the circular economy by challenging consumption habits.
- Cultural projects can increase **civic engagement** by up to 30%, especially among young people.

Create Your Own Practice: From Story to Startup

Goal:

Transform your creative ideas into **measurable** social or entrepreneurial initiatives that connect **art, sustainability, and community impact.**

Apply creative tools to turn personal passion for the environment into a sustainable venture or movement.

Step 1: Find Your Cause and Identify Skills

- Choose one environmental issue that truly moves you it could be **plastic pollution, energy use, food waste**, or **biodiversity loss**. The strongest projects begin with personal motivation.
- **Skills Focus (EntreComp):** Identify which entrepreneurial skill is needed most (e.g., **Motivation/Self-Awareness** to fuel your passion; **Spotting Opportunities** to find an unaddressed issue).

Step 2: Pick Your Creative Medium and Ensure Inclusion

- Decide how to tell your story: through **art, film, photography, design, music,** or **performance**. Creativity is your bridge to connect people emotionally with the planet.
- **Inclusion Check: Who is your audience?** Choose a medium and language that breaks down barriers and ensures your message can reach marginalized communities, non-academics, or individuals who are not typically engaged in environmental debates.

Step 3: Link Story to Action (Value Creation)

- Imagine how your creative message could evolve into a **product, service, or experience** that sustains itself (e.g., eco-workshops, art prints, performances, or community design projects).
- Define the **value proposition**: How does your creative output solve a problem or meet a need for your target audience?

Step 4: Prototype, Measure, and Share

- Build a small prototype or organize a pilot activity. Share your outcomes online or through your youth network to inspire others and attract collaborators.
- **Measure Your Impact:** Define 2 key metrics to validate the project's success:

Creative Output/Reach: Track the number of audience members engaged, or the views/shares of your digital content.
Social/Environmental Metric: Track the amount of recycled material used (for art), or the measured increase in audience environmental awareness (via quick survey). **Digital Tool Tip:** Use a free online tool (like Canva or CapCut) to finalize your creative assets, and develop a simple **one-page digital portfolio** to showcase your prototype to potential allies and funders.

Think Further: Scaling the Creative Venture

- Could your creative idea grow into a **social enterprise** that supports environmental awareness or green education?
- How might storytelling and entrepreneurship come together in your organization's future projects?
- What **new audiences** could you reach by combining creativity, sustainability, and digital tools?

Idea Seed: “Could your youth center host a mini ‘Green Film Festival’ where every movie must be shot on a phone and powered by renewable energy?”

Section 5:
Social Innovation & Community Impact

Sustainability is not only about technology and ecology it's about people. Real change happens when environmental goals meet human creativity, solidarity, and inclusion. Social innovation brings these elements together, creating communities that are not only greener but also fairer and more connected.

Across Europe, young changemakers are reimagining how communities can thrive. They are founding repair cafés, organizing sharing networks, creating circular social enterprises, and building local cooperatives that transform everyday life into a platform for sustainability. Each initiative demonstrates that innovation is not limited to products or technology it can also mean new ways of working together, sharing resources, and building trust.

By linking environmental responsibility with social engagement, youth are helping design new economic and cultural systems based on collaboration, reuse, and care. Whether through community composting, solidarity markets, or creative reuse projects, these models remind us that the most sustainable resource we have is our connection to one another.

This section presents inspiring practices such as Solidarity Network Vienna's community-sharing initiatives and Green Art for Awareness, which use creativity and participation to unite people around social and environmental change. Together, they show how sustainability becomes a shared journey when it empowers everyone to participate.

Reflection Prompt - Think Like a Social Innovator

- What challenges in your community could be addressed through collaboration and reuse rather than competition and consumption?
- How can young people ensure that environmental action also supports inclusion, equity, and well-being?
- What would a "solidarity-based circular economy" look like in your city or organization?

Rekava - From Coffee Waste to Eco-Candles

Concept: Rekava began with a simple idea: turning used **coffee grounds into candles.** The start-up quickly evolved into a leading example of circular entrepreneurship, proving that waste can spark innovation. Beyond eco-candles, Rekava now develops recycling technologies and sustainable product lines.

