



# ECO- ENTREPRENEUR'S HANDBOOK

EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH  
SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION

[www.empoweryouthswiththecoentrepreneurship.eu](http://www.empoweryouthswiththecoentrepreneurship.eu)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Eco-Entrepreneur's Handbook!

This handbook is a comprehensive educational resource designed for young people who want to make a positive impact on the world through sustainable business practices. Developed in the context of our **Erasmus+ KA210 strategic partnership** of project **“Let's Empower Youths with Eco-entrepreneurship”** with project number: **2024-1-NL02-KA210-YOU-000254026**, this guide draws from the collective knowledge and experiences of youth workers and organizations from **Türkiye, France, Greece, and the Netherlands**.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# INTRODUCTION

This handbook is the result of a collaborative effort among four dedicated organizations from across Europe: **MEGEDER**, Türkiye; **CAH - Centre d'Accompagnement et d'Hébergement**, France; **Fthia in Action**, Greece; and **Edu-Talents**, the Netherlands. Each partner contributed unique expertise, insights, and experiences that enriched the development of this educational resource.

In today's rapidly changing world, climate change and environmental degradation are pressing concerns. At the same time, young people face increasing challenges related to employment, social inclusion, and economic participation. Eco-entrepreneurship provides a powerful response to these issues by combining innovation with sustainability.

This handbook serves not only as an introduction to eco-entrepreneurship but also as a roadmap for turning green ideas into action. Whether you are a student, a youth worker, a young changemaker, or someone interested in building a sustainable future, you'll find this guide useful, inspiring, and practical.

## Target Group

- **Young people aged 15–30** with interest in sustainability
- **Youth workers and educators** working on climate and entrepreneurship topics
- **Young changemakers** aiming to launch a green business
- **Erasmus+ participants** and **project developers**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



**Let's get started on your  
journey to becoming an  
eco-entrepreneur!**



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# CONTENTS

## 1

UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE

p. 7

## 2

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND  
ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS

p. 15

## 3

WHAT IS YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

p. 25

## 4

ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE FUTURE OF  
GREEN INNOVATION

p. 34

## 5

STEPS TO LAUNCH YOUR ECO-BUSINESS

p. 40

# CONTENTS

## 6 LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF ECO- ENTREPRENEURSHIP

p. 47

## 7 EUROPEAN AND ERASMUS+ OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

p. 53

## 8 OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY

p. 57

## 9 CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

p. 67

## 10 UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES

p. 80

# CONTENTS

## 11 BUILDING INNOVATION CULTURE IN GREEN STARTUPS

p. 83

## 12 EMBEDDING THE SDGS IN YOUR BUSINESS

p. 87

## 13 TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ECO- ENTREPRENEURS

p. 91







# CHAPTER 1

## UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is one of the most critical challenges facing humanity in the 21st century. Its effects are widespread, impacting ecosystems, human health, food security, water resources, and economic development. For young people, understanding the science, causes, and consequences of climate change is a crucial step toward becoming active citizens and eco-conscious leaders.

## What is Climate Change?

Climate change refers to long-term alterations in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the Earth's climate system. While the Earth's climate has changed naturally over time, the current phase of climate change is largely driven by human activities, particularly the emission of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide ( $\text{CO}_2$ ), methane ( $\text{CH}_4$ ), and nitrous oxide ( $\text{N}_2\text{O}$ ). These gases trap heat in the atmosphere, leading to global warming and subsequent environmental changes. The combustion of fossil fuels for energy, deforestation, intensive agriculture, and industrial processes are major contributors to these emissions.



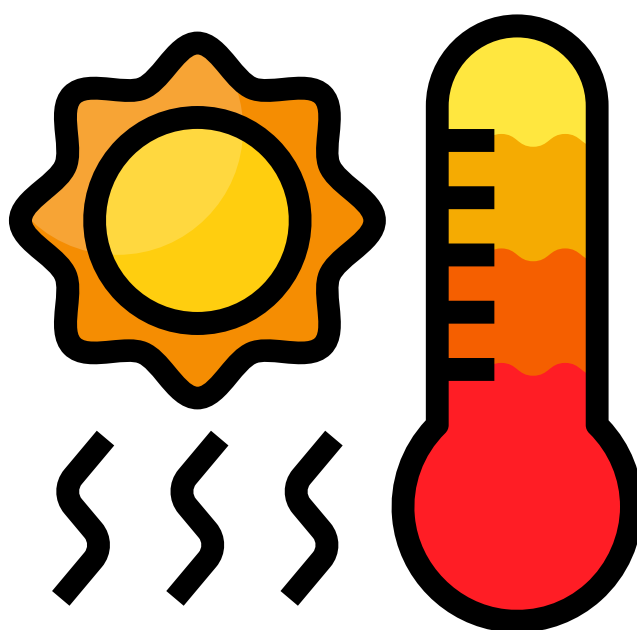
# UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE

## Why Does It Matter to Young People?

Young people will inherit the world shaped by today's climate decisions. They are also among the most vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change:

- **Rising temperatures and heatwaves** affect physical health
- **Increased natural disasters** disrupt education and communities
- **Water and food insecurity** threaten stability and well-being.

However, youth also hold the potential to be drivers of change. With innovation, activism, and entrepreneurship, they can challenge existing systems and lead the shift toward sustainability.



# UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE

## Effects of Climate Change on Human and Environmental Health

Climate change poses significant and multifaceted risks to both human health and the environment. Understanding these impacts is essential for fostering eco-conscious behaviors and informing sustainable policy decisions.

### Human Health Impacts

Climate change directly and indirectly affects human well-being through various pathways:

- **Respiratory and Cardiovascular Illnesses:** Rising temperatures and increased air pollution contribute to higher rates of asthma, chronic bronchitis, and cardiovascular diseases, especially among vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly. Fine particulate matter, ground-level ozone, and allergens are exacerbated by climate conditions.
- **Spread of Infectious Diseases:** Altered ecosystems and shifting climate zones create favorable conditions for vectors such as mosquitoes and ticks, leading to the expansion of diseases like malaria, dengue, and Lyme disease into new regions.
- **Mental Health Challenges:** The psychological impact of climate change is becoming increasingly evident. Climate-related anxiety, stress from extreme weather events, and displacement due to environmental degradation can result in depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other mental health disorders.

# UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE

## Effects of Climate Change on Human and Environmental Health

### Environmental Health Impacts

The degradation of ecosystems and natural resources under climate pressure has serious consequences for global biodiversity and environmental stability:

- **Biodiversity Loss and Species Extinction:** Changes in temperature, precipitation patterns, and habitat disruption threaten the survival of countless species. Reduced biodiversity weakens ecosystem resilience and the services they provide.
- **Ocean Acidification and Sea Level Rise:** Elevated levels of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> dissolve into oceans, increasing acidity and harming marine organisms, especially coral reefs and shellfish. Meanwhile, melting polar ice contributes to sea level rise, endangering coastal habitats and human settlements.
- **Desertification and Decline of Arable Land:** Increased droughts and shifting rainfall patterns contribute to soil degradation and desertification, diminishing agricultural productivity and threatening food security in vulnerable regions.

By understanding these interconnected effects, young people can better appreciate the urgency of climate action and become active contributors to sustainable and health-conscious communities.







# UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE

## The European Green Deal: A Youth Perspective

The European Green Deal represents the **European Union's strategic response** to the climate and environmental challenges of our time. It outlines a comprehensive policy framework designed to transform the EU into a modern, resource-efficient, and climate-neutral economy by 2050. Understanding the goals and mechanisms of the Green Deal is crucial for young people seeking to engage in sustainable development and environmental action.

### Key Objectives of the European Green Deal

- **Achieving Climate Neutrality by 2050:** One of the central ambitions of the Green Deal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by mid-century, positioning the EU as a global leader in climate action.
- **Protecting Natural Habitats and Biodiversity:** The Deal emphasizes the restoration and protection of Europe's ecosystems, with measures to halt biodiversity loss, improve forest health, and conserve water resources.
- **Transitioning to a Circular Economy:** Moving away from a traditional 'take-make-dispose' model, the Green Deal promotes a circular economy where materials are reused, repaired, and recycled, minimizing waste and resource use.
- **Advancing Clean Energy Innovation:** Investments in renewable energy, smart grids, and sustainable infrastructure aim to reduce dependency on fossil fuels and create green jobs for the future.



# UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE

## Why It Matters for Young People

The European Green Deal is not just a policy document, it is a call to action. It offers funding mechanisms, educational programmes, and innovation opportunities tailored to engage youth in building a greener future. By familiarizing themselves with its principles, young people can align their entrepreneurial, academic, or civic initiatives with EU-wide sustainability goals.

From community-based eco-projects to international environmental campaigns, youth participation is essential for the successful implementation of the Green Deal. As future leaders, innovators, and changemakers, young people have the potential to shape a more just and climate-resilient Europe.

## The European Green Deal

Striving to be the first climate-neutral continent

[Click me](#)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE

## The Role of Education and Youth Work

Climate education is essential in equipping young people with the knowledge and skills needed to respond to the crisis. Youth work settings, schools, and informal learning environments are all crucial spaces for learning about:

- Environmental responsibility
- Sustainable citizenship
- Critical thinking and innovation

In our Paris and Türkiye meetings, these themes were central to our discussions. Youth workers shared best practices on how to engage young people in sustainability topics through interactive methods such as workshops, city tours, eco-visits, and storytelling. These practices highlighted throughout this eBook serve as practical examples of how non-formal education can foster environmental awareness and inspire eco-entrepreneurship among youth.





# 2

## CHAPTER

# DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS

The path toward eco-entrepreneurship begins with individual awareness and behavioral change. Sustainability is not only about large-scale policies or green technologies, it also stems from everyday habits and conscious decisions made by individuals. For young people, adopting sustainable habits is a foundational step toward becoming ethical leaders and responsible citizens.

## What Are Sustainable Habits?

Sustainable habits are routines and lifestyle choices that minimize harm to the environment, support social well-being, and promote long-term ecological balance. They include conscious efforts to reduce waste, conserve energy, use resources efficiently, and support ethical consumption.

These habits span across multiple areas of daily life:

- **Waste Reduction:** Avoiding single-use plastics, composting organic waste, reusing and recycling materials.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Turning off lights and electronics when not in use, using LED bulbs, and favoring renewable energy where possible.
- **Eco-Friendly Mobility:** Walking, cycling, carpooling, or using public transportation instead of private vehicles.
- **Sustainable Consumption:** Choosing local, seasonal, and organic products; reducing meat consumption; supporting fair-trade and environmentally responsible brands.







# DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS

## Cultivating Sustainability in Youth Culture

Building a culture of sustainability among young people is not only about transmitting knowledge, it is about shaping values, behaviors, and social norms that promote long-term environmental responsibility. Youth workers play a vital role in this process by designing meaningful, participatory learning experiences that go beyond traditional teaching.

### Strategies to Promote Sustainability in Youth Culture

**1. Experiential Learning Activities:** Organizing eco-visits, guided city tours, and workshops focused on local environmental issues allows young people to learn through direct interaction with their surroundings. These activities make sustainability visible and relatable, helping youth connect abstract concepts to real-world practices.

