

Earth Youth Summit 2026 in KYOTO application guidelines

1. Purpose

To achieve the SDGs by 2030 and to build a sustainable society, there is a growing demand for individuals who can discern the underlying structures of social issues, engage in dialogue, discussion, and careful examination of solutions, and take action. Therefore, with the aim of nurturing leaders who perceive global environmental issues as their own and lead activities connected to the SDGs, we have launched the "Earth Youth Summit in KYOTO" targeting junior and senior high school students worldwide.

This program is primarily conducted in English. After attending lectures by experts, students identify issues from their own perspectives, brainstorm ideas for problem-solving, participate in field training, and then put their plans into practice. Through this program, we foster and network individuals who acquire the ability to communicate their goals and gain empathy in a global society by collaborating with others, as well as the skills to realize those goals. We aim for future leader candidates to deepen their understanding of diverse social issues, develop their ability to express themselves, and take flight.

In the 2025 academic year, 47 students participated (18 international students and 29 Japanese students). Participants join online sessions twice a month from the end of March through July to deepen their understanding of the SDGs and leadership. Prior to each lecture, they engage in preparatory study related to the topic, listen to the lecture, and then participate in discussions mainly in English on a wide range of SDG-related subjects.

Subsequently, with advice from instructors and mentors, students form groups to select themes related to sustainability, devise actions (proposals) to solve problems inherent in those themes, and participate in a three-day, two-night onsite summit in Kyoto Prefecture in August. Afterward, they implement their action plans and are required to present their results at the final online presentation in October.

2. Overview and Schedule

(1) Theme: "Are we taking action toward achieving the SDGs by 2030? Let's explore the current status of the SDGs and review our daily actions." With a focus on promoting the SDGs to the next generation, we aim to deepen our understanding of behavior changes that contribute to solving global challenges.

(2) Number of Participants: Approximately 50 high school students from both domestic and

international locations (up to two students per school and per grade).

(In case of many applicants, each school should select up to two students per grade before applying. For example: 2 first-year high school students, 0 second-year students, 1 third-year student, etc.)

(3) Content:

<Online lectures> All times are Japan Standard Time (JST)

Date and time	Content
Saturday, 21st March 4:30PM to 6PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A message from the organizer, Prof. Misuzu Asari. - Announcement of grouping and mentor, self-introduction. - Next steps. - Announcement of the pre-assignments for each lecture.
Saturday, 11th April 4:30 PM to 6 PM	<p>SDGs①</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of the SDGs. - Background of their establishment. - Understand that there are various ways to perceive the SDGs.
Saturday, 25th April 4:30 PM to 6 PM	<p>SDGs②</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion on the pre-assignment submitted at the time of application based on the previous lecture.
Saturday, 16th May 4:30 PM to 6 PM	<p>Co-creation and Dialogue①</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn approaches to create future action plans using practical examples - Understand the importance of involving people from various positions to solve issues.
Saturday, 30th May 4:30 PM to 6 PM	<p>Co-creation and Dialogue②</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roundtable discussions involving private companies, universities, NGOs, local governments, etc. (challenges and past efforts in addressing the SDGs)
Saturday, 13th June 4:30 PM to 6 PM	<p>Messages from corporate leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expectations for the next generation of high school students. - International leadership models. - Transforming personal interests into action and driving force.
Saturday, 27th June 4:30 PM to 6 PM	<p>Social issues and the future you envision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss on important social issues under the themes of "the ideal future society" and "the Earth we want to create."

Date and time	Content
Saturday, 11th July 4:30 PM to 6 PM	Kyoto Prefecture's efforts toward the SDGs - The significance of holding a Youth Summit in Kyoto.
Saturday, 25th July 4:30 PM to 6 PM	Preparation of the onsite summit

<Onsite summit (to be confirmed)>

Date and Time: From noon on Friday, August 21, 2026, to noon on Sunday, August 23, 2026 (2 nights, 3 days) (JST)

Content: Fieldwork, interaction with local residents, presentation of devised action plans, discussion on methods to implement the action plans, etc.

Location: - Owl Keihoku (2 Toritani, Shimonanacho, Keihoku, Ukyo-ku, Kyoto City, Japan)

- Kyoto Satoyama SDGs Lab Kotosu (11 Motokeihoku Daiichi Elementary School, Shimoterada, Shuzancho, Ukyo-ku, Kyoto City, Japan)

*The meeting place on the first day and the dismissal place on the last day are planned to be Kyoto Station.

<Online final presentation>

Date and Time: Saturday, October 3, 2026, from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM (JST)

Content: Presentation of results from the implemented action plans, announcement of awards, certificate awarding, etc.

*After the field training, participants will present their action plans and results to develop the ability to communicate what they want to achieve in collaboration with others and acquire the skills to realize it. Special consideration is requested when implementing the action plans at schools or other institutions.