Learning Point:

Waste as a Business Model

Waste is just a resource waiting for imagination. Rekava demonstrates that a viable business model can be built entirely on **waste reduction and upcycling**, proving that sustainability thrives on rethinking everyday habits and turning linear consumption into circular value creation.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Spotting Opportunities:** Identifying a massive, consistent waste stream (coffee grounds) and recognizing its potential value.
- **Creativity:** Developing a new, marketable product (eco-candles) from a low-value material.
- **Ideas into Action:** Scaling a local craft idea into a formal, sustainable, and profitable start-up.

Did You Know?

The Coffee Waste Challenge

- The EU generates over **6 million tons of coffee waste each year,** much of which ends up in landfills.
- Upcycling coffee waste into products like candles or biofuels significantly reduces **methane emissions** from decomposing organic matter in landfills.
- **Rekava** exemplifies how entrepreneurs can create a **circular, locally sourced supply chain** that benefits both the economy and the environment.

Rekava - From Coffee Waste to Eco-Candles

How to Apply:

Organize an "Upcycle Lab"

Spot a Local Stream: Partner with a large local café, university cafeteria, or coffee roaster to secure a steady supply of a single, consistent waste material (e.g., coffee grounds, paper pulp, textile scraps).
Run an Upcycle Lab: Organize an **"Upcycle Lab"** where participants turn local waste materials into new useful items combining creativity with entrepreneurship.
Digital Tool Tip: Use basic design software (like Canva or a free logo maker) to create packaging and branding for your prototype product, preparing it for market.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Waste Diverted:** Track the total kilograms (kg) of waste material successfully secured and repurposed into prototypes.
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Estimate the material costs saved by using waste instead of raw resources.
- **Innovation Output:** Track the number of feasible, marketable product ideas generated from the single waste stream.

Inclusion Check:How are jobs created? Design the production process for your upcycled product (e.g., mixing candle wax, preparing molds) to be suitable for skills training and employment pathways for youth facing barriers to work.

Think Further:

Scaling the Upcycled Market

- What other everyday products in your community from discarded beer mash to oyster shells could be redesigned from waste?
- Could youth teams develop a **"Waste Audit and Consultation"** service for local small businesses, identifying their largest waste streams and suggesting circular solutions?
- What form of **seed funding or mentorship** could your local chamber of commerce provide to youth teams that successfully prototype a profitable circular product?

Solidarity Network Vienna - Sharing and Circular Living (Austria)

Concept: The **Solidarity Network Vienna** promotes a circular lifestyle by hosting **money-free markets, repair cafés,** and **skill-sharing events**. Participants exchange goods and knowledge rather than buying new ones, which dramatically reduces waste and builds social trust.

Learning Point:

Solidarity as the Ultimate Resource

The sharing economy is not just about saving money it's about creating **communities of care and resource efficiency.** This social innovation model proves that linking environmental goals (waste reduction) with social goals (inclusion and solidarity) creates a more resilient and equitable local economy.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Mobilising Resources (Non-Financial):** Identifying unused goods, spaces, and skills within a community for mutual benefit.
- **Networking:** Building and maintaining a network of volunteers, donors, and users to facilitate non-monetary exchanges.
- **Ideas into Action:** Organizing and marketing regular community events (markets, cafés) to drive sustainable participation.

Did You Know?

The Power of Reuse

- If every EU citizen reused just **one-tenth of household goods**, annual waste could drop by **20 million tons.**
- If every EU household reused or repaired 20% of its products, waste generation would drop by **20 million tons per year.**
- Repair cafés and reuse initiatives directly reduce the consumption of new raw materials, decreasing the overall carbon footprint of products by **20–30%** by extending their life by just nine months.

Solidarity Network Vienna - Sharing and Circular Living (Austria)

How to Apply:

Host a "Swap & Skill-Share Day"

Define Exchange Currencies: Host a **Community Swap Day** in your youth center or school, inviting participants to exchange clothes, books, or tools.
Add a Service Component: Integrate a skill-sharing element where people trade abilities (like basic repair skills, language tutoring) instead of money, creating a simple **"Time Bank".**
Digital Tool Tip: Use a private social media group or a simple online form to list "Items to Swap" and "Skills to Share" before the event, strengthening the local culture of reuse.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Volume of Diverted Waste:** Track the number of items successfully swapped or repaired (to estimate waste diverted).
- **Estimated Savings:** Calculate and display the estimated carbon saved" or the monetary value saved by each exchange.
- **Social Cohesion:** Measure the number of skill-sharing exchanges facilitated (e.g., hours of tutoring, number of small repairs completed).