**2. Peer-Led Initiatives and Role Modeling:** Empowering young eco-entrepreneurs or environmentally active youth as facilitators or mentors encourages peer learning. When sustainability is demonstrated by relatable figures within their age group, young people are more likely to emulate these behaviors and take ownership of green habits.

**3. Storytelling and Creative Expression:** Incorporating storytelling, theatre, and digital media gives youth the opportunity to explore environmental issues through personal narratives and creative outlets. This approach enhances emotional engagement and helps internalize sustainability values in a culturally relevant way.





# DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS

## Cultivating Sustainability in Youth Culture

**4. Community-Based Projects:** Encouraging participation in local sustainability projects such as urban gardening, recycling campaigns, or eco-fairs promotes collaboration and civic responsibility. These initiatives show young people that their actions can have a tangible impact on their communities.

**5. Habit-Building Frameworks:** Integrating knowledge on how habits are formed can make behavior change more sustainable. Youth workers can use models such as "cue-routine-reward" or habit trackers to help participants gradually adopt eco-friendly behaviors, such as reducing plastic use or using public transportation.

**6. Gamification and Incentives:** Using games, challenges, and reward systems can make sustainability engaging. For example, youth can earn points for completing green actions, which encourages friendly competition and reinforces positive behaviors in a fun and motivating way.

**7. Creating Safe Spaces for Dialogue:** Facilitating open discussions about climate change, eco-anxiety, and personal challenges related to living sustainably allows youth to process their concerns, exchange ideas, and co-create solutions. This peer support builds emotional resilience and strengthens collective action.



# DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS

## Cultivating Sustainability in Youth Culture

Fostering a culture of sustainability among young people is essential for driving long-term environmental change. This involves more than individual actions, it requires embedding sustainable values within peer networks, educational activities, and community practices.

During the meeting in Greece, youth workers explored strategies to promote sustainable lifestyles through non-formal education. Approaches such as eco-visits, guided city tours, and hands-on local workshops provided young participants with practical exposure to green practices. These experiential learning activities demonstrated how sustainability can be woven into everyday choices, from transportation and consumption habits to waste reduction and community engagement.

## Case Study: Sustainable Living Visit – Greece

One highlight of the Greece meeting was a visit to a local sustainable living initiative. Participants observed real-life applications of:

- Zero-waste home practices
- Permaculture gardening
- Solar energy systems



A particularly inspiring example came from a small, family-run tavern that maintains its own garden. The owners demonstrated how they incorporate circular economy principles into their daily routine, not only composting organic waste but also using ashes from their traditional oven to enrich the soil for their tomatoes. The resulting produce is used to prepare delicious Greek salads served fresh to guests. These examples serve as practical examples of how young people can replicate similar ideas in their own neighborhoods or initiate community-driven green actions.



# DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS

## Tools for Building Sustainable Habits

To make sustainable living accessible, digital tools and campaigns can guide youth in their journey. Some examples include:

- **JouleBug** – an app that tracks sustainable activities
- **Too Good To Go** – helps reduce food waste
- **Ecosia** – a search engine that plants trees with every search.



Youth groups can also create sustainability challenges and gamified experiences to keep habits engaging and communal.



# DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS

## The Role of Social Media and Storytelling

Digital platforms have become powerful tools for engaging young people in environmental action. Integrating social media and storytelling into sustainability education allows for broad outreach, creative expression, and peer-to-peer influence—three elements essential for shaping lasting change.

During the Türkiye and France meetings, youth workers and participants explored how digital storytelling can be used strategically to raise environmental awareness and encourage eco-conscious behaviors. This approach goes beyond information-sharing by leveraging personal narratives, visual content, and social engagement to foster emotional connections and inspire action.

## Educational Functions of Social Media and Storytelling in Youth Engagement

**1. Awareness-Raising through Visual Narratives:** Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok allow youth to create and share content that highlights local environmental challenges, green practices, or innovative solutions. Visual storytelling (e.g., vlogs, reels, infographics) helps translate complex sustainability topics into relatable, digestible content for wider audiences.

**2. Promoting Peer Influence and Behavior Change:** When young people encounter real-life examples of sustainability from peers or "eco-influencers" within their own age group or community, they are more likely to identify with and replicate those behaviors. Peer modeling increases the credibility and appeal of sustainable lifestyles.







# DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS

## The Role of Social Media and Storytelling

### **3. Encouraging Reflective Learning through Personal Stories:**

Sharing personal journeys—challenges, successes, and motivations—helps normalize the learning process and shows that sustainable change is attainable. These narratives also support the development of critical thinking and self-awareness in youth audiences.

**4. Building Digital Campaigns for Collective Action:** Social media can also serve as a platform for mobilizing others around specific causes, such as clean-up drives, zero-waste challenges, or climate strikes. Participatory campaigns foster a sense of community and shared purpose, reinforcing the message that sustainability requires collective effort.

**5. Developing 21st Century Skills:** Creating digital content involves planning, research, communication, and creativity. By integrating social media into eco-education, youth not only learn about sustainability—they also develop digital literacy and storytelling skills that are valuable across educational and professional contexts.

### **Key Takeaway**

When sustainability education meets digital culture, learning becomes more accessible, dynamic, and empowering. Youth-led storytelling on social media transforms passive viewers into active participants, enabling broader societal shifts toward greener mindsets and practices.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

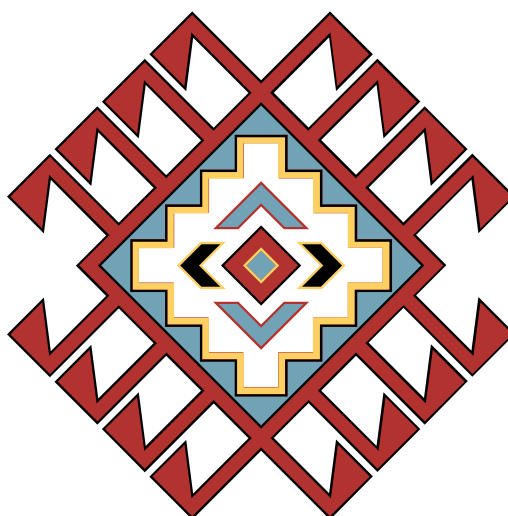
# DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS

## Making Sustainable Habits Last

Changing habits takes time and consistency. Educational programs and youth projects should focus on:

- Setting realistic goals
- Celebrating small achievements
- Embedding sustainability into youth group norms and values

As noted in the **"Strategy of the Successful Entrepreneur"** sessions in Türkiye, long-term success stems from discipline, purpose, and persistence qualities that also apply to sustainable living. During the Türkiye meeting, participants were introduced to the concept of Ahilik through a dedicated presentation. **Ahilik** is a traditional Anatolian socio-economic and ethical system that dates back to the 13th century, established by Ahi Evran. It offers one of the **earliest models of socially responsible entrepreneurship**, seamlessly integrating craftsmanship, ethics, and community values. In the Ahi tradition, individuals advanced through a structured path from apprentice to journeyman to master based not only on technical expertise but also on moral character and service to the community.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HABITS

Ahilik emphasized **honesty in trade, mutual support among peers, cleanliness in markets, and fair pricing**. If someone acted unethically, they were held accountable by the collective. This system ensured that economic activity was not driven solely by profit but guided by the well-being of the entire society.

Though the Ahi Order no longer exists as a formal institution, its values live on in modern ethical business movements. Understanding Ahilik allows today's young people to recognize that sustainability and community-minded entrepreneurship are not new concepts; they are deeply rooted in cultural heritage. By reconnecting with these traditional models, modern eco-entrepreneurs can draw inspiration and guidance for building a fairer, more sustainable future.





# 3

## CHAPTER

# WHAT IS YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP?



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# WHAT IS YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

Youth entrepreneurship refers to the practice of young individuals, typically **aged between 15 and 30**, starting and managing their business ventures. It encompasses more than just running a business; it involves creativity, critical thinking, innovation, and a willingness to take initiative to solve problems or address community needs. In the context of sustainability, youth entrepreneurship can become a powerful force for driving positive environmental and social change.

## Why Is Youth Entrepreneurship Important?

- **Economic Empowerment:** Entrepreneurship provides young people with pathways to employment, financial independence, and long-term economic security.
- **Social Inclusion:** It empowers youth from marginalized or disadvantaged backgrounds to take control of their futures and become changemakers in their communities.
- **Innovation and Adaptability:** Young people are more likely to adopt and develop new technologies and approaches that challenge traditional business models.
- **Sustainable Development:** When aligned with sustainable values, youth entrepreneurship contributes to the green economy and supports global goals such as the SDGs.



# WHAT IS YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

## Characteristics of Young Entrepreneurs

- **Curiosity** and a **willingness** to learn
- **Resilience** in the face of uncertainty
- **Creativity** and **out-of-the-box** thinking
- **Risk-taking** within reason
- A **passion** for impact and change



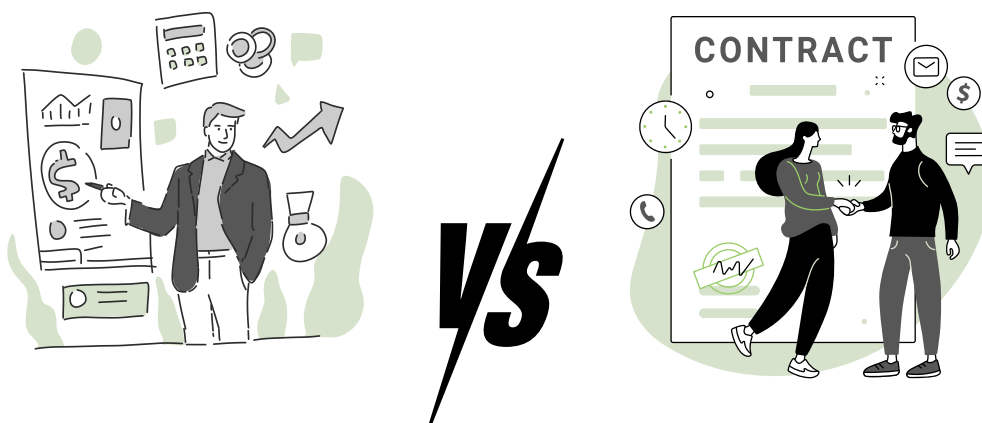
These traits could be cultivated through experiential learning, mentorship, and participation in youth programs such as Erasmus+.

## Entrepreneurship vs. Employment

Unlike traditional employment, where a person works within an existing structure, entrepreneurs create their opportunities. This shift requires:

- Identifying gaps or problems
- Designing solutions (products or services)
- Building a business model to deliver these solutions.

In today's world, where job markets are increasingly competitive and technology is rapidly changing industries, entrepreneurship offers an alternative and empowering path.





# WHAT IS YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

## Common Myths About Youth Entrepreneurship

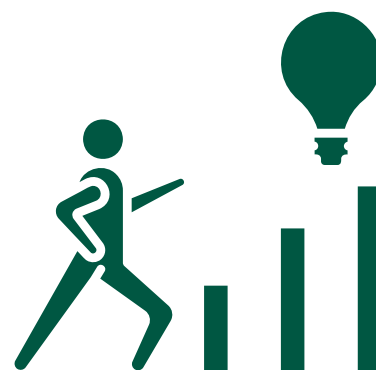
- **"Entrepreneurs are born, not made":** In reality, entrepreneurial skills can be learned and developed over time.
- **"You need a lot of money to start":** Many successful businesses begin with limited capital but high creativity and resourcefulness.
- **"You have to do it alone":** Building a network and seeking support are key parts of entrepreneurial success.

