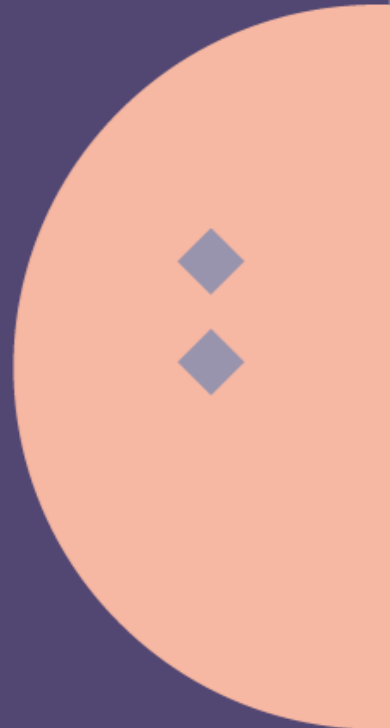




GREEN YOUTH INNOVATION LAB

Youth Green Innovation Lab Day 1



Day 1: Understand the Climate Challenge

UK time	Vietnam time	Activity and participation
09:00–09:15	15:00–15:15	Live hybrid: Welcome and introduction to the Innovation Challenge
09:15–11:00	15:15–17:00	Live hybrid: SME Climate Innovation Panel
11:00–11:15	17:00–17:15	Break
11:15–11:30	17:15–17:30	Live hybrid: Introduction to the five climate challenges
11:30–12:15	17:30–18:15	Live group work: Define the problem, target users and causes
12:15–12:30	18:15–18:30	Live group work: Groups share initial problem statements and receive instructions
12:30–13:30	—	UK lunch / Vietnamese participants leave the live session
13:30–14:30	Flexible offline time	*Guest Speaker Dr Tri Tray, Cantho University, Vietnam) Research the problem and develop a stakeholder map
14:30–15:15	Flexible offline time	Develop a focused “How might we?” question
15:15–15:30	—	UK break
15:30–16:15	Flexible offline time	Generate and compare initial business-solution ideas
16:15–16:30	Before Day 2	Record the group’s progress and prepare for Day 2

Important delivery note

- UK morning: UK and Vietnamese participants attend the live hybrid sessions.
- UK afternoon: UK groups continue working together on site.
- Vietnamese groups: Complete the same group activities offline, at a convenient local time.
- Both UK and Vietnamese groups must produce the same daily outputs.



Youth Green Innovation Challenge

Your task

Working in a group of four, you will design an innovative business solution to address one climate challenge.

Your solution may be:

- a new product or service;
- a digital platform or application;
- a social enterprise;
- a new business model;
- a community-based initiative; or
- an improvement to an existing business practice.

You are not expected to solve the entire global problem.

You should identify a specific part of the challenge, select a clear target user or customer and develop a practical solution that could be tested within 12 months.

Five green innovation challenges

Challenge 1: Creating a circular economy

Many products and materials are used briefly and then discarded, even though they could be reused, repaired, shared, recycled or transformed into something valuable.

Your challenge:

How might we reduce waste and keep products, materials and resources in use for longer?

Your team should identify a specific waste or resource problem affecting a particular group, business, industry or community. This could involve food, clothing, plastics, packaging, electronics, construction materials or other resources.

Five green innovation challenges

Challenge 2: Building sustainable food and natural resource systems

Food production and consumption depend on land, water, energy and healthy natural environments. However, current systems can contribute to waste, pollution, biodiversity loss and unequal access to essential resources.

Your challenge:

How might we make the way we produce, distribute or consume food and natural resources more sustainable?

Your team could explore agriculture, water, food access, local production, supply chains, biodiversity or responsible consumption. You should select one specific problem and identify who is most affected by it.

Five green innovation challenges

Challenge 3: Supporting the transition to clean energy and low-carbon business

Businesses and communities need to reduce their energy use and carbon emissions, but they may face barriers such as cost, limited knowledge, unsuitable technology or lack of infrastructure.

Your challenge:

How might we help businesses or communities move towards cleaner energy and lower-carbon ways of working?

Your team could focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy, carbon reduction, green technology, low-carbon production or support for SMEs. Begin by identifying a specific user group and the main barrier it faces.

Five green innovation challenges

Challenge 4: Creating climate-resilient and nature-positive communities

Climate change is increasing the risks associated with flooding, extreme heat, storms, drought and environmental degradation. These risks do not affect every community or business equally.

Your challenge:

How might we help communities, businesses or natural environments prepare for and adapt to climate change?

Your team could focus on climate preparedness, community support, business continuity, nature-based solutions, biodiversity, green spaces or protection for vulnerable groups. Select a particular place, community or type of business as your focus.



Five green innovation challenges

Challenge 5: Designing sustainable places, transport and lifestyles

The places where people live, work and travel strongly influence energy use, pollution, health and quality of life. Greener choices are not always affordable, accessible, safe or convenient.

Your challenge:

How might we make everyday places, travel or lifestyles more sustainable and inclusive?