Inclusion Check: How can sharing benefit marginalized groups? Partner with social services to offer an early access period or a designated donation system to ensure that low-income families or refugees can access essential goods freely and without stigma.

Think Further:

Scaling the Upcycled Market

- What other everyday products in your community from discarded beer mash to oyster shells could be redesigned from waste?
- Could youth teams develop a **"Waste Audit and Consultation"** service for local small businesses, identifying their largest waste streams and suggesting circular solutions?
- What form of **seed funding or mentorship** could your local chamber of commerce provide to youth teams that successfully prototype a profitable circular product?

Green Art for Awareness - Creativity as Community Catalyst

Concept: Youth groups have used **public art, murals, and performances** to raise awareness about sustainability and social justice. By turning environmental challenges into visual experiences, they reach audiences that data alone cannot. The core idea is that art connects emotions with action an inclusive language that crosses barriers.

Learning Point:

Making the Invisible Visible

Art and creativity are essential catalysts for community engagement, making sustainability **visible, emotional, and aspirational**. This model empowers communities to co-create their own vision of a green future and turn local environmental issues into a shared, actionable narrative.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Creativity:** Developing artistic concepts that transform waste or convey complex themes.
- **Communication:** Using visual media and public performance to convey ideas more effectively than data.
- **Ideas into Action:** Organizing and curating collaborative art pieces (murals, exhibitions) that require community participation

Did You Know?

Civic Engagement Through Art

- Studies show that c**ommunity art projects can increase civic engagement by up to 30%,** especially among young people.
- Creative industries represent **4.4% of EU GDP**, demonstrating the economic potential of the cultural sector to integrate green principles.
- Artistic expression can help normalize and promote sustainable lifestyles (e.g., eco-fashion, recycled installations), fostering a collective circular mindset.

Green Art for Awareness - Creativity as Community Catalyst

How to Apply:

Organize a Collaborative Green Mural

Define the Narrative: Choose a local environmental issue (e.g., local biodiversity loss, water quality) and work with local artists to translate it into a compelling visual concept.
Organize Collaboration: Organize a collaborative art piece for example, a mural illustrating your community's journey toward sustainability. Invite citizens of all ages to contribute paint or recycled materials.
Digital Tool Tip: Use time-lapse photography to document the creation of the art piece and share it online to show the **power of collective community work** (a form of storytelling).
Measure Your Impact:

- **Community Hours:** Track the number of citizen hours dedicated to creating the art piece (to measure social capital).
- **Engagement:** Track social media engagement (shares, views) and local news coverage generated by the artwork.
- **Attitudinal Shift:** Conduct a simple survey near the installation to measure if the artwork makes passersby more aware of the local issue.

Inclusion Check: Are all voices visible? Ensure the design process for the mural is open and accessible, allowing input from diverse community members and ensuring the final artwork represents the cultural and social diversity of the neighborhood.

Think Further:

Long-Term Cultural Platforms

- How could youth-led art initiatives evolve into **ongoing community platforms** where exhibitions, performances, and digital galleries continuously share creative messages about sustainability and social inclusion?
- Could a youth group develop an app that uses **Augmented Reality (AR)** to add a digital storytelling layer (like interviews or facts) to physical murals, enhancing the educational impact?
- What form of partnership could connect the art project to local **repair cafés** (Solidarity Network Vienna) or **upcycling start-ups** (Rekava) to provide materials and ongoing project support?

Green Jobs and Local Futures

Concept: Green employment opportunities are expanding in sectors such as **renewable energy, eco-tourism, recycling, repair, and digital sustainability.** For young people, these new roles connect personal values with vocation. The core principle is that green jobs prove that doing good for the planet can also mean **decent, meaningful work**.