## Supporting Youth on the Entrepreneurial Journey

Creating an enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship involves:

- Access to entrepreneurship education in schools and informal settings
- Mentorship programs and role models
- Incubators and youth hubs that offer space and support
- Access to funding and resources (microloans, grants, competitions)
- Exposure to real-world experiences through Erasmus+ projects.

Youth entrepreneurship, especially when guided by ethical and sustainable principles, prepares the next generation to tackle global challenges creatively and responsibly.



# WHAT IS YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

In the context of youth entrepreneurship education, it is important to recognize that entrepreneurial capacity extends beyond technical knowledge or the ability to write a business plan. It also includes a set of personal and interpersonal qualities, often referred to as entrepreneurial attitudes, that shape how young people perceive challenges, take initiative, and generate ideas.

To support this deeper understanding, the project introduced an Attitude Scale specifically designed for young people. This tool was presented during the Paris transnational meeting and provides a structured method to assess an individual's entrepreneurial mindset.

Entrepreneurship is not only about skills and knowledge—it is also about mindset. The way young people think, feel, and behave in uncertain and dynamic environments often determines their entrepreneurial success. Recognizing this, educators and youth organizations are increasingly turning to attitude-based assessment tools to understand and develop key entrepreneurial traits.

One such tool is the Entrepreneurial Attitude Scale, a structured instrument designed to evaluate the underlying qualities that influence entrepreneurial potential. This scale focuses on four major domains: **personal characteristics, business and innovation skills, risk and decision-making abilities, and social and leadership competencies.** It helps individuals assess their strengths and areas for growth while providing educators with data to tailor support and training.

# WHAT IS YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

The four core dimensions are highlighted as:

- **Personal Characteristics:** These include traits such as self-confidence, initiative, and resilience, all of which help individuals stay motivated and overcome setbacks in uncertain or high-risk contexts.
- **Business and Innovation Skills:** This dimension focuses on creativity, problem-solving, and resourcefulness, which are essential for identifying opportunities and building original solutions.
- **Risk and Decision-Making Abilities:** Young entrepreneurs must evaluate uncertainty and make informed choices. This requires comfort with risk, the ability to weigh multiple options, and confidence in acting under pressure.
- **Social and Leadership Skills:** Effective entrepreneurs must communicate ideas clearly, collaborate within diverse teams, and inspire others toward a shared vision.



# WHAT IS YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

The personal characteristics domain assesses qualities such as self-confidence, initiative, and resilience. These attributes enable young people to overcome obstacles, persevere through setbacks, and remain motivated in the face of uncertainty. Business and innovation skills reflect the ability to think creatively, solve problems, and use resources effectively—skills critical for designing impactful solutions and adapting to change.

Risk-taking and decision-making are also vital components of entrepreneurial behavior. They involve not only the willingness to take calculated risks but also the ability to evaluate options, anticipate outcomes, and act decisively. In parallel, social and leadership skills encompass communication, teamwork, and the ability to inspire others toward a shared goal. These competencies are essential for building networks, managing partnerships, and leading initiatives.

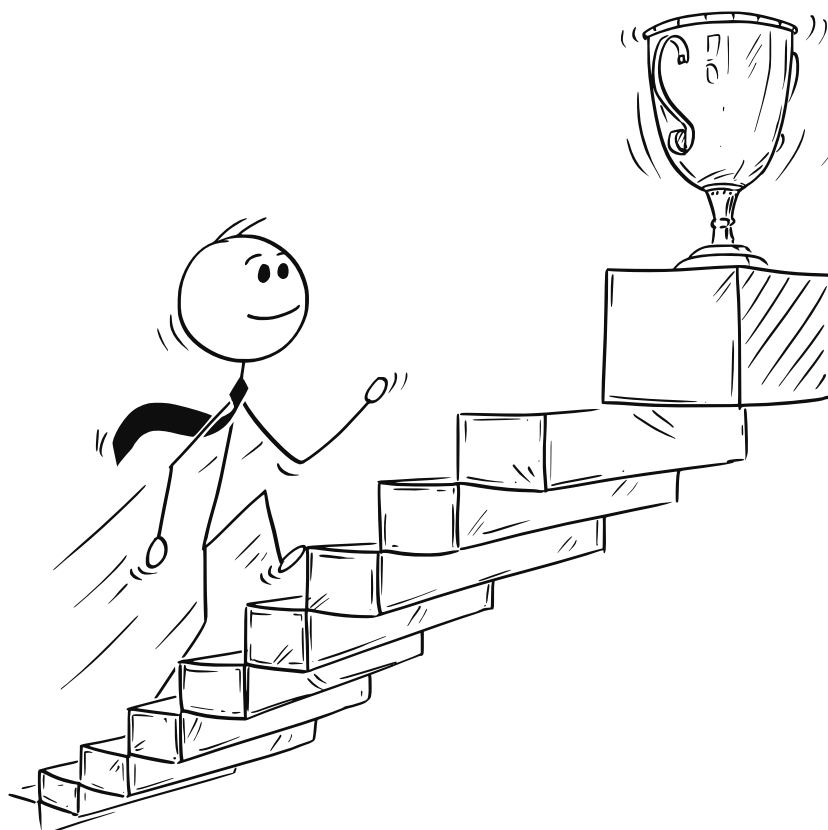
Assessment using the Entrepreneurial Attitude Scale typically involves self-report questionnaires and practical scenario-based reflections. The results can be interpreted to create personalized development plans, guide mentorship conversations, and track progress over time. For schools, training programs, and incubators, the tool serves as a foundation for designing inclusive, adaptive, and effective entrepreneurship education.



# WHAT IS YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

Importantly, the attitude scale is not a measure of worth or a predictor of immediate success. Rather, it is a formative tool that promotes self-awareness and growth. It encourages young people to reflect on how they think and act, and to build habits that support long-term personal and professional development. When combined with experiential learning and coaching, it becomes a powerful resource in shaping confident, capable, and ethical entrepreneurs.

By integrating mindset evaluation into their programs, youth educators can move beyond generic business training and support the holistic development of entrepreneurial leaders. This approach acknowledges that entrepreneurship is a human journey—driven as much by internal orientation as by external opportunity.





# WHAT IS YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

Using a tool like this enables young people to become aware of their entrepreneurial mindset, not only what they know, but how they think and behave. Educators and trainers can also use such tools to design targeted interventions, group projects, or coaching programs that address specific learning needs.

This kind of attitude-based evaluation ensures that youth entrepreneurship education is not limited to business knowledge but supports whole-person development, preparing young people for both entrepreneurial ventures and broader civic engagement.





# CHAPTER 4

## ECO- ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE FUTURE OF GREEN INNOVATION



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE FUTURE OF GREEN INNOVATION

Eco-entrepreneurship or ecological entrepreneurship is the practice of building and managing businesses with a strong commitment to solving environmental challenges. It blends the classic entrepreneurial spirit with sustainable development values, aiming not only for profit but for positive ecological and social impact.

## What Defines an Eco-Entrepreneur?

Eco-entrepreneurs are change agents. They see environmental issues as opportunities for innovation and transformation. Rather than contributing to pollution, waste, or resource depletion, they seek to:

- Reduce environmental harm
- Create sustainable alternatives to existing products or services
- Promote biodiversity, conservation, or carbon reduction
- Educate consumers and inspire responsible behavior.

Their success is measured not only in profits, but also in their contribution to a healthier planet.



# ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE FUTURE OF GREEN INNOVATION

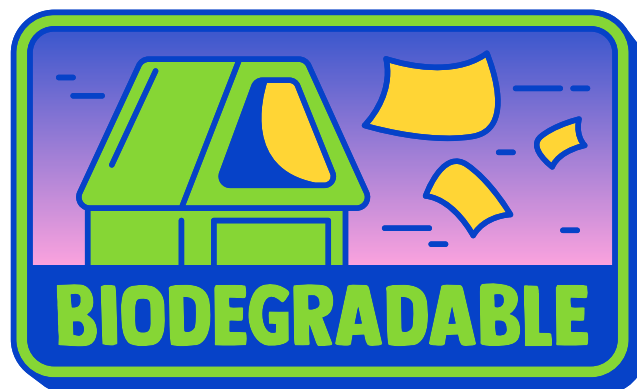
## Core Principles of Eco-Entrepreneurship

1. **Sustainability:** Businesses must operate in ways that do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
2. **Circular Economy:** Products and services are designed to minimize waste, reuse materials, and regenerate natural systems.
3. **Innovation:** Solutions are rooted in creativity, science, and emerging technologies to address pressing environmental problems.
4. **Social Responsibility:** Eco-entrepreneurs often integrate fair labor practices, inclusivity, and ethical sourcing into their operations.

## Examples of Eco-Entrepreneurship in Action

- Producing **biodegradable packaging** to replace plastic
- Launching organic, **zero-waste food** brands
- Developing **mobile apps** to promote **recycling or energy efficiency**
- Creating **educational platforms** or workshops on **sustainability**.

Each of these initiatives helps shift public behavior and accelerates the transition to a greener economy.





# ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE FUTURE OF GREEN INNOVATION

## Why Eco-Entrepreneurship Matters for Youth

Young people are uniquely positioned to lead this movement. They are digitally savvy, culturally connected, and deeply aware of climate issues.

Eco-entrepreneurship allows youth to:

- Align their personal values with professional goals
- Explore career paths in the green economy
- Build meaningful businesses with global relevance.

In project activities across countries, youth participants explored what eco-entrepreneurship means to them and how they could bring sustainable ideas to life in their communities. This hands-on approach nurtures critical thinking, collaboration, and a lifelong commitment to ethical innovation.

## The Difference Between Traditional and Eco-Entrepreneurship

Traditional Entrepreneurship	Eco-Entrepreneurship
Focus on profit maximization	Focus on profit and environmental/social impact
Often resource-intensive	Resource-conscious and low-waste
Short-term returns	Long-term sustainability
Reactive to regulations	Long-term sustainability



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE FUTURE OF GREEN INNOVATION

Eco-entrepreneurship is not only a strategy for sustainable business—it is also a way for young people to actively contribute to global development. In this context, one of the most powerful guiding frameworks is the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

These **17 goals**, adopted by all UN member states in 2015, set out a global agenda to end poverty, address inequality, protect the planet, and foster peace and prosperity by 2030.

During the educational workshops held in Greece, youth participants explored how eco-businesses can directly support the SDGs by aligning their mission with global priorities.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



[www.unosd.un.org/content/sustainable-development-goals-sdgs](http://www.unosd.un.org/content/sustainable-development-goals-sdgs)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

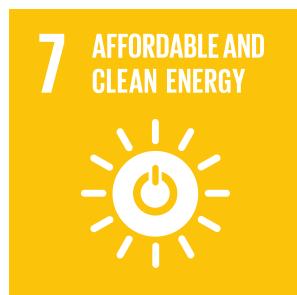
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE FUTURE OF GREEN INNOVATION

Here are some key SDGs that can inform and guide eco-entrepreneurial ventures:

- **SDG 2 – Zero Hunger** can be addressed through food redistribution apps or urban agriculture startups.
- **SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy** encourages innovation in renewable energy access, especially in remote communities.
- **SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production** promotes the development of businesses that reduce waste and promote circularity.
- **SDG 13 – Climate Action** calls for enterprises that actively reduce emissions or promote environmental awareness.

