

**Rotary** **YOUNG**  
**ENVIRONMENTALIST**  
**COMPETITION**



**INFORMATION PACK**

**2026-27**



[ROTARYGBI.ORG](https://rotarygbi.org)

**Rotary**  
Great Britain & Ireland 

# Information Pack for 2026-27

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# Information Pack for 2026-27

## THEME: – ‘Friendship’

The ‘Friendship’ theme can be interpreted as broadly as the Young Environmentalist/s wish and does not need to conform to a dictionary definition.

### Introduction

The Rotary Young Environmentalist Competition is organised and promoted by Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland (Rotary GB&I).

There are three stages to the competition and some stages may have more than one round to select those progressing to the next stage.

### Aims and Objectives

The competition aims to encourage young people to:

- interact with the environment
- address serious environmental issues
- develop and explore solutions to the issues
- explore, investigate, research and undertake an environmental sustainability project

### Who can take part?

The competition is open to all young people living within a Rotary Great Britain and Ireland district, including Gibraltar, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, provided they fall within in the age groups shown below. They may be an individual or a group of up to 4 participants. They may choose to enter directly themselves or be from any group or community organisation including schools and colleges, home educated, other young peoples’ community organisations, for example, community RotaKids, or Interact, Scout Groups, Girl Guides etc.

Age groups (based on age as of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026):

Junior	Up to and including 10 years old
Intermediate	11 to 13 years old
Senior	14 to 17 years old

There are two categories in the competition in each age group

- Individual entry
- Group entries (maximum of four participants)

Note: Because the qualifying age is based on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026, some entrants may have birthdays that would otherwise place them in a different age group at the actual date of the competition. For example, a young person who is 17 on 31<sup>st</sup> August but turns 18 on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2026 is still eligible to enter as a Senior or a 10-year-old on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026 with their birthday on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026 is still eligible to enter the Junior category. **Entrants must include their age on the entry form.**

### How to Enter

To enter a local heat, contact your local Rotary club. You can find one using the club finder at the top left-hand corner of the homepage of the Rotary GB&I website [www.rotarygbi.org](http://www.rotarygbi.org). If you’re unable to reach a local club or if you have any questions, please email the Rotary GB&I Competitions Team at [competitions@rotarygbi.org](mailto:competitions@rotarygbi.org).

Entrants should submit their entry through their group or organisation or individually. A completed entry form must be submitted with the entry to the relevant stage organiser by the specified deadline. In the case of a group (up to 4 participants) an entry form needs to be submitted for each member of the group.

Refer to the “Presentation” section in the Competition Guidelines below to see how the project can be submitted.

**Important:** Entrants may participate in a competition organised by a Rotary club outside their geographical area but may enter only one local heat.

## The Three Stages of the Competition

**Please note: some stages may involve more than one round to select those progressing to the next stage.**

### Local Heats

These are organised by local Rotary clubs, each of which sets its own deadline for entries. This deadline must allow enough time for winning entries from the Local Heat/s to be submitted, along with the correctly completed entry form and any necessary consent form/s, to the Rotary district for the District Final.

Entries received after the deadline set for the Local Heat/s in your area will not be accepted.

### District Finals

The winning entries from the Local Heats in each category for each age group are entered into the Rotary district final and must be accompanied by the correctly completed entry form/s and any necessary consent form/s. Each District sets its own deadline to ensure sufficient time for district winners to be submitted electronically for the National Final.

Local Heat/s winners submitted after the District deadline will not be accepted.

### National Final

The winners in each category for each age group at the District level are entered into the National Final. The National Final is organised by Rotary GB&I. Entries must be submitted electronically to [cgs@rotarygbi.org](mailto:cds@rotarygbi.org) by the deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2027, and each must be accompanied by the correctly completed entry form/s and any necessary consent form/s.

District winners submitted after the National Final deadline will not be accepted.

## Competition Guidelines

### Task

Entrants are invited to undertake an environmental sustainability project based on the theme “**Friendship**”. Projects should demonstrate actions taken or aim to inspire others to take action on an environmental issue related to the theme.

