Introduction

WHAT ARE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS?

The **Sustainable Development Goals** are a set of 17 Goals and 169 targets agreed to by 193 UN Member countries to end poverty, promote social inclusion, and achieve environmental sustainability by 2030. They are contained in Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly, better known as *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* ('2030 Agenda'). These inclusive Goals are multifaceted and apply to all people, calling for action by all countries - poor, rich and middle income - to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. Governments, civil society, the private sector, NGOs, and people like you and me are their key stakeholders and should work together to make them a success.

WHAT IS THE UNDERLYING ISSUE?

When we talk about the role of young people in achieving the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), we often forget that they are not simply there to be creative and mobilize support. In fact, they are also incredibly skilled, and many of them are already contributing to the 2030 Agenda through their actions and undertakings in educational programs, charity initiatives, research, and enterprise. In pursuing their objectives, these young people face common challenges, including reduced visibility, limited access to funding, and lack of sufficient advice or technical support.

WHAT IS THE YOUTH SOLUTIONS REPORT?

The Youth Solutions Report is a strategic tool that aims to identify and celebrate 50 youth-led initiatives, providing them with a platform that addresses the difficulties that young innovators face in securing funding, building capacity, communicating their experience and scaling their efforts. Covering an international spectrum, encouraging an interdisciplinary approach to problem-solving and showcasing solutions from a broad range of fields and sectors, the Report closely aligns with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and targets that will shape the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

WHAT IS THE AIM OF CREATING A REPORT FOR SOLUTIONS?

It is extremely important to recognize and celebrate Solutions led by young people around the SDGs in order to provide them with a solid network of supporters willing to promote their projects and initiatives. The **Youth Solutions Report** aims to identify such youth-led projects and ground-breaking ideas that are successfully working towards achieving the targets set in the 2030 Agenda by presenting them at international conferences and events, promoting them through all relevant means and helping them gain access to interested investors, donors and partners.

SDSN YOUTH

Guidelines

WHAT IS A YOUTH-LED SOLUTION?

Youth-led Solutions are transformative projects and endeavours, ranging from entrepreneurial ventures to educational programs, and include research activities, charity initiatives and so forth, that showcase the innovative approach that youth are taking in solving the multiple challenges of sustainable development. If your project showcases good leadership, collective action and innovative solutions that are impacting the society and environment positively, you should fill out the form right now!

HOW IS A SOLUTION DIFFERENT FROM AN IDEA?

Solutions are readily available projects in their implementation phase which have been operating for at least 18 months. These have often overcome initial barriers to become self-sustainable and financially viable, and are positively contributing to the achievement of one or more of the SDGs. On the other hand, Ideas are projects which are currently in their design phase and/or projects which have not been operating for at least 18 months. These would include startups with an extremely sustainable model.

WHAT IS THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

There are nine eligibility criterion. Please ensure your Solution or Idea fits the criteria in order to be considered in the Report:

1. **Alignment to one (or more) of the 17 SDGs:** your project must be linked to one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals in order to qualify. For instance, if your project is working on women's empowerment in rural areas of Kenya, it is most closely aligned with SDG 5 (*"Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"*) and as such, it fits this criterion.

2. **Youth-led and illustrative of youth contribution to sustainable development:** the project must have been founded by a person aged 15-30 and it must showcase the skills and creative mindset of the proponent. We are not simply looking at successful endeavors. Through the Youth Solutions Report we are specifically trying to celebrate innovative, game-changing ideas which have the potential to build transformative change and shift the behavior of people, businesses and countries.

3. **Target audience, objectives and structure:** your project should have a well-structured time horizon (what do you aim to achieve and when?), identified key stakeholders and beneficiaries and proposed outcomes that are reasonable and well thought out.

4. **Availability:** your project must be readily available, in its implementation phase and must have been operating for at least 18 months to overcome initial barriers related to project administration and future viability. However, please note that you will still be able to submit your project in the **Ideas** section of the report if it is in its design phase and/or has not been operating for at least 18 months.

5. **Environmental impact:** if your project re-uses waste products, has zero carbon emissions or utilises solar power, for example, it has a positive environmental impact and is eligible. Of course, not all projects will have a direct positive impact on the environment. It is necessary, however, that projects do not have an adverse effect on the environment.

6. **Social impact:** if your project is generating employment, eradicating poverty, developing skills, and so forth, then it has positive social impact. Any improvement to quality of life at community level, through an international reach or by any interaction with youth would be considered in this parameter. In addition, the project must aim to be inclusive and not to exacerbate existing inequalities.