Understanding how eco-entrepreneurship contributes to these goals empowers young people to approach business not only as a profit-making activity, but as a platform for global change. This knowledge enhances their ability to create ventures that are locally grounded and globally relevant





# 5 CHAPTER

## STEPS TO LAUNCH YOUR ECO-BUSINESS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# STEPS TO LAUNCH YOUR ECO-BUSINESS

Starting an eco-business is a journey that combines purpose with action. It requires planning, creativity, resourcefulness, and a commitment to sustainability. Whether you want to develop an environmentally friendly product, provide a green service, or build a platform that promotes eco-awareness, the following steps will guide you through the process.

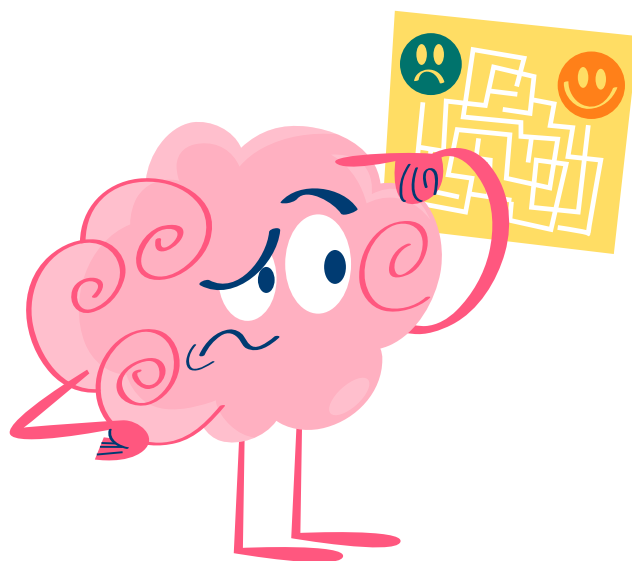
## Step 1: Identify a Problem Worth Solving

Every successful eco-business starts by addressing a real environmental or social issue. Begin by observing your community, your environment, or a sector you care about.

### Ask yourself:

- What environmental challenges need solutions?
- Are there inefficient, wasteful, or harmful systems that can be improved?
- What are people struggling with that affects both them and the planet?

Use tools such as surveys, interviews, or community discussions to validate your observations.



# STEPS TO LAUNCH YOUR ECO-BUSINESS

## Step 2: Develop Your Idea and Vision

Once you identify the problem, brainstorm ideas that could offer a sustainable solution.

Think about:

- How your idea creates value for people and the planet
- What makes it different from existing solutions
- Whether it's feasible in terms of cost, resources, and time.

Develop a clear vision: What impact do you want to create in 1 year, 3 years, or 10 years?

## Step 3: Create a Sustainable Business Model

A sustainable business model outlines how your eco-business will operate and remain viable. Consider using the Business Model Canvas, adapted to include environmental and social values.

Key elements include:

- **Value Proposition:** What eco-benefits are you offering?
- **Target Customers:** Who are you helping or serving?
- **Revenue Streams:** How will you earn income?
- **Key Activities & Partners:** What do you need to run the business?
- **Sustainability Strategy:** How will you reduce waste, emissions, and environmental harm?





# STEPS TO LAUNCH YOUR ECO-BUSINESS

## Step 4: Prototype and Test

Don't wait until everything is perfect—start small and test early. Create a prototype (a sample version of your product or service) and ask real users for feedback.

### This can help you:

- Learn what works and what doesn't
- Improve your offering based on real needs
- Avoid wasting resources.

Prototyping is essential for eco-businesses where environmental efficiency and resource-consciousness matter.

## Step 5: Plan Your Finances and Budget Sustainably

Being eco-conscious also means being financially sustainable.

Make a basic budget:

- Estimate startup and ongoing costs
- Explore funding options: Erasmus+ grants, national green innovation programs, microloans, crowdfunding, or competitions
- Monitor your carbon and material footprint from the start.

Make use of simple tools like Excel, Notion, or budgeting apps tailored for small businesses.



# STEPS TO LAUNCH YOUR ECO-BUSINESS

## Step 6: Build Your Brand and Communicate Your Purpose

Your brand is your story—it tells people who you are, what you stand for, and why your eco-business matters.

### Focus on:

- Designing a visual identity that reflects your mission
- Communicating transparently about your sustainability efforts
- Using digital platforms (social media, a website, blogs, videos) to reach your audience.

Consider collaborating with youth influencers, environmental NGOs, and local networks to grow your reach.

## Step 7: Launch and Keep Learning

With a solid foundation, you're ready to launch. Start small, remain open to feedback, and continue learning from your users, your peers, and the environment. Entrepreneurship is a dynamic process—and eco-entrepreneurship even more so, as ecosystems evolve and sustainability knowledge deepens.

Stay curious, stay adaptive, and keep aligning your business goals with the greater good.



# STEPS TO LAUNCH YOUR ECO-BUSINESS

Innovation is not limited to technology or flashy inventions. In entrepreneurship, especially eco-entrepreneurship, innovation means rethinking existing systems to make them more sustainable, equitable, and efficient. It is the engine behind meaningful change and long-term impact.

There are several types of innovation relevant to green business development:

- **Product Innovation:** The development of entirely new or significantly improved goods that reduce environmental harm. Examples include biodegradable materials, solar-powered devices, or low-impact clothing made from natural fibers.
- **Process Innovation:** The transformation of how a product or service is delivered. This could involve eliminating unnecessary packaging, using renewable energy in production, or streamlining supply chains to minimize emissions.
- **Business Model Innovation:** Entrepreneurs can innovate how they create, deliver, and capture value. Subscription services for reusable products or digital reward systems for eco-friendly behavior are examples.
- **Social Innovation:** This refers to addressing complex societal problems—like inequality, social exclusion, or youth unemployment—through creative, community-oriented solutions embedded in business practices.

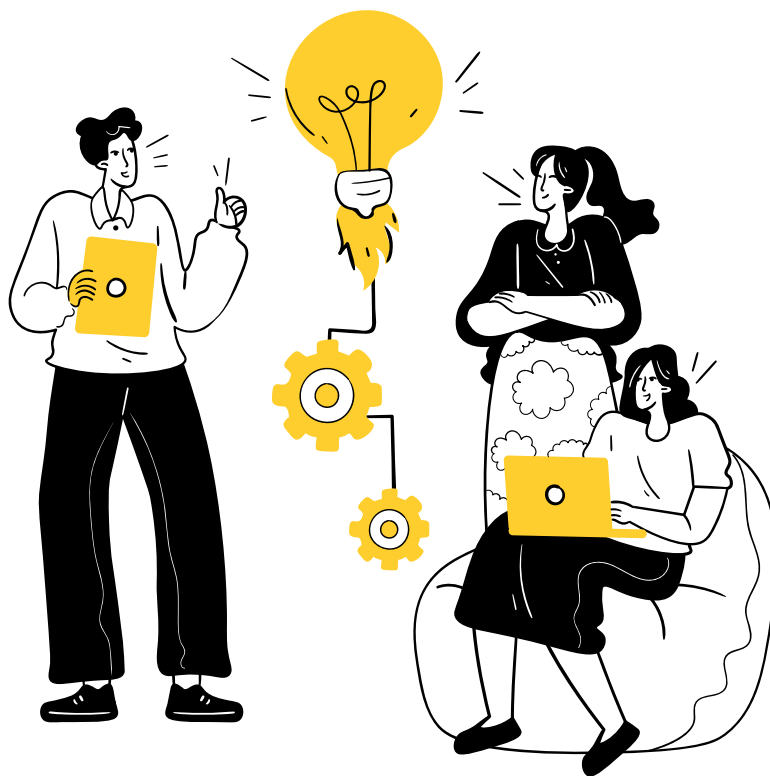
# STEPS TO LAUNCH YOUR ECO-BUSINESS

Teaching young people to think innovatively means helping them question assumptions, identify patterns, and prototype new ideas. Entrepreneurial education must also show that failure is part of the learning process, and that adaptability, curiosity, and persistence are as important as the original idea.

To build a culture of innovation, youth should be encouraged to:

- Prototype ideas quickly, without waiting for perfection
- Reflect on failures as learning experiences
- Engage with diverse perspectives and disciplines
- Stay connected to the needs of people and the planet.

These habits allow youth not only to innovate but to do so ethically and sustainably—a hallmark of true eco-entrepreneurship.





# 6 CHAPTER

## LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF ECO- ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Launching a successful eco-business involves more than a good idea and strong values, it also requires a solid understanding of legal and financial responsibilities. Navigating these areas responsibly is key to building a credible, long-lasting, and scalable enterprise.

## Understanding Legal Structures

Choosing the right legal structure for your business affects everything from taxes to liability and funding. Some common forms include:

- **Sole Proprietorship:** Easy to set up, ideal for small-scale initiatives.
- **Partnership:** Shared ownership and responsibility with one or more partners.
- **Limited Liability Company (LLC):** Protects personal assets while offering flexibility.
- **Social Enterprise/Non-Profit:** Focused on impact, often eligible for grants and donations.

Research the options available in your country and select the one that aligns with your mission and growth plans. Consulting a local legal expert or business mentor is advisable.



# LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Registering Your Eco-Business

Registration processes vary by region, but common steps include:

- Choosing and registering a business name
- Applying for a tax identification number
- Getting licenses or permits (especially for food, transport, education, etc.)
- Ensuring compliance with environmental regulations and labor laws.

Your eco-business may also need to meet specific sustainability certifications or green standards, such as:

- ISO 14001 for Environmental Management
- B Corp Certification
- EU Ecolabel or national equivalents



# LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Managing Finances with a Green Mindset

Being financially sound is essential but in eco-entrepreneurship, how you manage money matters too.

Key financial practices include:

- **Sustainable Budgeting:** Plan for both financial return and environmental impact.
- **Green Accounting:** Track your resource use, energy consumption, and carbon emissions alongside expenses.
- **Transparent Reporting:** Share your sustainability data with stakeholders to build trust.

Many countries and EU programs now support green entrepreneurs with tax incentives, grants, and reduced tariffs for environmentally conscious businesses.





# LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Funding Opportunities for Eco-Entrepreneurs

Access to finance is a common barrier for young entrepreneurs. Fortunately, there are several funding pathways tailored to sustainable initiatives:

- **Erasmus+ Projects:** Offer seed funding, training, and networking support.
- **European Green Deal Grants:** Targeted at innovation and environmental transformation.
- **Local Youth Grants and Incubators:** Often provided by municipalities, foundations, or universities.
- **Crowdfunding Platforms:** Platforms like Kickstarter and Indiegogo support eco-innovation.
- **Impact Investors:** Individuals or organizations seeking both financial and environmental returns.

It's important to prepare a solid pitch deck and business plan that clearly communicates your environmental and social impact alongside financial forecasts.

