Global Youth Leadership Programme for Sustainable Prosperity

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□□ :		12 Months
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As the world approaches 2030, the global community faces a pivotal moment in its sustainable development journey—one that demands both continued implementation of the SDGs and a deeper understanding of their real-world impact. Evaluating progress, identifying gaps, and drawing lessons from local experiences are essential to ensure inclusive and effective action.

Youth engagement in this process is critical. As both beneficiaries and catalysts for change, young people bring fresh perspectives, innovative thinking, and a strong connection to their communities. Their involvement ensures that SDG progress is not only measured through data, but also grounded in lived realities—highlighting what's working, where challenges persist, and how to accelerate meaningful change.

To fully harness their potential, young people must be equipped with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities to actively participate in the SDG evaluation process.

Programme Introduction

The Global Youth Scholar Programme is a dynamic initiative designed to empower youth aged 15–24 to assess the local impact of the SDGs in their lives, schools, and communities. As youth evaluators, participants will conduct case studies and produce concise reports reflecting how the SDGs have influenced their surroundings.

With their digital fluency, creativity, and community engagement, youth play a vital role in:

- Community-based data collection and citizen-led monitoring
- Designing innovative methods for SDG tracking
- Advocating for evidence-based policies
- Strengthening accountability to ensure sustained commitment from all stakeholders

The programme is free and open to all eligible youth, providing a unique platform for critical thinking, peer collaboration, and global engagement. Throughout the year, participants will gain access to enriching opportunities, including international study visits to Geneva, Osaka, Tokyo, Singapore, and other key locations (costs may vary depending on the program). These experiences help connect theory to practice and deepen understanding of global sustainability efforts.

Applications are accepted year-round, with monthly onboarding ceremonies. At the end of each year, the top evaluation reports will be selected, and exceptional participants will be invited to UNITAR Headquarters in Geneva to present their

findings to senior UN officials.

Select youth may also be invited to represent their work at high-level events such as the Expo UN Pavilion, COP conferences, and other global forums—providing a unique opportunity to engage directly with policymakers and shape the international sustainable development agenda.

Tentative Timeline of Activities (2025–2026)

- **April 2025:** Official programme launch and global press announcement
- **May 2025**: Participant recruitment via universities, youth networks, and online platforms
- **June – December 2025:** Monthly eLearning sessions on SDG-related themes and evaluation methodologies
- **July, August, October 2025:** In-person study visits to Geneva, Tokyo, Osaka, and additional global cities
- **November – December 2025:** Submission of SDG evaluation reports
- **December 2025 – January 2026:** Expert committee review, peer feedback, and selection of top evaluation reports
- **February 2026:** SDG Evaluation Showcase at UNITAR Headquarters in Geneva, featuring youth presentations to senior UN officials
- **April 2026:** Launch of Year 2 and recruitment of the next cohort

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By the end of the programme, participants will be able to:

1. Empower Youth as Key Evaluators of SDGs

- Identify and explain at least three core SDG evaluation methodologies (e.g., community-based data collection, citizen-led monitoring).
- Design and implement a localized SDG evaluation plan, including data collection and analysis, within their community.
- Submit a written report assessing at least one SDG's impact in their community, with specific indicators and recommendations.
- Present their findings in a 5–10-minute presentation to peers and/or mentors using data visualizations.

2. Explore the Role of Frontier Technologies in SDG Evaluation

- Describe the application of at least two frontier technologies (AI, big data, blockchain, etc.) in SDG evaluation through case studies.
- Analyze a real-world example where technology has enhanced SDG tracking or policy-making.
- Create a concept note or infographic outlining how a selected technology can be applied to improve SDG impact in their own context.
- Participate in a study visit and complete a reflection brief summarizing key takeaways related to tech and sustainability.

3. Cultivate Leadership for SDG Accountability

- Lead at least one group discussion or community session on SDG challenges and solutions.
- Apply critical thinking to solve a sustainability problem in a peer-reviewed case study activity.
- Develop and present a personal leadership action plan to advocate for SDG accountability in their school, university, or community.
- Receive peer or mentor feedback on their leadership and communication during project presentations.

4. Enable Practical SDG Evaluation & Local Action

- Conduct a local SDG evaluation project, measuring progress against at least three SDG indicators.
- Collaborate with community stakeholders to gather and analyze qualitative and quantitative data.
- Produce a 3–5 page evaluation report with clear metrics, findings, and proposed actions.
- Demonstrate impact by reporting on at least one tangible change or insight that resulted from their evaluation.

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The programme offers a year-round hybrid learning experience, designed to balance knowledge acquisition, practical field application, and global collaboration. The structure is divided into key components that allow for both

virtual and hands-on engagement:

1. Monthly eLearning Courses

Each month, participants will engage in virtual learning sessions, guided by high-level UN officials and subject-matter experts. These courses provide foundational knowledge and practical skills across various topics, including:

- Principles and Methodology of SDG Evaluation: Understanding the framework for assessing SDG impact at local and global levels.
- Citizen Engagement in Sustainability Tracking: Exploring the role of communities in data collection and SDG monitoring.
- Digital Tools for Community-Based Data Analysis: Hands-on training in the use of digital platforms to collect and analyze data relevant to sustainability goals.
- Global Trends & Local Adaptations in Sustainable Development: Analyzing emerging global sustainability trends and their application to local contexts.

