



Keep Scotland
Beautiful

Young Reporters Scotland



Support for Young People

Welcome to Young Reporters Scotland

Young Reporters Scotland is an exciting opportunity for young people to build their skills and experience in journalism and be part of an international group of young people producing creative solutions to sustainability issues within their community. This guide is a resource for young people interested in taking part in Young Reporters Scotland (YRS). It outlines all of the information you need to know to take part and gives some useful tips to help you complete your entry. This booklet will also help you make sure you have done everything you need to do to enter, guide you through the process of producing a piece of journalism, and let you know where you can get help and support with your entry.





Taking part in Young Reporters Scotland

Are you interested in a career in journalism or media? Do you want to have your say and have your voice heard? Have you got some creative ideas for how to make your local community better for you and your family? Taking part in YRS is a fantastic opportunity for you to begin to develop your career and become part of an international network of young people striving to help make a difference in their communities.

By taking part in YRS you can:

- Build a range of skills such as communication, research and analysis.
- Have your say on how global issues affect local communities.
- Have the chance to win one of our fantastic prizes designed to help you pursue a career in journalism.
- Have the opportunity to report on environmental events around Scotland.
- Have the chance to display your work internationally, representing Scotland.
- Add to your portfolio and give your CV a boost.



Prizes

We're working on getting an amazing list of exciting prizes for the winners of the 2015/16 competition. We'll share the news through our website and twitter once we have these confirmed.

We will award prizes for each form of media within each age category. Winners will be selected by our judging panel of young people and experts and prizes will be presented at our national awards in March 2016.



Use the step by step guide to complete your entry

1. Register for the competition.

- You or your group must be registered through our website at www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/yrs

2. Choose your topic.

- This must be based on a sustainability issue. Our core themes are: Agriculture & Forestry; Biodiversity; Climate Change; Coastline; Energy; Food; Health & Wellbeing; Transport; Waste; Water

- There are lots of inspiring links and ideas to help you on our website.

3. Decide what media to use.

- Your report can be in video/animation, photographic or written form. If you can't decide you could make more than one entry!

4. Plan your investigation.

5. Carry out your investigation.

6. Produce your report.

7. Share your report.

- Think about how you can share it with others – could it be published in a local newsletter or website? Could you send it to your local newspaper or share it via social media? There are some sample press releases on our website.

8. Submit your entry!

- Use the checklist at the end of this booklet to make sure you have included all the information you need to before submitting your entry. If you are creating your entry through a group or organisation, they will do this for you.



Competition guidelines

Categories

Anyone aged 11-21 can enter the competition. We have three age categories: 11-14; 15-18; 19-21. The category you are included in will be decided by your age on the day you submit your entry.

You can take part as either an individual or as part of a small group. **Make sure you read our guide to carrying out a safe investigation before you begin.**

Types of report

To enter the competition you are asked to submit a piece of journalism which focuses on a sustainability issue. You could do this by writing an article or blog, creating a video or animation, or capturing your investigation through a photograph or series of photographs.

Articles or Blogs

If you are submitting an article, the maximum word count is 1000 words. You can include pictures, illustrations or photographs provided you state where

these are taken from if they are not your own. Make sure you include an interesting title for your work!