# APPLY



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

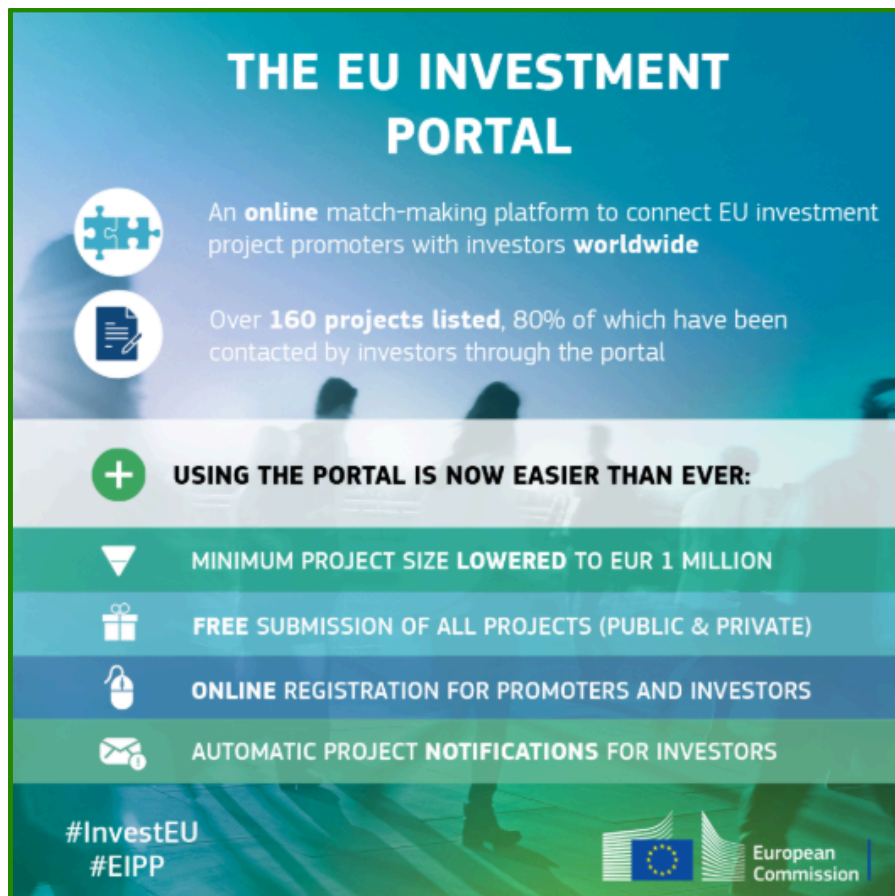
# LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Financial Tools and Resources

Young eco-entrepreneurs should consider using:

- Accounting tools like **Wave, QuickBooks, or Zoho Books.**
- **CO<sub>2</sub> and life cycle** analysis calculators.
- EU portals such as the **Erasmus+ Project Results Platform** and **European Investment Project Portal.**

Financial literacy and compliance empower your eco-business to grow responsibly, attract support, and scale sustainably.

The infographic is titled 'THE EU INVESTMENT PORTAL' in large white letters on a blue background. It features several icons: a puzzle piece, a document with a pencil, a plus sign, a downward arrow, a gift box, a mouse cursor, and an envelope. The text describes the portal as an online match-making platform connecting EU investment project promoters with investors worldwide. It highlights that over 160 projects are listed, 80% of which have been contacted by investors. A section titled 'USING THE PORTAL IS NOW EASIER THAN EVER:' lists five key features: minimum project size lowered to EUR 1 million, free submission of all projects (public & private), online registration for promoters and investors, and automatic project notifications for investors. The bottom of the infographic includes the hashtags #InvestEU and #EIPP, along with the European Union flag and the European Commission logo.

**THE EU INVESTMENT PORTAL**

An **online** match-making platform to connect EU investment project promoters with investors **worldwide**

Over **160 projects listed**, 80% of which have been contacted by investors through the portal

**+** **USING THE PORTAL IS NOW EASIER THAN EVER:**

- MINIMUM PROJECT SIZE LOWERED TO EUR 1 MILLION**
- FREE SUBMISSION OF ALL PROJECTS (PUBLIC & PRIVATE)**
- ONLINE REGISTRATION FOR PROMOTERS AND INVESTORS**
- AUTOMATIC PROJECT NOTIFICATIONS FOR INVESTORS**

#InvestEU  
#EIPP

European Commission



# 7

## CHAPTER

# EUROPEAN AND ERASMUS+ OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.





# EUROPEAN AND ERASMUS+ OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Europe offers a wealth of opportunities for young people to turn their sustainable ideas into reality. Whether you're looking to gain skills, network with peers, or access funding, EU programs like Erasmus+ provide powerful platforms for learning and launching eco-entrepreneurial projects.

## Erasmus+ and Youth Entrepreneurship

Erasmus+ is the European Union's flagship program for education, training, youth, and sport. It supports initiatives that promote mobility, cooperation, and innovation across Europe. For aspiring eco-entrepreneurs, Erasmus+ provides:

- **Youth Exchanges:** Short-term group mobilities that allow young people to explore topics like sustainability and entrepreneurship while living in another country.<sup>4</sup>
- **Training Courses and Seminars:** Focused learning opportunities for youth workers and young leaders on project design, green skills, and leadership.
- **KA2 Strategic Partnerships:** Collaborations between organizations across countries to develop new educational tools, platforms, and business models.
- **Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs:** A cross-border exchange program that gives new or aspiring entrepreneurs the chance to learn from experienced hosts in other EU countries.

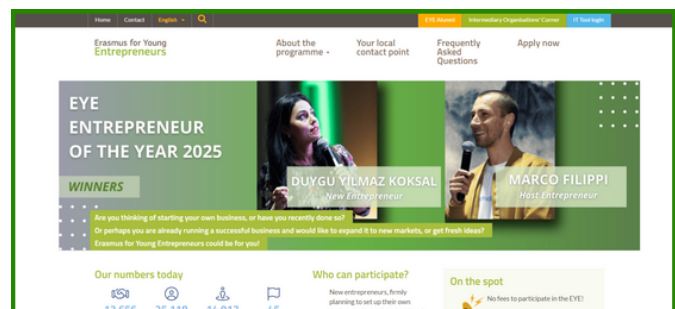
Participating in these activities helps young people develop the skills, confidence, and networks they need to become changemakers.



# EUROPEAN AND ERASMUS+ OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

## What You Can Gain

- Skills in business development, team management, and digital tools
- Hands-on experience in real projects
- Exposure to other cultures and green practices across Europe
- Certification through Youthpass or Europass to validate learning.

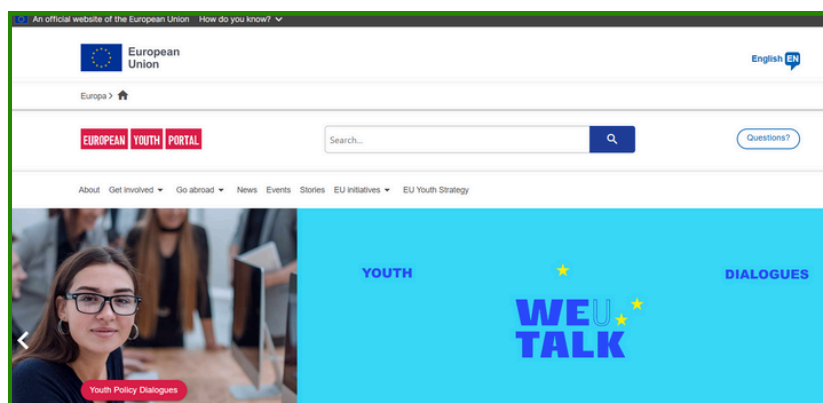


## Finding Opportunities

To explore and apply for Erasmus+ opportunities:

- Visit the **European Youth Portal**
- Follow national agencies or youth organizations in your country
- Join Facebook groups or platforms like Salto-Youth and Eurodesk
- Reach out to local NGOs and youth centers

Stay curious, ask questions, and don't hesitate to apply—Erasmus+ is open to people from all backgrounds, and many successful projects have started with a simple idea and a motivated team.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# EUROPEAN AND ERASMUS+ OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

## Real-Life Inspiration

Many youth-led eco-businesses have their roots in Erasmus+ experiences.

For example:

- A **youth exchange** in Greece inspired participants to start a **zero-waste food coop**.
- A **training course** in France led to the development of an **eco-tourism guidebook**.
- A **strategic partnership among youth organizations** resulted in an **online platform** connecting green start-ups.

These success stories show that with support, vision, and collaboration, young people can lead Europe's transition to a greener economy.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# 8

## CHAPTER

# OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

## OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY

The development of this handbook was informed and enriched by a series of structured transnational meetings that took place within the framework of a European cooperation project on eco-entrepreneurship. These meetings were carefully designed to address specific learning objectives through participatory activities, thematic presentations, case analyses, and cross-cultural exchange. Each mobility contributed to building a holistic understanding of sustainable entrepreneurship, with a particular focus on youth empowerment. The four meetings, held between November 2024 and July 2025, took place in the Netherlands, France, Türkiye, and Greece. The thematic focus and educational contributions of each meeting are presented below.

### Rotterdam, The Netherlands - November 2024

The first meeting was hosted by Edu-Talents and served as a foundational week aimed at preparing youth workers for **Getting to Know the Fundamentals of a Sustainable Economy**. The educational content of the Rotterdam phase included critical conceptual and systemic elements:

- The **European Green Deal** was introduced as a guiding framework for environmental policy and green economic transition across the EU.
- Participants were informed about the **impact of climate change on public health**, emphasizing the importance of integrating environmental and health objectives.
- The role of **legal regulations, tax policies, and national business laws** relevant to eco-entrepreneurs was analyzed in a comparative format across participating countries.
- **Key elements of a sustainable economy** were discussed, with examples of eco-entrepreneurship practices from various sectors.





# OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY

This session provided an essential policy and systemic literacy base, enabling participants to better understand the institutional, legal, and economic environment surrounding sustainable business development in Europe.





# OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY

## Paris, France - April 2025

The second transnational mobility took place in Paris and was hosted by CAH. The thematic emphasis was on the social dimension of sustainability and the ways in which youth entrepreneurship can support responsible production and consumption.

The key educational activities included:

- A structured analysis of the **characteristics of sustainable consumption and production**, aligned with EU priorities and SDG 12.
- A facilitated group discussion of the documentary “**Demain** (Tomorrow)”, used as an educational tool to explore diverse international practices in sustainability.
- A session focused on an **entrepreneurial attitude scale**, aimed at evaluating youth competencies related to initiative, creativity, responsibility, and resilience.
- Presentations of youth-led eco-entrepreneurship case studies from the participating countries, showcasing early-stage and established practices.
- A field visit to an **eco-business in Paris, Climate change Academy** allowing participants to directly observe sustainable practices within an urban commercial setting.



# OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY

## Paris, France - April 2025

The Paris meeting highlighted the importance of behavioral change, education, and local action in advancing environmental goals. It reinforced the idea that social innovation is a key driver of sustainable entrepreneurship.



# OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY

## İzmir, Türkiye - May 2025

The third meeting was held in İzmir and organized by MEGEDER. This meeting focused on strategic innovation in eco-entrepreneurship and the integration of traditional ethical values into modern business development.

