

UNESCO UK ASPnet Arts and Culture for Peace Initiative

2026 Seeds of Hope for a Better Future Competition

Competition Rules and Guidelines

Entry Criteria and General Administration

1. The Competition is **free**. The Competition is **open to all participating countries** with UNESCO ASPnet National Coordinators.
2. The Competition is for UNESCO ASPnet schools, but **other schools are also invited** to join and can do so by working with an ASPnet school, or by joining UNESCO ASPnet through, and at the discretion of, their National Coordinator.
3. Schools may enter **individually** or as a **group** with other schools.
4. Students of **all ages** may participate. This includes: primary, secondary, tertiary and any collaborative working between these sectors.
5. All entries must complete the **Competition Entry Form**. There must be one designated **point of contact/project leader** for each application.
6. Schools decide their own **schedule** and whether this is part of the regular curriculum or not.
7. Entries must reach the relevant UNESCO ASPnet National Coordinator in the participating country no later than **14 July 2026**.
8. Each ASPnet National Coordinator is responsible for checking eligibility and forwarding entries from their country onto the ASPnet UK National Coordinator who will send all entries to our UNESCO UK ASPnet Arts and Culture Judges.
9. To enable the sharing of artistic outcomes internationally each project leader **must submit**:
 - **Short Project Overview** of no more than 50 words
 - **Project Description** of the project which **must be between 200 and 400 words**
 - **A maximum** number of 10 artistically good quality photos
 - If you have made a video you must first upload it to a local site (school or community project, for example), and then send a link only to your ASPnet National Coordinator. **Do not send video files directly to your ASPnet National Coordinator.**

10. If you would like to discuss participating in the Competition please **contact your ASPnet National Coordinator in the first instance.**
11. The UNESCO UK ASPnet National Coordinator is the lead Coordinator for the Competition. Her details are as follows:
Ms Ann BEATTY, ASPnet National Coordinator.
Chief Executive, The Steve Sinnott Foundation,
Warner Brothers Studios, Lord Lieutenants Charity Hub, Suite 23, Building,
6 Hercules Way, Watford WD25 7GS, United Kingdom.
Email: unescoaspnet@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk
12. Official logos, event branding and social media guidelines to support Competition participants will be made available upon request.

Competition Brief

13. It is important for participating schools to understand the **ASPnet Action Areas**, the need for peace and sustainability, and the urgency of the climate change challenges globally. **This Competition is about living more peacefully and sustainably with nature, ourselves and our planet.**
14. The Competition aims to inspire young people to develop their understanding of the importance and impact of these issues to the wider community and to use this to **create high quality, artistically diverse and accessible artworks in one of the four categories** listed below.
15. Projects can be amalgamated with existing local community projects if they reflect the Competition ethos and criteria; of being **children-led**, demonstrate the **unique power of art, creativity and imagination, raise awareness of sustainability and climate change, benefit local communities** and try to **leave a positive legacy**.
16. The goal of these artworks is for young people to create the most interesting and imaginative legacy projects by **engaging with local/global artists** wherever possible.
17. Young people are also encouraged to connect their stories and artworks to **local communities** by creating or working with existing allotments, gardens or other open spaces to make a Seeds of Hope legacy space.
18. **Recording and sharing** the engagement and output of these activities is not only a way to provide a good record of the students' and teachers' efforts for themselves and their local communities but will also be the main means of sharing the outcomes with others and ASPnet members internationally.

Judging Criteria and Prizes

19. The Panel of Judges will evaluate the artworks and select the overall winners. The Judges' decisions are final.

20. Judges will score each project out of a maximum of 100 points, and include consideration of the short project overview and project description provided with each project. Points will be allocated based on the following criteria:
- a. Is the project **children-led**? (max. 30 points)
 - b. Does the project demonstrate the **unique power of art, creativity and the imagination**? (max. 25 points)
 - c. Does the project raise **awareness of sustainability and climate change**? (max. 20 points)
 - d. Does the project **benefit local communities**? (max. 15 points)
 - e. Will the project have a **legacy**? (max. 10 points)
21. A prize pot totaling £5000 will be divided, at the judges' discretion, among the best projects, taking account of the local environmental and economic circumstances, selected by the panel of judges in each of the following four categories:
1. **Art works**, such as paintings, drawings, sculptures, which can be individual, a gallery exhibition, or a community art work
 2. **Illustrated poems/short stories** for local poetry/story festivals, or circulated through print media, e.g. books/flip books, posters, leaflets or other graphic formats
 3. **Digital illustrations** using photography/film/animation shown on social and other public media formats or exhibitions
 4. **Performance and/or installation art**, such as a play/opera/musical theatre/dance/installation art.

Good luck everyone!

Frequently Asked Questions

How long will this project take?

The time needed to work on this activity could be as little as one class session, or it could be undertaken over a period, depending on the length of time teachers wish to give to the research element and how this may be connected to their curriculum, or a local community initiative.

What is a legacy project?

Creating legacy projects, spaces or gardens are a reflection of the benefits to others that can last over a long period.

Connecting young people artistically with existing projects that may already be establishing a foundation for such work can also give greater national and international relevance to such efforts and add value.

We are encouraging young people to think about the ASPnet Action Areas in relation to local needs. For example, it might be possible to:

- a. Artistically add value to an existing local development project
- b. Transform an existing space, garden or park area to inject new artistic and cultural life and meaning
- c. Imaginatively and creatively help to re-generate wasteland to create a space(s) for the well-being of the public
- d. Link with other community development initiatives, such as local and national tree-planting or climate change projects and use young people's artistic abilities to communicate the need for such initiatives.

How will Seeds of Hope benefit local communities?

The primary audience for the Competition is local communities. Ultimately, we hope that by sharing internationally what has been learned, this will demonstrate our global interconnectivity and share benefits with other communities, humanity and our planet.

In essence young people are our primary Seeds of Hope. Seeds of Hope can also refer more literally to raising awareness of the value of seeds to support a bio-diverse future by providing food security, biodiversity, sustainable development and/or other benefits for local communities and the planet.

How can artists and arts organisations contribute?

A key objective is for young people to create inspiring stories and artworks in collaboration with local community partners, local/global artists, in order to enhance and benefit the lives of others using art and culture to communicate the knowledge young people have gathered about the value and importance of seeds to our existence.

Many arts organisations already work with young people sharing their expertise and creating new work together with young people. It is hoped that artists and arts organisations could incorporate the aims of this Competition project into their work to help inspire and work with young people to produce high quality artworks for local communities and that these high quality outcomes can be shared internationally. This would help demonstrate our global unity and heighten peoples' awareness, as a matter of urgency, of the benefits of working together towards creating a more bio-diverse future.

Can schools from other countries join?

Although UK-initiated, the Seeds of Hope Competition aims to encourage as many schools as possible from other countries to participate. Schools in other countries should contact their own UNESCO ASPnet National Coordinator in the first instance to discuss their interest. Or they can also contact the UK Coordinator who works closely with the National Coordinators of other countries.

Can schools join at any time?

Schools can join at any time taking note of the entry deadline.