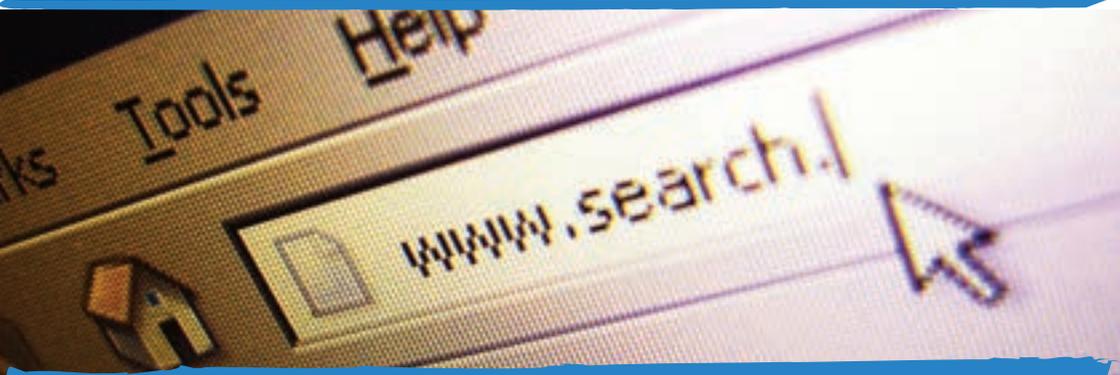
Photographs

You can enter either a single photograph, or a series of up to 12 photographs. Photographic entries must tell a story, include a title and a short caption of no more than 150 words to explain the link with sustainability and/or a solution to the problem or issue.

Videos/animations

Videos must be no more than 3 minutes long and in documentary or reporter/interview style. A video must be accompanied by a title must be in one of the following formats: WebM, .MPEG4, 3GPP, MOV, .AVI, .MPEGPS, .WMV, .FLV

If you want to try several methods, you can submit more than one type of entry to the competition.



Carrying out an investigation...

You may find these practical pointers helpful as you carry out your investigation:

- Find out some background information, including some key facts and figures. Identify who are the key individuals you may wish to speak with.
- Whenever you speak to anyone, it is good practice to start by explaining what you are doing. Accept that some people might not want to speak with you if you are creating a report.
- Not everyone will agree about the topic you are exploring; finding people who have differing opinions will help you create a balanced report. Can you get quotes from them?
- Compare the information you gather from different sources – it may reveal a different picture.
- Visit any relevant locations yourself.
- Carry out some internet research to see if you can find any more information.
- Stuck for inspiration? **Check out our website for ideas.**





Staying safe

As a young reporter, you may wish to visit a site you are investigating, do some internet research or speak to people to find out what they think. All of these activities carry some level of risk; it's up to you to make sure you think about these and stay safe. Here's a few general rules we advise you to follow:

- If you are under 16, make sure you have permission from your parent/guardian for your activity and that they are aware of where you are going and when you will be back.
- Never go into someone's house alone if you don't know them. If you are meeting a person you don't know to interview them, make sure this is in a public place.
- Always let someone know where you're going and what time you'll get back.
- If you are investigating an issue on a site, look out for hazard signs and follow their warnings.
- If you're carrying out an individual investigation, take a friend with you if you can.
- Always take your mobile phone or change for a pay phone in case of emergencies.
- Stay safe online by never sharing personal information. This includes your full name, address, phone number, email or a photo that you can be identified by.
- The **ThinkUKnow** website is full of advice for how you can stay safe online and where to get help if you need it.



Reporting basics - written work

Everyone has their own writing style and way of working yet there are a few general guidelines which will help you create a fantastic piece of journalism:

- Plan your article before you start writing. Look at all the information you have gathered in your investigation and decide what you want to use and the points you want to share with your reader.
- Make sure you start your article with a clear introduction that highlights the main points of the story. Try to make it interesting so that people want to read on.
- Structure your article so that the most important information is at the top and you provide more detailed information as you go on.
- If you have carried out any interviews as part of your investigation, you may wish to include some quotes. Try to pick one from your interview which stands out and adds to your story.
- News articles need to be accessible so try to keep your article simple and your writing clear – bear in mind who your audience will be.
- If you can add photos to your written piece make sure they complement your story and that you have permission to use it.
- Check your article carefully to make sure there are no spelling or grammar mistakes. Asking someone else to read over your work can often highlight things you have missed.