The educational content of this phase included:

- A presentation on **financial access strategies for sustainable startups**, highlighting public and private mechanisms at the national and EU levels.
- A **seminar** on the development of **innovation strategies**, with practical tools for youth to conceptualize and test eco-business ideas.
- An introduction to the **Ahilik system**, a 13th-century Anatolian model of ethical entrepreneurship. This historical case was analyzed as an early example of community-based sustainable economic practice.
- A guided discussion on **entrepreneurship projects implemented at the national and international level** in Türkiye, illustrating how young people are transforming environmental challenges into opportunities.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY

This meeting reinforced the value of combining innovation with cultural heritage, ethical business principles, and structured planning. Participants gained a deeper appreciation of entrepreneurship as both an economic and moral practice. A cultural visit to Ephesus ancient site and Izmir town was provided along with sustainable business such as zero carbon point education centre visits.



# OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY

## Kamena Vourla, Greece - July 2025

The fourth and final meeting was hosted by Fthia in Action in Kamena Vourla. The thematic emphasis was placed on eco-business ideation, community relevance, and local adaptation. It provided a concluding phase in which theoretical insights could be translated into entrepreneurial planning.

Key educational components included:

- Workshops on the **generation of green business ideas** based on real community needs and sustainability gaps.
- **Case study sessions** examining national responses to risk and resilience in the face of environmental and economic uncertainty.
- Presentations exploring how to embed the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** into entrepreneurship, with specific reference to **SDGs 8, 9, 11, 12, and 13**.
- **A study visit to a local family-run tavern**, where sustainable practices such as using wood ashes to fertilize tomato gardens were demonstrated. This example illustrated how simple, local, and low-cost solutions can reflect circular economy principles in practice.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY

The Greece meeting offered a reflective space where participants could connect previous learnings to personal experience and community insight. It also demonstrated that sustainable business concepts are scalable and adaptable to rural, urban, traditional, and modern settings alike.





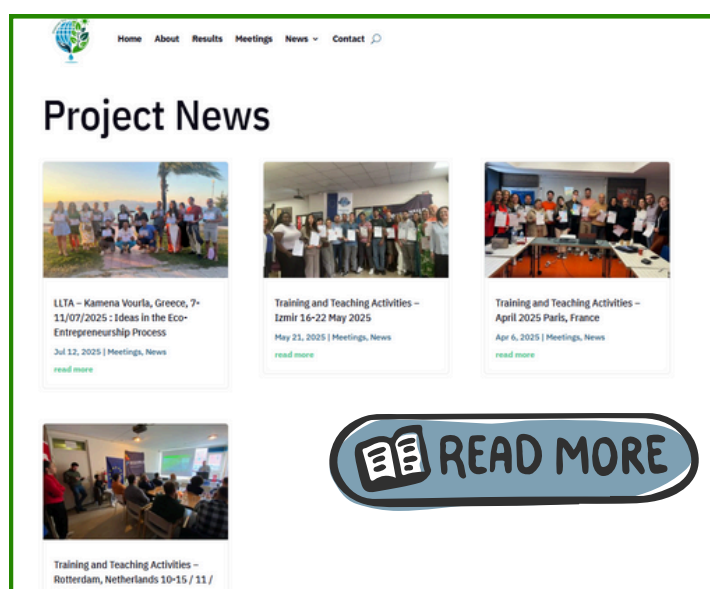
# OUR TRANSNATIONAL JOURNEY

## Summary of Educational Impact

Across all four meetings, participants developed knowledge and competencies in the following areas:

- **Understanding climate policy and legal structures** relevant to green business.
- **Cultivating sustainable consumption practices** and social responsibility.
- **Applying ethical and cultural traditions** to modern entrepreneurship.
- **Generating and refining eco-business ideas** with a strong local and social dimension.

These cross-border educational activities demonstrated the potential of non-formal learning environments to equip young people with the mindset, skills, and support systems needed to participate in and lead the green transition.





# 9

## CHAPTER

# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Case Study 1: Camille Dubois and Verdurable (France)

### Reinventing Eco-Packaging through Resilience and Community Support

Camille Dubois, a 27-year-old eco-entrepreneur from Clermont-Ferrand, France, established "Verdurable," a company dedicated to producing compostable food containers using agricultural waste such as corn husks and sugar beet pulp. Armed with a Master's in Environmental Management, Camille launched Verdurable in 2022 with the support of BPI France's "Entrepreneuriat pour tous" program, a regional green innovation grant, and mentorship from France Active.

Initially, Verdurable experienced rapid success—receiving positive media attention, securing contracts with school cafeterias, and creating jobs for youth from urban priority areas. However, a critical product flaw emerged: the containers lacked humidity resistance. This led to the return of a major order, unsold inventory, financial strain, and a partially disbanded team.

Rather than concede defeat, Camille initiated a strategic response. She collaborated with a materials lab at Université Clermont Auvergne to improve the product's durability, launched a crowdfunding campaign titled "Save Verdurable," and mobilized local youth through volunteer engagement. Vocational high school students supported with marketing, engineering students enhanced product testing, and local freelance communicators drove a successful social media campaign.



# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Case Study 1: Camille Dubois and Verdurable (France)

Community support played a vital role in the company's recovery. Mentors from the "Jeunes Pousses" program, partnerships with agricultural high schools, and involvement from retired business professionals contributed to a holistic mentorship ecosystem. The improved "Verdurable 2.0" product line gained new contracts, reduced inventory waste, and reestablished team confidence.

Camille's experience highlights critical lessons for aspiring eco-entrepreneurs: embrace failure as a learning opportunity, build resilient networks, and prioritize social innovation alongside technical development. Her story has since inspired local youth and been featured in entrepreneurship education programs.



[www.verdurable.fr](http://www.verdurable.fr)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Case Study 2: Tayeba Chaudhary and Fullsoon (France)

### Combating Food Waste with AI-Powered Sustainability

Tayeba Chaudhary co-founded Fullsoon, an eco-startup tackling food waste in the restaurant industry through artificial intelligence. Based in France, Fullsoon emerged in response to the staggering volumes of edible food discarded daily in catering and restaurant services. The business uses AI algorithms to predict food overproduction and optimize stock management, resulting in a 30% reduction in food waste at pilot sites.

Fullsoon embodies circular economy principles by redistributing unsold food to charities, effectively addressing both environmental and social issues. The startup has built strong institutional partnerships with the Île-de-France region and major hospitality brands like Accor, reinforcing the role of eco-entrepreneurship in public-private ecosystems.

Inclusivity is a cornerstone of Fullsoon's model, with operations in underserved areas and diverse, community-rooted teams. Real-world testing and fast iteration cycles enabled quick validation and improvement. Tayeba's work demonstrates how technology, when integrated with social goals and inclusive practices, becomes a powerful tool for eco-innovation.



[www.fullsoon.co](http://www.fullsoon.co)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Case Study 3: Benoît Paget and GreenBig (France)

### Scaling Eco-Innovation through Smart Recycling Solutions

Benoît Paget, founder of GreenBig, tackled the paradox of plastic recycling in France. While households generate vast quantities of plastic waste, the recycling industry suffers from low availability of high-quality recycled materials. To bridge this gap, GreenBig created the "b:bot," a machine that transforms PET plastic bottles into flakes directly at collection sites such as supermarkets.

The b:bot initiative achieved remarkable scale, with 360 machines processing 200,000 bottles per day and providing customers with vouchers per bottle returned—redistributing over €700,000 in purchasing power. The system benefits multiple stakeholders: bottlers receive high-quality recycled material, retailers enhance eco-reputation, and consumers enjoy rewards.

GreenBig's model is economically viable, with projections of €10 million in revenue and ambitious plans to install 10,000 b:bots by 2026, including international expansion. The company's success highlights how user-centric design, economic incentives, and scalability can turn eco-entrepreneurship into a growth engine.



[www.eu-startups.com/directory/greenbig/](http://www.eu-startups.com/directory/greenbig/)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Case Study 4: COCO-MAT (Greece)

### Resilience through Sustainability and Global Thinking

Founded in 1989 in Xanthi, Greece, COCO-MAT specializes in natural sleep products made from coconut fiber, rubber, wool, and cotton. When the Greek financial crisis and later the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted operations, the company turned adversity into opportunity.

COCO-MAT expanded into international markets, strengthened its e-commerce presence, and continued to invest in research and eco-friendly product innovation. Notably, it engaged in inclusive employment practices and supported vulnerable social groups.

The company's sustainability-oriented philosophy, combined with bold strategic decisions, transformed COCO-MAT into a symbol of Greek green entrepreneurship. It maintained growth throughout national crises and inspired other businesses to adopt sustainable practices.



[www.coco-mat.com](http://www.coco-mat.com)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Case Study 5: The Young AHI Project (Türkiye)

### Reviving Ethical Entrepreneurship through Cultural Heritage

The Young AHI Project in Türkiye revives the ancient Ahi tradition, a guild-based system from the 13th century rooted in ethics, solidarity, and social responsibility. Led by the Education Innovation and Social Research Association and supported by Izmir Katip Celebi University and local NGOs, the project fosters moral entrepreneurship in youth.

Participants, mainly high school students, engage in a virtual business creation process. Profits are channeled into social impact projects, such as addressing community issues. Mentorship is provided by university academics and business leaders, ensuring intergenerational learning.

Through this culturally enriched model, the project equips youth with financial literacy, ethical values, and innovation skills. It bridges historical wisdom with modern entrepreneurship, aiming to spread this model across Türkiye.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Case Study 6: SEUP Project (Türkiye)

Fostering Vocational Skills and Social Cohesion through Eco-Innovation

The SEUP (Social and Economic Harmonization Project) addresses the educational and employment integration of Syrians under temporary protection and Turkish youth aged 14–17. It offers vocational training in high-demand green sectors, such as renewable energy, textile recycling, and food tech.

Implemented by the Turkish Ministry of National Education, SEUP supports over 1,000 vocational institutions with infrastructure improvements and training programs. The project promotes equity by covering student costs (meals, supplies, transport) and guarantees one-year employment for 1,500 graduates.

SEUP combines educational innovation with labor market alignment, encouraging eco-conscious career pathways. Through awareness campaigns, school visits, and public-private cooperation, it advances social cohesion and green entrepreneurship.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Case Study 7: Teapsule (Greece)

### Innovating Eco-Friendly Tea Consumption

Teapsule is a sustainable initiative founded by Nikitas Kefalogiannis and Ilia Ioannidi, two young Greek entrepreneurs devoted to promoting eco-friendly consumption. They developed home-compostable organic herbal tea capsules that are compatible with Nespresso machines.

This innovation presents an environmentally conscious alternative to conventional tea and coffee pods, aiming to reduce plastic and aluminum waste while delivering quality and convenience. The initiative has gained significant recognition, including First Prize at a national competition for agrifood entrepreneurs in Greece.

The sustainability-driven innovation has also earned praise for promoting organic farming and supporting sustainable agriculture. By encouraging eco-conscious consumer habits and minimizing environmental impact, Teapsule has positioned itself as a model for modern green entrepreneurship in the Greek agrifood sector.



[www.teapsule.com](http://www.teapsule.com)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Case Study 7: Teapsule (Greece)

### Innovating Eco-Friendly Tea Consumption

Teapsule is a sustainable initiative founded by Nikitas Kefalogiannis and Ilia Ioannidi, two young Greek entrepreneurs devoted to promoting eco-friendly consumption. They developed home-compostable organic herbal tea capsules that are compatible with Nespresso machines.

