



Global SDGs and Leadership  
Development Center



**unitar**

United Nations  
Institute for Training and Research

# SDGs Youth Public Policy Innovation Challenge

## Theme: Protecting Cultural Diversity

INFO SHARING SESSION

3rd April, 2026



# Do's & Don'ts

## Do's

- ✓ Join on time and stay engaged
- ✓ Rename yourself "Name\_Country"
- ✓ Keep your camera on (if possible) to encourage interaction
- ✓ Keep questions concise and relevant

## Don'ts

- ✗ Do not interrupt speakers while they are presenting
- ✗ Avoid spamming the chat or sending irrelevant messages
- ✗ Do not interrupt speakers while they are presenting
- ✗ Avoid background noise or distractions



# INFOSHARING SESSION AGENDA

**11:00** Opening & Welcome Remarks

**11:05** Program Overview

**11:20** Application & Proposal Guidelines

**11:30** Application Tips & Tricks

**11:40** Alumni Sharing Session

**11:50** Live Q&A and Discussion

**12:20** Closing Remarks & Key Takeaways

# Renmin University of China

Renmin University of China (RUC) is a comprehensive research university directly administered by the Ministry of Education and jointly supported by the Ministry of Education and the Beijing Municipal Government founded in 1937.

**4** CAMPUS

**28,633** ENROLLED STUDENTS

**408,000** ALUMNI

**89** UNDERGRAD  
MAJORS

**337** MASTER & DOCTORAL  
PROGRAMS





**22** COUNTRIES



**250** EVENT HOSTED



**360** EXPERTS ENGAGED



**24,000** YOUTH ENGAGED



Global SDGs  
and Leadership  
Development Center



**unitar**

United Nations  
Institute for Training and Research

The Global SDGs & Leadership Development Center (GSLDC), also known as the UNITAR-affiliated SDGs Singapore Center, is an international capacity-building platform advancing sustainable development & leadership.

# SDGs Youth Public Policy Innovation Challenge, also known as, Global Development Public Policy Youth Innovation Contest



...is a **global initiative that brings together young innovators to develop policy solutions** addressing global issues. Organized by leading international institutions, the Challenge provides a platform for participants to apply research, innovation, and interdisciplinary thinking to real-world issues aligned with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Through collaboration, mentorship, and global engagement, participants will contribute practical and impactful ideas to support inclusive and sustainable societies.

**384** PROPOSALS

# 2025 SNAPSHOT

**6** CONTINENTS **55** COUNTRIES

**200+** UNIVERSITIES **1,400+** YOUTH





# 7.6% ACCEPTANCE RATE



ROUND 1

60 out of 384 teams



ROUND 2

15 finalist teams + 15 observer teams



FINAL ROUND

29 teams (~100 international participants)

# 2025 OUTPUTS

**150,000** -WORD COMPILED  
PROPOSAL COLLECTION

**20+** MEDIA COVERAGE

Selected proposal were presented at the World Food Forum (FAO, Rome)

Outstanding teams got invited to the Tongzhou-Global Development Forum (Beijing)



# Why Cultural Diversity Matters Now

- 80th anniversary of the entry into force of UNESCO's Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- Culture as the foundation of peace and sustainable development

## The Question for Us:

How do we protect, promote, and harness cultural diversity for a more inclusive and resilient future?



# 2026 Theme – *Protecting Cultural Diversity*

Guided by UNESCO documents, including *the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and Reshaping Cultural Policies: Advancing Creativity for Development*.

<b>Four Areas</b>	<b>Focus</b>
Sustainable Systems of Governance for Culture	Inclusive, participatory, legally sound cultural governance
Flow and Mobility of Cultural Resources	Equitable circulation of cultural goods, services, and artists across borders
Integration of Culture in Sustainable Development Frameworks	Culture's role in education, health, urban planning, climate resilience
Safeguarding Diverse Cultural Expressions and Their Creators	Protecting endangered cultures and supporting cultural professionals

# What Awaits You

Timeline	March	April	June	July
<b>PHASE 1</b>	Research	Proposal Development		
<b>PHASE 2</b>		Expert Evaluation	Proposal Refinement	
<b>PHASE 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Travel to China for the final (with financial support)</li><li>• Present before an international jury (academia, UN, policy experts)</li><li>• Engage in policy dialogues, field research, and cultural immersion</li><li>• Gain visibility and beyond-program opportunities</li></ul>			On-site Program in China

# Offline Highlights of 2025 – Final Defense

- Present your proposal
- Engage in in-depth Q&A discussions
- Exchange ideas with global peers



# Offline Highlights of 2025

- Policy dialogues & youth salons
- Field research & institutional visits
- Cultural immersion across China