Your team could explore transport, local delivery, housing, buildings, tourism, campuses, public spaces or sustainable consumer behaviour. Identify a specific problem experienced by a clearly defined group.

Core task for every team

Within your assigned theme:

1. Identify a specific environmental problem.
2. Decide who experiences the problem and where it occurs.
3. Investigate why the problem has not already been solved.
4. Develop a green start-up idea that creates environmental value.

Explain how the solution could also create social and economic value.



Define the problem, target users and causes

Review the assigned climate challenge

Discuss:

What is happening?

Where and when does it occur?

Why is it important?

Identify possible problems

Each member writes down one specific problem connected to the challenge. The group then combines similar suggestions and selects one problem to explore.

Define the target

Identify:

Primary users: people who experience the problem directly;

Customers: people or organisations that may pay for the solution;

Beneficiaries: others who may benefit from it.

Describe the primary user as specifically as possible, including their location, circumstances, behaviours and needs.

Explore the causes

Use the **Five Whys** technique:

Why does this problem occur?

Why does that cause exist?

Continue asking “Why?” until the group identifies underlying causes rather than only visible symptoms.



Define the problem, target users and causes

Organise the causes under four areas:

Cause area	Examples
Behavioural	Habits, awareness or motivation
Economic	Cost, affordability or incentives
Systemic	Infrastructure, regulation or access
Technological	Inadequate or inaccessible technology

Define the problem, target users and causes

Distinguish causes from consequences
Create a simple problem tree:

Underlying causes	Core problem	Consequences
Why it happens	What users experience	What happens as a result

Write the initial problem statement

[Target users] experience [specific problem] in [context or location] because of [main causes]. This results in [environmental, social or economic consequences].

Check and agree

Confirm that the statement:
describes one specific problem;
identifies a clear target group;
addresses causes, not only symptoms;
does not introduce a solution prematurely;
can be investigated within the Innovation Lab.



Research the problem and develop a stakeholder map

Review the challenge

What is the environmental problem?

Who experiences it?

Where and when does it occur?

Conduct rapid research

Find two or three credible sources.

Record evidence about:

scale of the problem;

environmental and social consequences;

underlying causes;

existing solutions and their limitations.

Separate evidence from assumptions.

Define the target user

Who is most affected?

What do they currently do?

What difficulties or unmet needs do they experience?

Identify stakeholders

Consider:

target users and communities;

customers and beneficiaries;

businesses and suppliers;

government and regulators;

universities, schools and NGOs;

funders and investors;

potential partners;

groups that might resist or obstruct the solution.



Research the problem and develop a stakeholder map

Create the stakeholder map

	Low influence	High influence
Highly affected/interested	Involve and consult	Collaborate closely
Less affected/interested	Keep informed	Engage and manage

Summarise the findings

[Target group] experiences [specific problem] because [main causes], resulting in [important consequences]. Existing solutions are insufficient because [identified gap].

Develop a focused “How might we?” question

Review the evidence

Confirm the target user, main need and underlying cause.

Identify the opportunity

Ask:

What needs to change?

Which part of the problem can our team realistically address?

What important stakeholder needs must be considered?

Draft three questions

Use this structure:

How might we help [specific target group] to [desired change] by addressing [key barrier], while achieving [environmental or social benefit]?

Check each question

A strong question should be:

focused on a defined group;

based on evidence;

open to several solutions;

ambitious but achievable;

relevant to environmental sustainability;

inclusive and ethically appropriate.

Select and refine one

Avoid questions that are too broad, contain a predetermined solution or can be answered “yes” or “no.”

Too broad:

How might we stop food waste?

More focused:

How might we help small cafés reduce avoidable food waste in a way that is affordable, easy for staff to adopt and capable of generating business value?



Generate and compare initial business-solution ideas

Individual idea generation

Each person independently writes at least three possible solutions. Encourage different types of ideas, such as:

- a product;
- a service;
- a digital solution;
- an education or behaviour-change programme;
- a circular business model;
- a partnership or community initiative.

Share ideas without criticism

Each member briefly presents their ideas.

Combine and improve ideas

Group similar ideas and combine complementary elements. Aim to retain three or four distinct options.

Generate and compare initial business-solution ideas

Compare the options

Score each idea from **1 (low)** to **5 (high)**.

Criterion	Question
User desirability	Does it address a genuine user need?
Environmental impact	Could it create a meaningful environmental benefit?
Feasibility	Can it be developed with available skills and resources?
Financial viability	Could it generate income or sustain its operation?
Inclusiveness	Is it accessible and beneficial to different groups?
Distinctiveness	Is it better or meaningfully different from existing solutions?

Select the strongest idea

Use the scores to guide discussion rather than automatically accepting the highest total.

Prepare an initial solution statement

Our solution is [product/service] for [target users]. It helps them [benefit] by [how it works]. Unlike existing alternatives, it [distinctive value]. It creates environmental value by [impact].

CLOSE

End of Day 1



Final reflection

You do not need the right answer today—progress comes from understanding the problem, challenging assumptions and learning what to explore next.