Entrants should

- select a topic within the theme and research and explore the current scale and impact of the issues associated with it
- work individually or in a group of no more than four young people
- develop their own ideas, propose solutions and take ownership of the project
- raise awareness of their chosen issue/s and/or take action or inspire others to do so in response to those issues
- if a project includes **photographic or video images of people under 18 or adults at risk, a signed consent form/s must accompany the entry.**

### Projects

Projects can be approached from different angles and perspectives and might include one or more topics such as those listed below. These examples are just ideas, entrants are encouraged to be creative and innovative in their interpretation of the theme.

Senior entrants are particularly encouraged to explore less commonly reported topics or present new concepts.

**Nature Art Creations** - use leaves, stones, twigs, and other natural materials to design mandalas, collages, or sculptures that express joy in nature (see also Rotary Young Artist).

**Poetry or Storytelling Inspired by Nature** - Write and share original poems or short stories that reflect personal happiness and emotional connections to the natural world (see also Rotary Young Writer).

**Nature Sound Music or Dance** - Compose music or dance art using recordings of birdsong, wind, water, and other natural sounds.

**Recycled Art from Waste** - Collect waste materials and transform them into beautiful or thought-provoking works of art that celebrate nature or carry a sustainability message (see also Rotary Young Artist).

**Happy Habitats for Small Creatures** - Build bug hotels, birdhouses, butterfly stations, or frog shelters to support local biodiversity and provide animals with a safe home.

**Plastic Reimagined** - Explore creative, practical, or artistic ways to reuse and repurpose plastic waste in your community.

**Eco Games & DIY Toys** - Design and build eco-friendly games or toys using natural or recycled materials (e.g. leaf boats, nature bingo, stick-and-stone puzzles).

**Nature Festival or Parade** - Host a community event (art wall, costume parade, mini-festival) that celebrates the beauty and joy of the natural world.

**Litter Clean-Up & Impact Video** - Conduct a clean-up (in a park, school, or beach) and present your results in a video or visual format showing impact and reflection.

**Waste Audit & Mapping** - Survey and map litter hotspots in your community using photos and/or data visualisations to raise awareness.

**Fast Fashion Fix Project** - Investigate the impact of fast fashion locally and propose solutions.

## Outcomes

Young people should

- demonstrate meaningful engagement with an environmental issue
- present a well-researched and balanced viewpoint that shows an understanding of the problem
- showcase a solution or propose an innovative idea to address the issue.

## Presentation

Projects must **be submitted electronically** and may be in any format. An explanation of how the work links to the theme “*Friendship*” must be included.

**Examples of presentation formats** include:

- Written and illustrated submissions (no more than 1000 words long)
- Photographic or artistic presentations
- Audio or video reports (because of space limitations for email, it is likely to be preferable to provide a YouTube Link for videos and related presentations)
- A tangible product such as an App for smartphone
- Interactive conversations or creative movement.

Additional presentation guidelines

- PowerPoint presentations: maximum of 10 slides
- Posters: A3 or A4 size, colour or black and white, with images and text
- Audio or video: maximum 5 minutes for individuals or 10 minutes for groups
- Group entries: the contribution of each team member must be clearly stated.

Please note:

- If the project includes **photographic or video images of people under 18 years of age or adults at risk, a signed consent form/s must accompany the entry**
- For the National Final the project must be submitted digitally and be at least 1500 pixel in size on the longest length and the entry and supporting information sent electronically **MUST NOT EXCEED 15Mb** per email sent. This is likely to apply to Videos, and a suggested method for submission is to generate a YouTube Video and forward the link in a covering email. An alternative option would be to send the project, entry form/s and consent form/s across as several emails clearly identifiable as part of one submission.

## Originality, Use of Artificial Intelligence, Plagiarism or Close Copying

Entries must be entirely the competitor's own original work and must match the theme of the competition. Plagiarised, copied, traced, close-copied, or AI-generated work is not permitted in any Rotary Youth Competition.