Learning Point:

Values Meet Vocation

The transition to a sustainable economy is the greatest job-creation engine of our time. A **"green job"** is not just about technology; it's any role that **contributes to protecting or restoring the environment**. This sector empowers youth to build resilient local futures that are aligned with their environmental ethics.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Vision:** Identifying long-term career opportunities in emerging sectors like hydrogen, circular design, and regenerative agriculture.
- **Self-Awareness & Self-Efficacy:** Connecting personal passions (e.g., climate activism) with required professional skills (e.g., technical, digital).
- **Financial & Economic Literacy:** Understanding market demand, salary trends, and investment opportunities in the green economy.

Did You Know?

EU The Green Jobs Boom

- The EU's **Green Deal** aims to create **1 million new green jobs by 2030** through renewable energy and circular economy initiatives.
- The global renewable energy sector alone is projected to employ **38 million people globally by 2030.**
- Over **85% of renewable-energy employers in Europe report skills shortages,** indicating a huge demand for trained young professionals (IRENA Skills Report 2024).

Green Jobs and Local Futures

How to Apply:

Run a "Green Career Day"

Host the Event: Run a "Green Career Day" or workshop. Invite local entrepreneurs and organizations (e.g., solar installers, zero-waste shop owners, eco-tourism guides) to present real examples of sustainable jobs and internship opportunities.
Job Redesign: Use a simulation game to ask participants: "What would a 'green' version of your current role or organization look like?" Focus on redesigning conventional jobs (e.g., in logistics, administration, or marketing) through a sustainability lens.
Digital Tool Tip: Use online job portals dedicated to sustainability (e.g., Green Job Search, platforms focusing on European Green Deal projects) to show young people concrete vacancies and required qualifications in the sector.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Career Interest:** Track the number of participants who enroll in green skills courses or apply for green internships/jobs within a set timeframe.
- **Skills Gap:** Survey participants on which technical and transversal skills they feel they currently lack for green careers (e.g., coding, project management, technical certifications).
- **Partnership Success:** Track the number of new mentorship relationships established between green professionals and youth participants.

Inclusion Check: Are opportunities equitable? Partner with social support organizations to offer free transport or childcare if needed for youth to attend Green Career events. Ensure recruiters at the event actively promote training pathways accessible to youth without university degrees.

Think Further:

Policy and Future Pathways

- How can local education systems (schools, vocational centers) be reformed to ensure every young person graduates with the **basic green and digital skills** demanded by the new economy?
- Could youth councils influence local policymakers to prioritize **"Green Public Procurement",** requiring city contracts to be fulfilled by businesses that create local, sustainable jobs?
- What form of digital **skills passport** or micro-credential could simplify the recognition of non-formal learning (like skills gained in this toolkit) for green employers?

Youth Empowerment and Participation

Concept: Youth are not just participants in sustainability they are its **engine**. This project showed that when young people collaborate, they create fresh, localized, and feasible ideas for change. The core belief is that **empowered youth don't wait for opportunities they create them.**

Learning Point:

The Youth Multiplier Effect

Empowerment moves beyond simply giving youth a voice; it gives them **ownership** and **resources** to act. When youth are equipped with green and digital skills, they become **multipliers of change**, transforming local action into collective global momentum.

Skills Focus (EntreComp)

- **Self-Awareness & Self-Efficacy:** Recognizing one's ability to drive change and taking proactive steps to influence policy and community outcomes.
- **Mobilising Others:** Leading and coordinating informal groups and youth councils to address local issues.
- **Vision:** Defining a clear, shared goal for the local community's sustainable future.

Did You Know?

EU Investment in Youth Leadership

- Erasmus+ funded over **300,000 youth workers and leaders** between 2021–2024 to strengthen green and digital competences.
- Youth participation in decision-making processes increases the long-term success and relevance of local sustainability policies.
- Youth-led initiatives often demonstrate higher rates of innovation because they are unconstrained by traditional employment or academic pathways.

Youth Empowerment and Participation

How to Apply:

Develop Mini-Action Plans

Form an Action Team: Encourage youth councils or informal groups to develop **mini-action plans** addressing local sustainability issues (e.g., waste, clean energy access, green spaces).
Define a Simple Project: Encourage every youth group to commit to **one small project each** year from waste reduction to food donation that directly improves its neighborhood.
Digital Tool Tip: Use online collaboration tools (like Google Docs or Miro boards) to jointly draft the mini-action plan, allowing for transparent co-creation and easy sharing with partners and mentors.
Measure Your Impact:

- **Action Completion Rate:** Track the number of youth groups that successfully launch and complete their planned mini-action project within six months.
- **Policy Influence:** Track the number of proposals submitted by youth groups to local authorities or school boards.
- **Participation Reach:** Track the number of new young people engaged in environmental action who were previously inactive.