2. Field-Based Case Studies & Reports

Participants will apply their learning by conducting field evaluations in their local communities. Using the tools and methodologies introduced in the training sessions, they will:

- Identify key SDG challenges within their community.
- Collect data and analyze the local impact of SDGs.
- Develop and submit formal evaluation reports with findings and actionable solutions based on real-world observations.

3. Study Visits

Participants will have the opportunity to join in-person study visits to various international destinations. These visits will provide hands-on experiences in sustainability practices, with opportunities to interact with tech companies, government agencies, and UN offices. Possible destinations include:

- Geneva, Switzerland: Engage with UN bodies and sustainability experts.
- Tokyo & Osaka, Japan: Explore cutting-edge sustainability and technology solutions.
- Singapore & other cities: Learn from global leaders in sustainable urban development.

Note: Travel costs and arrangements (including visa, insurance, and accommodation) are the responsibility of the participants and may vary by destination.

4. SDG Evaluation Showcase in Geneva

At the end of the programme, the most outstanding participants will be invited to present their evaluation reports at the UNITAR Headquarters in Geneva in February 2026. The event will be attended by senior UN officials, sustainability experts, and key stakeholders. Participants will have the opportunity to:

- Present their evaluation findings to a global audience.
- Compete for awards recognizing the most impactful and innovative SDG evaluations.

This structure ensures a balanced, engaging, and impactful learning journey that equips participants with both the theoretical knowledge and practical skills to drive positive change in sustainable development.

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The programme adopts an innovative, learner-centered approach that blends digital learning, experiential activities, and collaborative engagement to maximize impact. Participants will benefit from a structured yet flexible learning journey designed to foster practical skills, critical thinking, and global perspectives.

Key components include:

- **Interactive Webinars & Expert-Led Dialogues:** Live sessions with global experts and practitioners to provide foundational knowledge and real-time insights into SDG evaluation and frontier technologies.
- **Real-World Evaluation Challenges:** Hands-on assignments that require participants to apply learned concepts to local SDG issues, fostering problem-solving and contextual understanding.
- **Case-Based Learning & Digital Resource Access:** Curated case studies and multimedia learning materials to deepen understanding of best practices and innovations in sustainable development.

- **Individual & Group Mentoring:** Regular coaching sessions with experienced mentors to support personal growth, project development, and leadership skills.
- **Peer Collaboration & Global Networking:** Group activities, feedback sessions, and international networking opportunities that promote cross-cultural exchange and collaborative learning.

This blended methodology ensures that participants not only gain theoretical knowledge but also develop practical evaluation skills, leadership capacity, and a deeper commitment to sustainable development through meaningful engagement and reflection.

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The programme is open to youth aged 18–24 who are passionate about sustainable development and eager to make a positive impact in their communities and beyond. It is designed to attract a diverse group of young changemakers with a wide range of interests and backgrounds. Ideal participants include:

- High school and university students interested in global issues and community action
- Youth activists and community organizers committed to advancing the SDGs at the grassroots level
- Aspiring researchers, journalists, and policy enthusiasts seeking to explore sustainability through data and storytelling
- Young social entrepreneurs and innovators developing solutions for local or global challenges
- Youth from underserved or underrepresented communities, who bring valuable perspectives and are especially encouraged to apply

The programme welcomes applicants from all regions and encourages participation from those with lived experiences that reflect the realities of SDG implementation at the community level.

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- **Eligibility:** Open to all youth aged 18–24, from all countries and backgrounds. Applicants below 18 years old will need parental consent to apply and to participate which will be required before any participation in the programme.
- **Application Process:** Rolling admissions accepted throughout the year
- **Programme Fee:** Free to apply to the programme (Note: Some programme events will require travel. If selected, the travel and accommodation costs for study visits may vary and are the responsibility of participants.)
- **Certification:** Participants who complete the programme will receive a Certificate of Completion issued by UNITAR
- **Language of Instruction:** English

We look forward to welcoming a new generation of global changemakers to the Global Youth Scholar Programme—where passion meets purpose to shape a more sustainable future.

DATA PROTECTION NOTICE: The personal data of participants applying for, registering for, or participating in UNITAR's training courses and events is managed in accordance with UNITAR's Data Protection and Privacy Policy. By proceeding with the application, registration, or participation in this programme, participants confirm that they have read and agree to the terms of the policy. As part of the implementation of this programme, UNITAR is collaborating with College Daily. In line with our Data Protection and Privacy Policy, limited personal data may be shared with College Daily strictly for purposes related to programme delivery, coordination, and continuous improvement. For more information, please refer to UNITAR's Data Protection and Privacy Policy:
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