It is important that we protect the work of creative individuals. While we are all inspired by the work of others, competitors must not use generative artificial intelligence (AI), or any app, tool or platform that creates, rewrites, edits, enhances or generates any part of the submission. The entry must be created solely by the competitor.

For the purposes of these competitions, "close copying" means that, to a reasonable person, the entry appears remarkably similar in significant respects to work created elsewhere.

Rotary reserves the right to investigate any entry where plagiarism, close copying or use of AI is suspected, and to disqualify any entry found to be in breach of this rule.

## Judges

The judges will be people with appropriate skills appointed by the organisers for the Local Heats and District Finals accordingly.

At the National level the judges will be appointed by Rotary GB&I and will not be Rotarians.

## Judging Criteria

### Evidence, Research and Effectiveness

The project must demonstrate that exploration and some research has been undertaken. Its aims must clearly be stated, and outcomes must be capable of assessment and demonstrate sustainability. It is important that the Environmental Project chosen focuses on the theme set for 2026–27 – i.e. Friendship and the link to it must be included.

Particular Credit will be given to those projects which involve the participants engaging pro-actively in projects.

### Innovation and Adaptability

New concepts and ideas are valuable and will be recognised and the project should be capable of replication by others based on the information provided.

### Beneficiaries and what lessons have been learnt

What would the benefit of the project be to the community or society as a whole? Is it likely to be cost effective and what problems, if any, have been encountered? How could such a project be improved in future?

### Presentation

How much information has been given? Is it imaginative and eye-catching? What is the impact? Is it easy to follow and understand? What is the quality of the content?

### Evidence of Teamwork

If undertaken in a group (up to 4 young people), what is the evidence of individual team members' participation?

### Recognition

At all stages of the competition, competitors will receive a certificate of participation.

### Rotary Youth Competitions and other opportunities for young people

Take a look at <https://www.rotarygbi.org/projects/young-people/> to explore

- other Rotary Youth Competitions: Artist, Chef, Musician, Photographer, Writer, Youth Speaks and Youth Speaks A Debate
- and
- Rotary Young Citizen Awards, Rotary Young Citizen Environmentalist Award, Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award and Rotary Young Citizen Sporting Hero Award

You may wish to enter more than one competition or Award.

You'll also find information about

- Rotary Technology Tournaments which are organised in many areas
- Rotary programmes including RotaKids, Interact, and Developing Future Leaders
- Rotary Youth Exchange and more

There may be additional opportunities available locally - connect with Rotarians in your area to find out what's happening near you.

### Working with Children

Rotary GB&I has adopted this statement of policy in working with children, vulnerable adults and those with disability:

The needs and rights of the child, the elderly, the vulnerable and those with disability take priority. It is the duty of every Rotarian to safeguard to the best of their ability, the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect of all children, the elderly, persons with disability or otherwise vulnerable persons with whom they come into contact during their Rotarian duties.

Click here to see the [Rotary GB&I Safeguarding Policy](#)

## Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland Youth Competitions consent form for use of images of young people under 18 years or adults at risk

Rotary GB&I Youth Competitions Entrant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The young person named above is submitting an entry for the Rotary GB&I Youth Competitions 2026/27 and is requesting permission to use your image/s as part of their submission. This may mean that your image could be used by Rotary GB&I for the following purposes:

1. Rotary social media platforms
2. Rotary websites
3. Media coverage such as newspapers or other publications

### Image Retention

Once shared, your image may continue to appear elsewhere depending on how it was used e.g. in newspaper articles, website, posters, etc. If shared with third parties their privacy policies will apply.

If you believe the image is being used inappropriately, please inform the sponsoring Rotary Club immediately.

### Groups

A separate form must be completed for each young person or adult at risk whose image is being used.

### Parent/Guardian/Carer Consent Statement

I give consent for the image of the person named below to be used by the Entrant for the purposes outlined above

Print FIRST name of child or adult at risk:

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian/Carer Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name of person signing:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child or adult at risk:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please attach this form to the competition submission that includes the image/s**

*\*This form is available as a separate document*