Reporting basics - videos

Making a video can be an exciting way to showcase your topic:

- Plan what you are going to film, make sure there is a start, middle and end. One clear format for a video article is to have an introduction, interview, some extra shots which highlight the issue and a conclusion. You don't have to follow this if you don't want to but try to make sure it flows.
 - If someone is speaking to the camera, think about where people are positioned – what can you see behind them? Are they speaking to the camera or to the interviewer?
 - Getting to know your equipment in advance will help ensure things run smoothly when you come to filming. Taking some practice shots in advance and making sure you are familiar with how your camera works can pay off.
 - Remember audio is just as important as what you are filming– make sure you can hear what people are saying.
 - If you are filming people, make sure you have permission to do so.
 - Have several attempts at filming something if you are not happy with how it has turned out.
 - Edit your video once you have filmed so that you include all the best shots.
- If you want to include music in your video we strongly recommend you do not use copyrighted material as without a licence we cannot accept entries that break copyright laws.**



Reporting basics - photography

Using photographs to report on an issue can be an extremely powerful way to tell a story. Here are a few things you may wish to consider:

- As with all journalism, you should always try to plan in advance. Try and think about the kind of issue you want to report on and where might be the best place to capture a photo or series of photos that highlights it. You may also wish to think about what time of day would be best to take your photos so that you have the kind of light you need.
- Getting to know your equipment in advance will help ensure things run smoothly when you come to taking your actual photos. Taking some practice shots in advance and making sure you are familiar with how your camera works can pay off.
- Photos that you take should be objective and highlight an issue in an unbiased way. When you are taking your photograph you should try not to influence it, moving objects or asking people to pose will mean that your photo is influenced.
- You may choose to edit your photo once you have taken it. How much a photograph should be edited is an ethical debate within photojournalism. Cropping an image to highlight a specific part may be useful however you should avoid overly editing your photograph using programmes such as Photoshop.
- Try and think of a caption for your photo that enhances it and explains what is happening. If you are submitting a series of photos you should use these to tell a story.



How your work will be judged

Each entry will be judged based on five criteria:

1. Composition

Entries will be judged on their overall quality and structure. For articles and videos, judges will consider whether an entry covers information such as who, what, where, why, when and has a clear introduction, middle and end. Photos will be judged based on their composition and quality.

2. Fair, balanced and objective reporting

Judges will consider whether the entry presents both sides of an issue or problem, proposes a solution and uses a range of sources. For photographs they will also consider whether an entry is a fair representation.

3. Informative and well-researched

Judges will consider whether a realistic and well-explained solution has been identified and if the consequences of that proposed

solution have been considered. Judges will also consider whether there is a clear link between the local environmental problem or issue and a global environmental problem.

4. Originality, style and independence

We want to encourage you to be creative so judges will look for an original approach to challenging topics. Whether the entry has involved field work, research and takes a positive approach will be considered.

5. Spreading the word

Finally, we want to make sure as many people as possible hear about the fantastic work that has been done by young reporters so we encourage you to share your work with others. Judges will consider how you chose to share your entry and who you shared it with.



Entry checklist

If you are working as part of a group or organisation, a leader will submit your entry for you.

	Yes	No
Have you included a title and description of any photographs you are submitting?		
Have you checked that your work is the right length and in the right format? (See competition guidelines)		
Have you shared your work with your target audience?		
Have you completed the cover sheet for your entry?		

If you've answered yes to all of the above then you're ready to submit your entry! Email your completed entry and cover sheet to lyndsay.sutton@keepsotlandbeautiful.org

Get Help

We don't want you to struggle with your entry so if you have any questions or are unsure about your idea we can help you. The best way to get in touch is to contact Lyndsay on 01786 477184 or email lyndsay.sutton@keepsotlandbeautiful.org

FOLLOW KEEP SCOTLAND BEAUTIFUL ON TWITTER FOR UPDATES ON YRS AND LOTS OF TIPS/INTERESTING LINKS!

Keep Scotland Beautiful is the charity that campaigns, acts and educates on a range of local, national and global environmental issues to change behaviour and improve the quality of people's lives and the places they care for. We are committed to making Scotland clean, green and more sustainable.

Keep Scotland Beautiful

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www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/yrs



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