

Fridays For Future Climate Education TES - Youth Declaration Proposal

These recommendations are made on behalf of Fridays For Future Climate Education.

Fridays for Future Climate Education is a project representing a group of activists from many different countries. It is a part of the worldwide movement Fridays for Future. By cooperating with climate specialists and advisors we are working on achieving one specific goal: to implement general climate education at all levels of education. Without education we cannot expect any change in how the public (underage and adult) perceives the critical importance of climate transition. Without sharing an understanding of the issues that the modern world faces, we will not be able to face them together.

Our Vision of Climate Education is a comprehensive curriculum rooted in sustainability and fostering humanity's connection to nature. It aims to provide a holistic understanding of the ongoing climate and biodiversity crisis and its underlying causes and consequences, facilitate the development of sustainable innovations and solutions and empower students to actively engage in creating a just, sustainable society.

Proposal 1: Climate education must be available for everyone, regardless of their ethnicity, age, sex, gender and social status and must be provided at every level of education.

The ongoing climate and biodiversity crisis knows no borders, affects current and future generations, and its mitigation requires global cooperation. Only by ensuring access to climate education to all will allow nations to be able to share a common understanding of the crisis and implement effective, long-lasting global solutions. There is a need for green finance set aside for climate education, capacity building (skill development, mentorship) research and innovation.

Proposal 2: Climate education must be integrated into the core values of every curriculum and thus be taught in every subject and discipline. Students must learn about the scientific, social and ethical aspects of the climate crisis.

The ongoing climate and biodiversity crisis is a multifaceted scientific, social and ethical issue and its mitigation requires a holistic understanding of its causes and consequences. Students must be equipped with the ability to draw connections between the different facets of the crisis and exercise critical thinking through engaging, student-centered learning across all disciplines. The curriculums of all subjects should provide examples of the current impact the climate crisis has on economies and people, especially from MAPA countries (Most Affected People & Areas).

Proposal 3: Educational institutions must provide the tools and support to help students and teachers cope with climate anxiety and mental health issues.

Climate anxiety and mental health issues put people at risk of becoming unfit to study or work, negatively impacting their quality of life and sense of agency and incurring significant costs to society. Fostering students' and teachers' mental health is key to ensuring their wellbeing and ability to be contributing members of society.

Proposal 4: All teachers must be trained in climate education and be provided with lesson schemes and teaching materials.

Without effective, well trained teachers, students will be ill-prepared to actively contribute to society and address the ongoing climate and biodiversity crisis. Teachers must be given the knowledge and tools necessary to integrate climate education into their respective subjects and disciplines in the context of their educational curricula through compulsory teacher training and ongoing professional development.

Proposal 5: Educational institutions must take initiative in developing responsibility for nature and society as well as engage students to practice active citizenship.

In this time of unprecedented ecological and social crises, it is vital for students to be engaged in societal issues from as early on as possible and develop a deep respect and responsibility for nature and a just society. As seen with the COVID-19 pandemic, widespread disregard for others has cost thousands of lives and millions of euros. Schools play a significant role in shaping their students', and therefore all of society's values and lifestyle choices. The introduction of project-based climate education is crucial to ensure the societal change that is necessary to fight the climate emergency.

Proposal 6: Educational institutions must follow the rules of sustainability and be innovators in this field, therefore all schools must be climate neutral by 2030 and all newly built schools must be emissions-free.

If educational institutions are to teach the foundations in terms of knowledge and skills related to the ongoing climate and biodiversity crisis, it follows that they should lead by example and be a driving force of innovation in the fight against it. By building educational facilities with sustainability in mind from the start, significant future costs can be avoided as society is forced to increasingly adapt to the crisis.

Proposal 7: There should be clear financial resources and budgets for the implementation of the Climate Literacy and inclusion that addresses different climate needs. All educational institutions must include climate change related courses in their programs.

Educational institutions play a key role in shaping the interests of students and the future job market. Every student interested in a career related to fighting the climate crisis should be able to acquire the knowledge necessary in their workfield. These opportunities however, cannot be limited to a certain group of people. This is why the Ministries of Education have to provide necessary funding and scholarships to the people who need them. Youth across the globe needs more access to green grants to pursue green initiatives. This will ensure further research into the climate crisis and hopefully accelerate the progress in reaching carbon neutrality.

Proposal 8: Governments, in collaboration with IPCC and Indigenous communities should make climate science and Indigenous knowledge accessible in a digital format, both online and offline, by creating an educational platform which will bring knowledge both to students, teachers and adults, beyond borders.

A universal climate education platform will bring knowledge where there are no schools, or where teachers are not yet trained in teaching climate science. Knowledge that will be the core of the platform must be fully accepted by IPCC and updated by the scientific community, as well as accessible in all state languages.

We sincerely hope for the inclusion of these recommendations not only as part of the general goals in the Transforming Education Summit but also as specific actions. We hope that this will make the voice of the Youth even louder bringing Climate Education one step closer to the world's curriculum.

*Fridays For Future Climate Education Team
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