# Support Mechanism

- Tiered travel subsidies for finalists
- Coverage of accommodation and meals in China
- Opportunities for UN submission and internships





# What You Will Gain

- Transform ideas into policy thinking
  - Global Peer Network
  - Real-world experience
  - Recognized and shared on global platforms
- Awards (12 categories):
- Team awards (e.g., First Prize, Innovation Award, Best Practical Research)
  - Individual awards (e.g., Best Presenter, Youth Insight Award)



- Featured by international media
- Connected to UN-related platforms
- Participation in global forums
- Continued development opportunities

# Beyond the Program

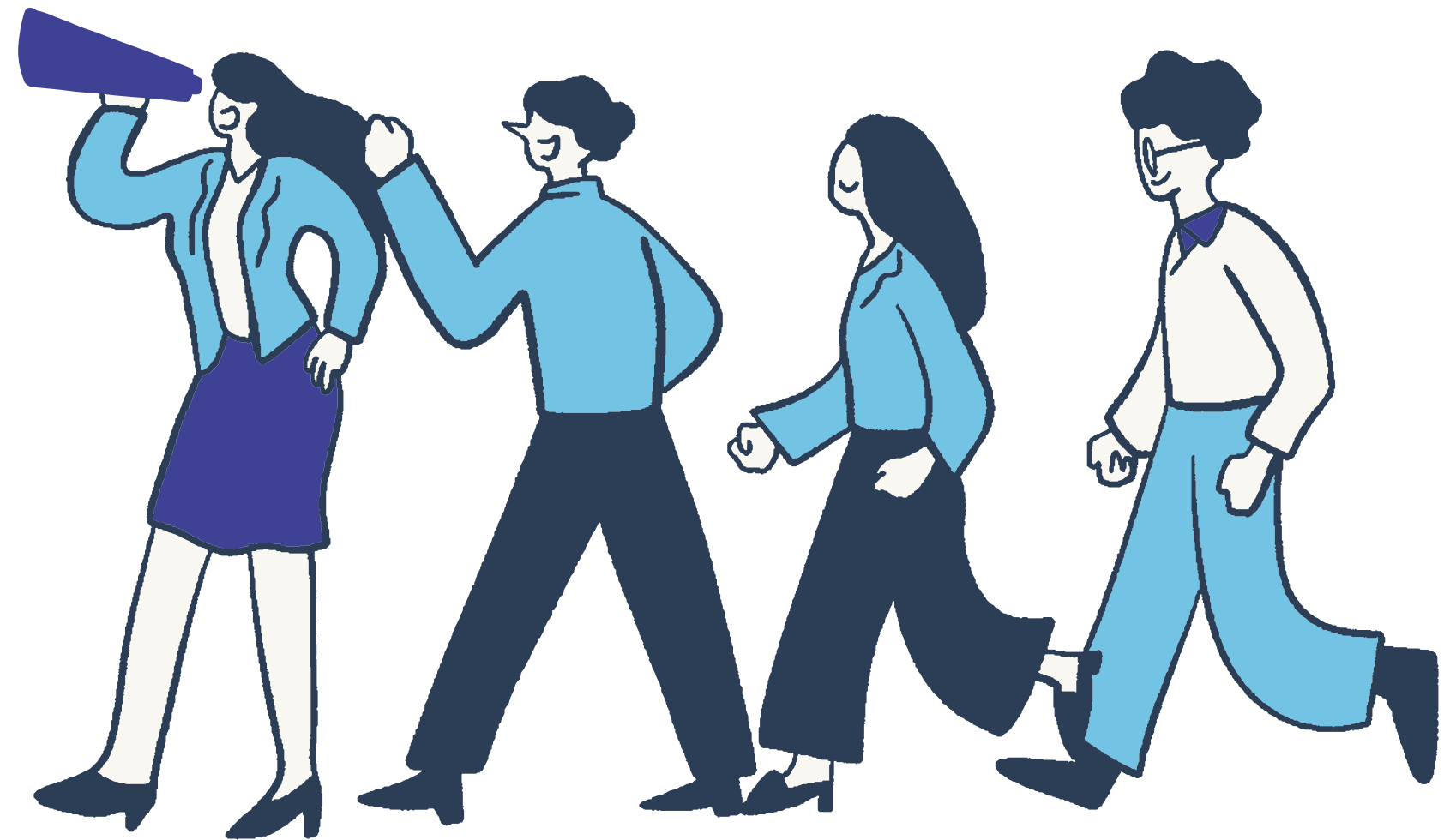


# **Application process & How to write a strong proposal**

**A Step-by-Step Guide**

# Eligibility Criteria

- Participants must be youth aged 18-40.
- Participants may apply individually or in teams of up to five members.
- Cross-disciplinary and cross-year collaboration is encouraged.
- Open to students and young innovators worldwide.
- Teams must submit a policy proposal aligned with the Challenge theme and guidelines.
- Must be able to travel to China if being selected as finalists.