Inclusion Check: Who is at the table? Actively seek out mentors and partners who can guide youth from underserved communities, ensuring that the benefits of empowerment and green participation are shared equitably across all demographic groups.

Think Further:

Building Global Momentum

- How could young changemakers link their local sustainability projects into a **wider European youth network** sharing outcomes, mentoring each other, and influencing policy together to turn local action into global momentum?
- What policy structures could recognize the "social capital" generated by youth participation and offer tangible support (like project seed funding or micro-credentials)?
- How can youth organizations act as connectors between citizens, policymakers, and innovators, creating a continuous dialogue for sustainable development?

Create Your Own Practice: Map Your Community Impact

Goal:

Empower readers to design a **measurable, inclusive,** and **collaborative** initiative that transforms their organization or network into a local sustainability leader.

This exercise brings together all the entrepreneurial, social, and ecological principles in the toolkit to launch a lasting community project.

Step 1: Map the Challenge and Identify Skill Focus

- Identify one pressing **social or environmental issue** in your area for example, **unemployment, waste management, inclusion,** or **access to green spaces**. Observe who is already working on it and what gaps remain.
- **Skills Focus (EntreComp):** Identify which entrepreneurial skill is needed most to define the scope (e.g., **Vision** to see the solution; **Spotting Opportunities** to find the unaddressed need).

Step 2: Discover Local Assets and Skills Inventory

- List the **skills, spaces, and partnerships** your group or community already has. You might have access to meeting venues, digital tools, volunteers, or creative networks all potential building blocks for change.
- **Skills Focus (EntreComp):** Take an **Inventory of Skills** within your group. What skills (digital, creative, technical) can you mobilize to meet the challenge?

Step 3: Co-Create an Inclusive Solution

- Brainstorm a **collaborative initiative** that brings together citizens, volunteers, or organizations to address the challenge.
- Focus on **simple, achievable actions** from repair workshops to inclusive green campaigns or community gardens.
- **Inclusion Check: Who is the project designed to serve?** Ensure the project explicitly supports inclusion, equity, and the well-being of all participants (e.g., by providing accessible venues or targeting youth with fewer opportunities).

Step 4: Prototype, Measure, and Test

- Develop a short proposal or pilot plan, then test it during a community event or youth activity.
- **Measure Your Impact:** Define **2 key metrics** to validate the project's success:

Social Impact Metric: Track the number of participants from diverse backgrounds, or the number of skill-sharing exchanges facilitated.
Resource Metric: Track the reduction in utility consumption, waste diverted, or local resources mobilized.

- Collect feedback, reflect on what worked, and identify how the idea could grow into a long-term initiative.

Digital Tool Tip: Use a free online tool (like Canva or CapCut) to finalize your creative assets, and develop a simple **one-page digital portfolio** to showcase your prototype to potential allies and funders.

Think Further: Sustaining Momentum and Policy Influence

- Could your project evolve into a **permanent local network** for sustainability and inclusion?
- How can youth organizations act as **connectors** between citizens, policymakers, and innovators?
- What forms of support or recognition (e.g., local grants, municipal partnerships) might help sustain your community's impact over time?

Idea Seed: “What if every youth group had one small project each year from waste reduction to food donation that directly improves its neighborhood?”

Closing Reflection: From Ideas to Impact

Green entrepreneurship is not just a career path; it's a **mindset** that values curiosity, care, and courage. Every youth worker, educator, or activist who reads this Toolkit can become a **multiplier of change**, inspiring others to act, invent solutions, and build hope in their own communities.

The journey doesn't end here. You are invited to contribute your own practices and innovations through the project's shared **Padlet space**, continuing the exchange of ideas, creativity, and solutions across Europe. By sharing what works, you help others learn, adapt, and multiply impact.

"We don't inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children."

Let's make sure we return it better than we found it, **greener, fairer, and filled with opportunities** for every young person to shape a sustainable future.