

New initiative for young people to explore how Irish language & traditions can inspire environmental innovations **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/113299>)**



The CONNECT Centre's Academy of the Near Future (<https://nearfuture.ie/>), in partnership with Gael Linn's Gaelbhreach (<https://gaelbhreach.ie/en/home/>) team, has launched a new Irish-language educational programme for young people. The initiative – ‘Treoraigh do Thodhchaí’ (<https://nearfuture.ie/programmes/treoraigh-do-thodchai/treoraigh-do-thodchai-2/about-the-programme>)’ – will feature hands-on workshops addressing environmental challenges and explore how the Irish language and traditions can inspire creative, sustainable, and technological solutions for the future.

Young people aged 15-17 are being invited to apply for the week-long programme, which will run from Monday, 31st March to Friday, 4th April 2025. Over the course of the programme the selected students will be encouraged to reflect on the role of the Irish language in their own lives and explore its significance in the wider context of environmental sustainability.

The programme will be hosted at Stiúideo Cuan, An Spidéal, Co. na Gaillimhe. It is the first Irish-language medium version of the 'Design Your Future City' programme, which has been delivered by Academy of the Near Future annually in Dublin since 2022.

Commenting on the launch, **Dr Mairead Hurley, Assistant Professor in Science & Society Education, Trinity College Dublin**, said: “We are excited to build on our innovative, youth-led approach to sustainability and citizenship education by delivering it through the Irish language for the first time. This step celebrates the creativity and transdisciplinary potential the Irish language brings to global citizenship education.

“This programme offers students a fantastic opportunity to build confidence, collaboration, and problem-solving skills, while exploring the role of Irish language and culture in shaping a sustainable future. It will also draw on the expertise of Trinity School of Education’s Critical Change Lab programme, an EU project exploring creative educational approaches to promote active citizenship and youth activism.”

Also commenting, **Edel Ní Bhraonáin, Bainisteoir Gaelbhreach, Gael Linn** said: “Gael Linn is thrilled to collaborate on ‘Treoraigh do Thodhchaí’, creating opportunities for young people to lead and shape a brighter future. Through our Gaelbhreach initiative, we have seen the incredible creativity and passion young people bring when given the chance to lead and shape their own future. This project is an exciting opportunity to amplify the student voice, combining their innovative ideas with the power of our language and culture to create a brighter, more sustainable tomorrow.”

Support from the Department of Education

The programme is being run with support from the Department of Education’s ‘Education for Sustainable Development to 2030 Fund’. Commenting on the initiative, **Minister for Education, Norma Foley TD** said: “I am delighted to see ‘Treoraigh do Thodhchaí’ open for applications, supported by the Education for Sustainable Development to 2030 Fund. I am particularly pleased to see it being rolled out for the first time in the Gaeltacht community in Galway, with plans to extend it to the Gaeltacht community in Kerry in the coming months. This will encourage students to get involved in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and to be excited about the role they can play in tackling climate issues in their community using technology.”

Highlights from the programme

Over the course of the week, the selected students will have the opportunity to:

- Engage in interactive workshops that integrate Irish language and cultural elements with sustainability and technology.
- Collaborate with experts through Irish to develop a deeper understanding of Irish language and traditions.
- Experiment with citizen science to address the environmental challenges facing modern cities, all through the lens of Irish culture.
- Meet STEM, design, and innovation experts who will guide students in bringing their ideas to life with a sustainability focus

Application Details

The programme is open to students aged 15-17. Applicants must commit to attending all sessions of the week-long course. Workshops will be conducted in Irish, and the main requirement is an enthusiasm for technology, sustainability, and Irish culture. With only **20 places available**, interested students are encouraged to apply early to avoid missing out.

To apply, applicants must answer a few short questions about themselves, describe an environmental challenge in their area, and propose a technology-driven solution. **The deadline for applications is 5pm on Monday, 24th February 2025.**

For further information and the application process, visit <https://nearfuture.ie/programmes/treoraigh-do-thodchai> (<https://nearfuture.ie/programmes/treoraigh-do-thodchai>)



Region

Co na Gaillimhe / Co Galway

[Further information and the application process \(https://nearfuture.ie/programmes/treoraigh-do-thodchai\)](https://nearfuture.ie/programmes/treoraigh-do-thodchai)

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