(4) Expenses

- Participants are responsible for securing their own environment for attending online courses.
- Accommodation, meals, and transportation costs during the onsite summit program will be covered by the committee (excluding transportation costs to the summit site).
- A limited number of participants will receive travel expense subsidies to the onsite summit site. The selection will be made comprehensively based on factors such as engagement with pre-course assignments, active participation in the online main course, and cooperativeness in group work.
- On the first day of the summit, please have lunch on your own and gather at Kyoto Station at noon (planned).

- On the last day of the summit, participants will move to Kyoto Station after lunch and be dismissed there.

3. Eligibility

Must be a high school student as of 2026 (motivated third-year junior high school students are also eligible).

4. Application Conditions

- (1) Ability to discuss and write in English (English proficiency level is not required if motivated). Interest in SDGs and social issues. Ability to actively participate in group work learning.
- (2) Complete the pre-application task and submit it along with the application documents.
- (3) In principle, participate in all online courses, onsite summit, and the online final presentation (if unable to attend any session due to circumstances, please notify in advance).

5. Application Method

(1) Submission Documents

[School Application]

- Fill in the required information on the designated application form (<https://kyoto-youthsummit.com/en/entry/form-school>) and attach it to the preliminary assignment.
- The application form and the preliminary assignment can be downloaded from the Earth Environment Youth Summit website (<https://kyoto-youthsummit.com/en/entry>). Please use them as a draft before filling out the application form if necessary, but be sure to complete and submit your application through the application form. If it is difficult to apply via the application form, we will exceptionally accept applications by email. In that case, please download the application form and preliminary assignment, fill them out, and attach them to an email sent to info@kyoto-youthsummit.com.



[Individual Application]

If applying through a school is difficult, individual applications are also accepted.

- Fill in the required information on the designated application form (<https://kyoto-youthsummit.com/en/entry/form-school>) and attach it to the preliminary assignment.
- When applying, please obtain consent from a school teacher or guardian and indicate on the application form that you have received their agreement to participate in this program.

(2) Submission Deadline

By 11:59 PM on Saturday, March 7, 2026 (JST)

6. Participant Selection

All applicants will be accepted. After the submission deadline, the secretariat will directly contact each participant by email with information about the first online lecture.

7. Handling of Personal Information

The information provided in the submitted documents will be strictly managed and used only for the purposes of this program.

【Related URL】

Earth Youth Summit webpage (<https://kyoto-youthsummit.com/en/>)

Presentations by past participating youth (<https://www.youtube.com/@sdgskytotimes6606>)

【Contact】

Kyoto Beyond SDGs Consortium Earth Youth Summit 2026 Executive Committee

<https://kyoto-youthsummit.com/en/contact>

info@kyoto-youthsummit.com

-Messages from former participating students-

Sara Ikawa, Kindai University-affiliated Toyooka High School, Osaka, Japan

I participated in the Earth Environment Youth Summit in 2025, where I had the opportunity to meet peers from around the world and engage in multifaceted discussions about social issues such as environmental problems and poverty. What left the strongest impression on me was the role-playing exercise, where we took on different perspectives as consumers, companies, and workers. I realized how much the perception of a single issue can vary depending on one's position.

Before participating, I tended to view various problems in a simple way—either right or wrong. However, through repeated discussions, I learned that economic and social systems are intricately intertwined, creating complex problems, and I became able to reconsider my own views more flexibly.

This summit was not a place to be given answers, but a place where the way of thinking itself changed. Recognizing that issues I had thought were distant problems in faraway countries are actually connected to my own life and choices was a significant growth experience. I am truly glad I participated as a first step toward confronting social challenges.

-Messages from former participating students-

Shree Nidhy Suresh

I decided to participate in the 2024 programme because it offered a great opportunity to develop my social skills by meeting new people while deepening my interest in environmental sustainability. The programme also allowed us to visit Miyazu, Kyoto, where we experienced activities such as fishing, visiting Amanohashidate, and listening to talks by accomplished speakers. These are all experiences I wouldn't have had otherwise.

One of my most memorable experiences before the onsite summit was visiting Kyoto University to attend a special lecture by a representative from McDonald's Japan's sustainability division. It was fascinating to learn about their sustainability initiatives, and it was also exciting to tour the Kyoto University campus. One of the highlights of the onsite summit was collecting plastic waste on the beach and then using a plastic detector to scan and analyze the types of plastics we found. This was a really engaging experience, especially because we were able to interact with Japanese marine high school students who have such unique expertise and hands-on experience. Being able to use the technology firsthand made the activity even more memorable. This experience sparked my interest in polymer chemistry, as plastics are among the most commonly used polymers. As a result, I am now taking a course in materials chemistry at University, where we have learned extensively about plastics.

I wish I had discovered this programme earlier, as it was an incredibly rewarding experience. I met many inspiring people and still keep in touch with some of them. I would highly recommend EYS to teenagers and young adults who are passionate about sustainability or just eager to try something new.