This innovation presents an environmentally conscious alternative to conventional tea and coffee pods, aiming to reduce plastic and aluminum waste while delivering quality and convenience. The initiative has gained significant recognition, including First Prize at a national competition for agrifood entrepreneurs in Greece.

The sustainability-driven innovation has also earned praise for promoting organic farming and supporting sustainable agriculture. By encouraging eco-conscious consumer habits and minimizing environmental impact, Teapsule has positioned itself as a model for modern green entrepreneurship in the Greek agrifood sector.



[www.teapsule.com](http://www.teapsule.com)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.





# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Case Study 8: Ayşe Sultan Kurt and Bionova (Türkiye)

From Waste to Innovation – Biotechnology for a Circular Future

Ayşe Sultan Kurt, a biotechnology PhD student and graduate of METU's Food Engineering program, exemplifies how scientific expertise can be transformed into meaningful environmental entrepreneurship. Motivated by the belief that “waste is not trash, it is a resource,” Ayşe founded Bionova in October 2020 with support from TÜBİTAK's 1512 Individual Youth Entrepreneurship Program.

Bionova aims to revolutionize food and agricultural waste management through biotechnological innovations. Starting with laboratory-scale trials for enzyme and bioethanol production, the initiative now envisions a broader product portfolio including organic fertilizers and bioplastics. The company's mission is to help the food industry manage waste sustainably, reduce environmental impact, and ultimately achieve zero-waste targets.

Technologically, Bionova uses fermentation and waste separation processes that are more efficient and cost-effective than traditional methods. Their core products—enzymes for industrial use and bioethanol as a renewable energy source—contribute to both environmental protection and economic productivity.

The social and ecological need for such a venture is urgent: Türkiye produces 18 million tons of food waste annually, contributing significantly to global carbon emissions. Bionova addresses this by diverting waste from landfills and transforming it into usable raw materials for energy and agriculture.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

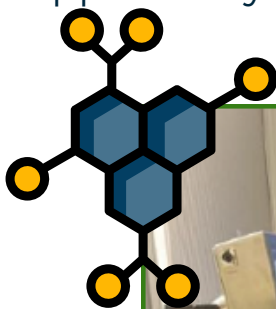


## CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Despite facing challenges typical of solo entrepreneurs, such as limited financing and difficulty gaining market acceptance for innovative products, Ayşe implemented strategic solutions. These include partnerships with universities, municipalities, and private enterprises, as well as educational campaigns to raise public awareness about sustainable waste management.

Bionova's efforts have been recognized through multiple awards, including winning the EIT Food EWA 2021 program and being a finalist in the 2022 Turkey Women Entrepreneurs Competition. Looking ahead, the company plans to scale its pilot plant by 2025, expand into international markets, and launch new product lines such as bioplastics.

Bionova's journey is a testament to the power of youth-driven innovation in solving complex environmental problems. It underscores how scientific knowledge, entrepreneurial spirit, and social commitment can converge to build a more sustainable and opportunity-rich future.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# CASE STUDIES IN ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Inspiration for the Next Generation of Eco-Entrepreneurs

The diverse case studies presented in this chapter offer more than just success stories, they serve as powerful examples of how young individuals can become active agents of change in their communities and beyond. From France to Greece and Türkiye, each initiative reveals how innovation, sustainability, and social responsibility can come together to shape a greener and more inclusive future.

These stories demonstrate that age, background, or resources are not barriers to making a positive environmental and societal impact. What matters most is a mindset driven by resilience, creativity, and collaboration. Whether launching a tech-driven food waste platform, reviving cultural values through entrepreneurship, or pioneering new uses of agricultural waste, these young changemakers have proven that eco-entrepreneurship is both feasible and essential.

Young readers are encouraged to draw inspiration from these journeys. Let these real-world examples ignite your curiosity, challenge your assumptions, and motivate you to take the first step toward your own sustainable initiative. You do not need to wait for ideal conditions, **start small, think local, and grow with purpose**. With courage, collaboration, and the right support networks, you too can become part of the growing movement of youth transforming the world through eco-entrepreneurship.

Let this chapter be your call to action.





# 10

## CHAPTER

# UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES

A sustainable economy is an economic system designed to support long-term environmental health, social equity, and economic resilience. Unlike traditional economies that prioritize rapid growth and consumption, sustainable economies emphasize balance—ensuring that today's progress does not come at the expense of future generations. They operate on the principle that economic development must be integrated with environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

A key framework in sustainable economic thinking is the Triple Bottom Line: **People, Planet, and Profit**. This model encourages entrepreneurs to measure success not just by financial performance, but also by their contributions to society and the environment. It fosters businesses that generate positive outcomes in employment, equity, biodiversity, resource management, and community well-being.

Sustainable economies reject the traditional linear model of production and consumption, often summarized as "take, make, dispose." Instead, they embrace circular systems where materials are reused, resources are conserved, and waste is minimized. In a circular economy, businesses prioritize product longevity, reparability, and recyclability, ensuring that environmental impact is reduced at every stage.



# UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES

For example, companies committed to sustainability may develop biodegradable packaging, utilize renewable energy, or build supply chains around ethical labor practices. These choices not only benefit the planet but also enhance brand reputation, attract conscious consumers, and align with emerging regulations and investor criteria.

Young people have a critical role in shaping these new economic models. As digital natives with high awareness of social and environmental issues, youth are uniquely positioned to challenge outdated norms and lead transformative change. Their creativity, global outlook, and entrepreneurial spirit are essential in reimagining how economies can serve both people and the planet.

Entrepreneurship education should therefore include a strong foundation in sustainability principles. By understanding how economic systems work and how they can be redesigned, young entrepreneurs gain the tools to launch ventures that are both innovative and impactful. Sustainable economies are not just a response to crisis, they are a proactive strategy for securing a just and viable future.





# 11

## CHAPTER

# BUILDING INNOVATION CULTURE IN GREEN STARTUPS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# BUILDING INNOVATION CULTURE IN GREEN STARTUPS

Innovation is a vital force in eco-entrepreneurship. It enables individuals and organizations to respond creatively to environmental and social challenges, generate new forms of value, and differentiate themselves in a fast-changing market. In the context of green startups, innovation is not limited to technology; it includes new products, services, processes, business models, and even ways of thinking that contribute to sustainability.

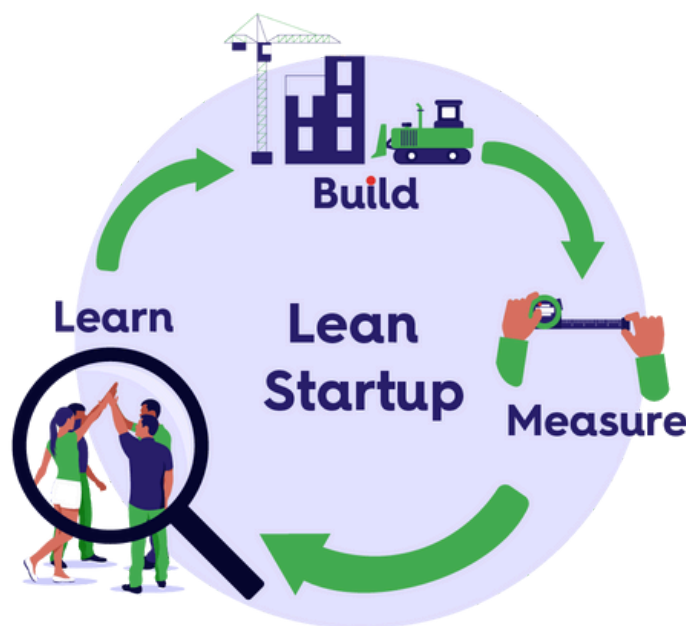
There are several forms of innovation relevant to eco-entrepreneurs. Product innovation might involve designing goods from recycled materials or developing new plant-based alternatives to plastic. Process innovation could focus on reducing water usage in manufacturing or using blockchain to track carbon footprints. Business model innovation often includes shifting from ownership to access, such as renting, sharing, or subscription models that reduce waste. Social innovation aims to address inequality and inclusion through participatory design or inclusive hiring practices.



# BUILDING INNOVATION CULTURE IN GREEN STARTUPS

Building a culture of innovation requires intentional practices. First, green startups must encourage curiosity and question existing assumptions. Creating an environment where team members feel safe to propose new ideas, even if they seem unconventional, is essential. Second, small-scale experimentation, through prototyping or minimum viable products (MVPs), allows ideas to be tested, improved, or discarded with minimal risk. Third, learning from failure should be embedded into the organization's mindset. Mistakes should be seen not as setbacks but as opportunities for growth and discovery.

Entrepreneurs can also adopt structured innovation tools to guide their work. Design thinking, for instance, emphasizes empathy for users, iterative design, and creative problem-solving. The Lean Startup method encourages rapid testing and feedback to avoid wasting resources on unproven concepts. These tools align well with sustainability, where flexibility and continuous improvement are crucial.





# BUILDING INNOVATION CULTURE IN GREEN STARTUPS

Innovation culture thrives on collaboration. Eco-entrepreneurs benefit from engaging with diverse stakeholders, users, suppliers, experts, and community members, who can offer insights and co-create solutions.

Networking with other entrepreneurs, participating in innovation hubs, and accessing mentorship further expands possibilities. For young entrepreneurs, innovation is not just a competitive advantage, it is a mindset that empowers them to imagine and build the future they want to see.

# GAME START



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# 12

## CHAPTER

# EMBEDDING THE SDGS IN YOUR BUSINESS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# EMBEDDING THE SDGS IN YOUR BUSINESS

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal framework adopted by the United Nations to guide global efforts toward eradicating poverty, as mentioned earlier, protecting the environment, and promoting peace and prosperity. Comprising **17 interlinked goals and 169 targets**, the SDGs serve as a blueprint for sustainable development by **2030**. For eco-entrepreneurs, the SDGs offer not only a set of values to align with but also a practical tool for designing impactful and responsible business strategies.

**Embedding the SDGs into a business** means intentionally aligning operations, products, and services with one or more of the goals. For example, a company developing biodegradable packaging supports SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), while a startup using solar-powered systems to electrify remote areas contributes to SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy). Integrating the SDGs can improve a company's mission clarity, stakeholder engagement, and access to purpose-driven funding and partnerships.

Understanding how to operationalize the SDGs begins with identifying which goals are most relevant to your venture.

Entrepreneurs should ask:

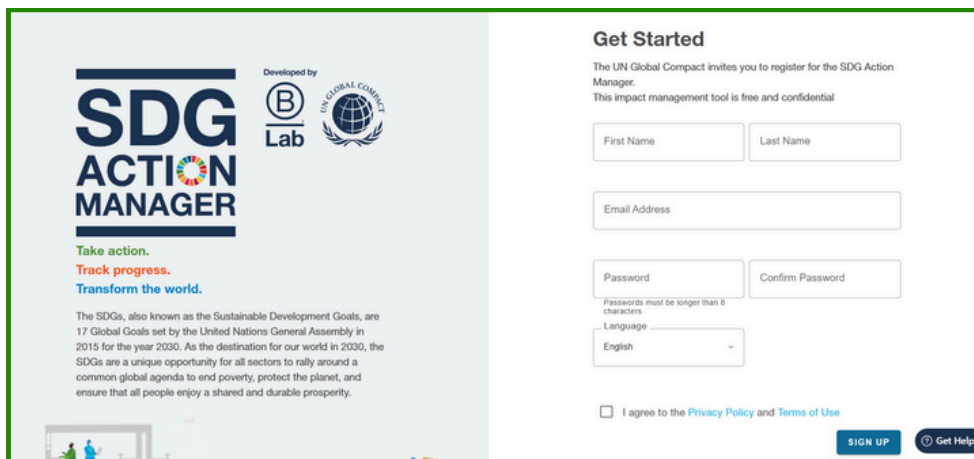
- What societal or environmental problem are we solving?
- Who benefits from our solution?
- What resources do we use, and how do we manage waste?