7. **Impact measurement:** the impact your project has had must have been adequately measured and/or be measurable, and if possible should be aligned with the **SDG indicator framework** which is being developed to monitor the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. For example, if you are running a business which has found an inspiring and innovative way to achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources in its operations, then chances are that you are not only aiming to meet Goal 12 (*'Ensure Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns'*) and target 12.2, but you also have introduced a way to measure your positive impact, i.e. by calculating what is the material footprint of your actions. Impact measurement, even if not directly aligned with the SDG indicator framework, is key to demonstrate the success of your Solution and to communicate it to others!

8. **Financial viability:** your solution must also be self-sustaining in the long term. In other words, it must able to achieve efficiency and to survive on its own through the resources it generates and/or the investments and donations it attracts.

9. **Scalability:** your project must have the potential to perform as well or better after expanding in scope or size and/or being transported to other regions. We are looking at projects which might help other people in other parts of the world, beyond your immediate community if possible!

Submitting your Solution

HOW TO FILL IN THE SUBMISSION FORM

This is what the submission form looks like. Some examples are provided to guide you:

SOLUTION/IDEA [Provide a name]	
Founders	• Mention the name(s) and position(s). • Include all affiliations including funding agencies, technology partners, knowledge partners, private players, content partners, etc. • Include the age as it comes under the eligibility criteria. • Please mention the email address and telephone contact details of each founder.
Location	• Please select all the locations relevant to the project. This should include the macro-region where the project is taking place (e.g., South Asia, Mediterranean, Sub-saharan Africa) as well as all places of operation.
Status	• Mention the year of foundation. • Select organization type among student organization, volunteer association or group, entrepreneurial endeavour/startup, educational and/or non-profit. • Please select a legal status from the drop down, if applicable (relevant year, country of registration, registration no.) • registered non-profit/NGO/charity (e.g., 501(c) tax-exempt non-profit, USA; Registered Charity No., England & Wales, ABN no., Australia, CRA no, Canada etc.) • Registered company limited by guarantee (no.) • Other • If not registered: any plans to do so, any steps taken, N/A etc.
Background	• Please describe your Solution/Idea by mentioning how it was formed, in which context, what are its key components and activities, etc. • Mention what is the addressed need/issue, why was it addressed and in what region. This section should reflect on how the project progressed from the Idea stage. • Please describe the beneficiaries of the particular project and its scale along with any potential opportunity for growth or expansion. • Please mention the partnership/s developed to implement the project.
Funding	• Give details about how the project receives its funding. • Select an appropriate budget from the drop-down list.
SDGs	• Please check all that apply among the 17 SDGs. **Click here** for a full list of the SDGs and targets.
Results	• Describe the results the project has achieved to date. • Also include a brief about how results have been measured or evaluated.
More information	• Please include relevant links to website, news or pictures to enhance the form.

SDSN
YOUTH

Selection

HOW WILL THE SOLUTIONS BE SELECTED?

A database is going to be developed based on: (a) our outreach efforts to youth groups and communities; (b) our cooperation with SDSN Regional and National Networks, SDSN Youth's Member Organizations, and other external partners; and (c) nominations and direct submissions through the Report's website. The collected Solutions will then be screened and reviewed by an Advisory Panel, comprising representatives from SDSN Youth, SDSN Secretariat and external partners, which will select 50 of the most innovative and successful solutions/ideas. Please note, not all Solutions will be included in the final Report; however, rest assured that every effort will be made to incorporate relevant youth solutions in any of SDSN Youth's alternative mediums.

Benefits

WHAT WILL BE THE BENEFITS FOR THE SELECTED PROJECTS?

The Solutions contained in the Report will be divided by sectors, regions, and SDGs they are targeting. They will be showcased at high-level conferences and events (including the *International Conference on Sustainable Development 2016*, the *22nd Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC*, and more), and will also be featured online by our media partners as well as an interactive website that will help users explore them. The most promising Solutions might also become part of our direct efforts under Support and Scale, a project through which we will aim to directly support innovative, ground-breaking projects by providing them with managerial, financial and visibility incentives.

HOW WILL SOLUTIONS BE PROMOTED?

The Solutions will not only be showcased at international conferences and events, but will also be presented locally by SDSN Youth, its partners and members' organizations. They will be supported through networking opportunities and promoted through media channels and email lists. In addition, SDSN Youth will disseminate the Report through an innovative Solutions platform that we are creating together with SDSN, providing easy access to Solutions by investors, donors, supporters, institutions and private citizens.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Solutions Initiatives team:
solutions@sdsnyouth.org

SUBMIT YOUR SOLUTION