These questions help map business activities to specific goals and ensure coherence between intentions and impact.



# EMBEDDING THE SDGS IN YOUR BUSINESS

Several tools can support this alignment process. The **SDG Action Manager**, developed by B Lab and the UN Global Compact, allows businesses to assess their progress toward each goal and receive recommendations for improvement. Additionally, the Business Model Canvas can be adapted to include an SDG layer, prompting entrepreneurs to consider social and environmental outcomes alongside customer segments, revenue streams, and value propositions.



**SDG ACTION MANAGER**

Developed by B Lab and UN GLOBAL COMPACT

Take action.  
Track progress.  
Transform the world.

The SDGs, also known as the Sustainable Development Goals, are 17 Global Goals set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 for the year 2030. As the destination for our world in 2030, the SDGs are a unique opportunity for all sectors to rally around a common global agenda to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy a shared and durable prosperity.

**Get Started**

The UN Global Compact invites you to register for the SDG Action Manager.  
This impact management tool is free and confidential

First Name  Last Name

Email Address

Password  Confirm Password

Passwords must be longer than 8 characters

Language

☐ I agree to the [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Use](#)

[SIGN UP](#) [Get Help](#)

[www.unglobalcompact.org/take-action/sdg-action-manager](http://www.unglobalcompact.org/take-action/sdg-action-manager)

Beyond alignment, businesses must also find ways to measure and communicate their SDG impact. This includes setting indicators (e.g., reduction in plastic use, number of low-income customers reached) and reporting transparently to stakeholders. Certifications, partnerships, and storytelling are effective ways to build trust and demonstrate commitment.



# EMBEDDING THE SDGS IN YOUR BUSINESS

By embracing the SDGs, eco-entrepreneurs signal that their ventures are not only economically viable but also socially and environmentally responsible.

This approach strengthens business resilience, opens new markets, and contributes to the larger global agenda for sustainable development. For young entrepreneurs especially, the SDGs provide **a common language** for impact and a framework to channel their passion into purposeful action.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# 13

## CHAPTER

# TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ECO- ENTREPRENEURS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ECO-ENTREPRENEURS

To translate inspiration into action, young individuals must be equipped with the necessary tools, knowledge, and support systems that can enable them to successfully navigate the path of eco-entrepreneurship. This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of educational resources, funding opportunities, mentoring networks, and digital platforms that are essential for building, launching, and sustaining environmentally conscious entrepreneurial initiatives.

## 1. Educational Platforms and Online Learning

Education is the cornerstone of empowerment. The following platforms offer accessible, structured learning paths for eco-entrepreneurs:

- **Coursera, edX, and FutureLearn:** Offer university-level courses on environmental sustainability, green business models, circular economy, social innovation, and entrepreneurship. Courses are often available for free or with affordable certification options.
- **SDG Academy:** Provides high-quality educational content on sustainable development goals, climate action, and ethical leadership, developed by the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.
- **YALI Network and Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange:** Engage young people in global learning communities, offering interactive modules on civic engagement, environmental stewardship, and social entrepreneurship.



# TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ECO-ENTREPRENEURS

## 2. Mentorship, Incubation, and Business Development Support

Guidance from experienced professionals and structured incubation environments can significantly enhance the success of youth-led eco-enterprises.

- **Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs:** A cross-border exchange programme facilitating knowledge transfer between aspiring and experienced entrepreneurs within the EU.
- **Climate-KIC Greenhouse Programme:** Supports early-stage cleantech and sustainability-focused startups through mentorship, grants, and training.
- **Youth Business International (YBI):** A global network offering personalized mentoring and business development services tailored to young entrepreneurs, with a focus on social impact.
- **Local innovation hubs and accelerators:** Examples include Impact Hub, Envolve Entrepreneurship in Greece, and other national platforms supporting green business development.



# TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ECO-ENTREPRENEURS

## 3. Funding and Financial Support Mechanisms

Access to finance is often a key challenge for young entrepreneurs. Multiple funding avenues exist to support eco-innovation:

- **EU Structural and Investment Funds:** Administered via national and regional authorities, these funds often support youth entrepreneurship and green transition.
- **European Solidarity Corps (ESC):** Funds youth-led projects addressing social and environmental challenges.
- **Youth-led Startup Grants and National Competitions:** Many countries run annual competitions (e.g., Social Impact Award, Green Entrepreneurship Challenge) offering seed funding and mentorship.
- **Crowdfunding Platforms:** Platforms like Kickstarter, Indiegogo, and Goteo provide the opportunity to raise initial capital while validating ideas through community engagement.



# TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ECO-ENTREPRENEURS

## 4. Professional Networks and Knowledge Exchange Platforms

Building relationships and accessing shared knowledge are vital components of successful entrepreneurship.

- **Youth Climate Movement Networks:** Initiatives such as Youth4Climate, Fridays for Future, and the Youth Climate Lab offer collaboration opportunities and visibility for youth-led green projects.
- **LinkedIn Groups and Professional Forums:** Groups like “Sustainable Startups,” “Circular Economy Innovators,” and “Eco-Entrepreneurs EU” provide valuable insights, resources, and community support.
- **Erasmus+ Youth Networks and National Youth Councils:** These networks serve as entry points for collaboration, training, and mobilities on topics like environmental justice and sustainable development.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ECO-ENTREPRENEURS

## 5. Entrepreneurial Tools and Impact Measurement Frameworks

Effective business planning and impact tracking are crucial for long-term viability and scalability.

- **Business Model Canvas and Lean Startup Methodology:** These tools assist in designing and refining business concepts with a focus on customer validation and continuous improvement.
- **UN SDG Action Manager (developed by B Lab and the UN Global Compact):** A digital platform to help entrepreneurs measure, manage, and improve their contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **B Impact Assessment Tool:** Provides an in-depth evaluation of a business's social and environmental performance, essential for mission-driven enterprises.
- **Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) Tools:** For evaluating the environmental impact of products and processes throughout their lifecycle.



# TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ECO-ENTREPRENEURS

## 6. Local Resources and Institutional Support

In many countries, ministries of education, employment, or environment collaborate with NGOs and private sector actors to offer youth-specific entrepreneurship support.

- **Municipal Youth Entrepreneurship Offices:** Provide localized training, consulting, and funding advice.
- **Chambers of Commerce and Agricultural Cooperatives:** Often engage youth through specialized training programmes and eco-business development schemes.
- **Universities and VET Institutions:** Increasingly serve as hubs for sustainable innovation, offering courses, project-based learning, and student entrepreneurship labs.





# TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ECO-ENTREPRENEURS

## Conclusion: Equipping the Youth for Action

As this handbook comes to a close, it is important to reflect on the essential message that threads through each chapter: young people are not just the leaders of tomorrow, they are innovators, change-makers, and visionaries of today. The climate crisis, social inequalities, and economic uncertainties we face globally demand bold and creative solutions. Eco-entrepreneurship offers a compelling path forward, merging business with environmental stewardship, and personal ambition with social impact.

The stories, tools, and strategies presented throughout this book illustrate that every action, whether small or large, has the potential to generate positive transformation. Whether it begins with a local school project, a sustainable product idea, or a youth-led community initiative, the journey of eco-entrepreneurship starts with a single step. What matters most is the willingness to act, to learn continuously, and to stay committed to building a just and resilient future.

You now possess knowledge, inspiration, and practical guidance. The next step is yours to take. Let this handbook not be the end of your learning, but the beginning of your entrepreneurial impact.

**Believe in your vision.** Act with purpose. Collaborate with others. And never forget, every sustainable business starts with a young person who dares to care.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



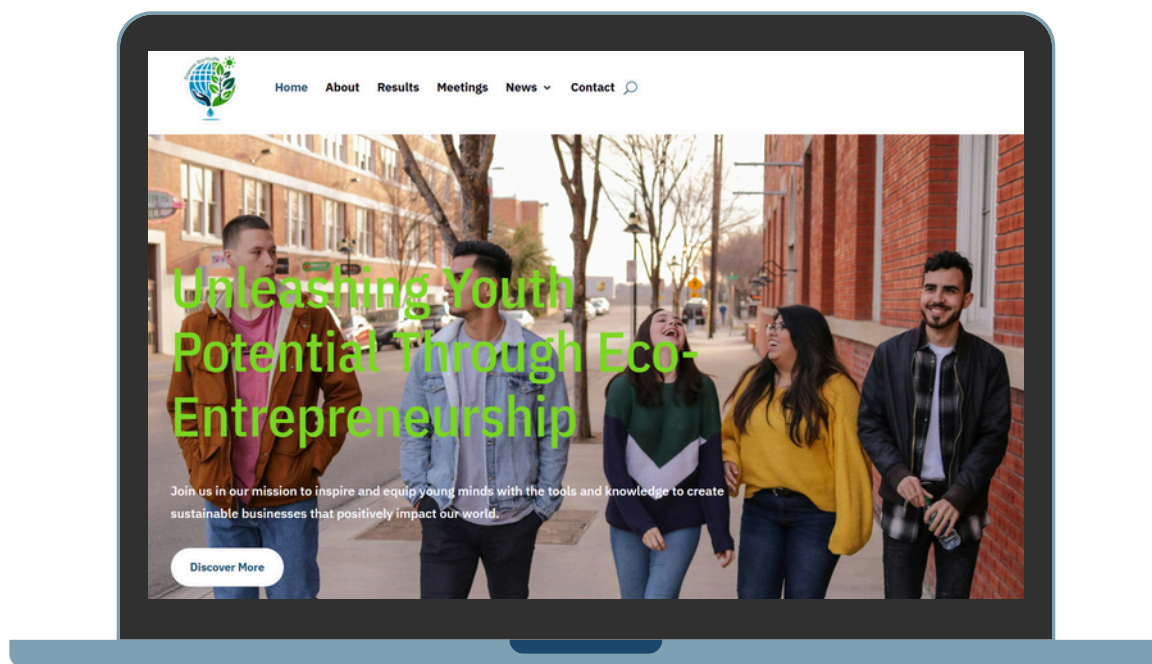
**EMPOWER ECO YOUTHS**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

# CHECK OUR WEBSITE



**[www.empoweryouthswiththecoentrepreneurship.eu](http://www.empoweryouthswiththecoentrepreneurship.eu)**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



# ECO- ENTREPRENEUR'S HANDBOOK

EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH  
SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION

[www.empoweryouthswiththecoentrepreneurship.eu](http://www.empoweryouthswiththecoentrepreneurship.eu)



EDU TALENTS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.