# Proposal Guideline



Document tabs



Background

**Guidelines and Topics**



- Language: English
- Outline: Proposal Overview, Problem Analysis (supported by research findings), Policy Design, and Feasibility Assessment.
- Word count: 7,000 words max.

Scan QR Below  
for more information:





# Key Evaluation Criteria:

## **Scalability**

Shows how your solution can be expanded or applied in other contexts.

## **Innovation**

Presents a new or creative approach to solving the problem.

## **Feasibility**

Demonstrates that your solution is practical and can be implemented.

## **Problem Focus**

Clearly defines one specific issue with a targeted, realistic solution.



# What to avoid? or Common issues

- Misunderstanding what a “policy proposal” is (tendency to write a general academic essay)
- Topics too broad
- Lack of field research or real-case grounding
- Incomplete submission materials



# What We Expect from Your Proposal

## 1. Follow the Basics

- Submit on time
- Use English throughout (proposal & presentation)
- Keep formatting clear and consistent

## 2. Think Like a Policymaker

- Focus on one specific issue
- Provide practical and actionable solutions

## 3. Go Beyond Description

- Go beyond simply describing a case
- Extract transferable insights that can inform similar contexts elsewhere
- Highlight global relevance



# What We Expect from Your Proposal

## 4. Show Policy Impact

- Where can your solution be applied?
- Who can adopt it?
- How can it be scaled or replicated?

## 5. Digital Tools Are Encouraged

- Explore innovative tools that can creatively support your policy design
- Show how tools contribute
- Submit diverse supplementary materials
- Keep it real and ethical

**ALUMNI**

**SHARING SESSION**

**Andre Ferreira, 2025 Alumni**



人大附中



*SDG Youth Public Policy Innovation Challenge 2025*

# ScrapSnacks Soko

From Waste to Wealth — How a Mobile Food Rescue Idea Won at Renmin University

---

Andre Ferreira • April 3, 2026 • Beijing Sharing Session

SDG 2

SDG 13

SDG 10

SDG 1

SDG 12

SDG 5

# The Problem We Set Out to Solve

*Food insecurity and food waste reinforce each other in a vicious cycle — especially across the Global South.*

**733M**

people facing hunger globally

**4.4M**

Kenyans facing food insecurity  
(WFP 2023)

**30–40%**

of edible food lost post-harvest  
in Kenya

**#1 Cause**

Lack of refrigeration drives  
food waste

**ScrapSnacks Soko was our answer: a mobile, solar-powered circular food ecosystem for Kenya.**

# The Idea: ScrapSnacks Soko

*"Soko" means market in Swahili — local, accessible, community-based.*

## What It Does

1. Rescues unsold produce from farms & informal markets
2. Solar-powered dehydration converts it into shelf-stable snacks & emergency food
3. Cold chain + dehydration unit in one mobile vehicle
4. AI monitors freshness, optimizes routes & generates culturally-relevant recipes



### Circular Economy

Zero-waste food system



### Clean Energy

100% solar off-grid

### Women & Youth Led

50%+ women operators

### Scalable Model

Replicable across Africa

# The Competition

*SDGs Youth Public Policy Innovation Challenge 2025*  
*Renmin University of China • Beijing • July 24–28, 2025*

01

## Proposal Submitted

ScrapSnacks Soko concept developed & submitted by April 2025 deadline

02

## Selected as Finalists

Chosen among international teams — fully funded trip to Beijing

03

## Presented at Renmin

Pitched in front of judges, academics, government officials & a packed crowd

04

## Won the Competition

Our circular food ecosystem concept took first place!

Judges included: international academics • government officials • UN & SDG professionals • industry leaders

# Why We Won

*Three things made ScrapSnacks Soko stand out from every other team:*

## End-to-End Circular System

Most proposals addressed one part of the food chain. Ours connected collection → cold chain → solar dehydration → distribution → jobs in one mobile unit. The judges loved the completeness.

## Community Ownership at the Core

We didn't just solve food waste — we gave ownership to local women and youth cooperatives. 50%+ women operators, microgrants, hands-on training. It's community entrepreneurship, not charity.

## Policy-Ready & SDG-Aligned

We anchored ScrapSnacks Soko in Kenya's Constitution (Art. 43), its devolution system, national food policy, and 6 SDGs (1, 2, 5, 10, 12, 13). Judges saw a real policy intervention, not just a cool gadget.

# Beyond the Competition: Beijing & Xi'an

*Winning wasn't just a trophy — it was a fully-funded cultural and academic immersion across China.*

## Beijing

Renmin University — academic exchanges & presentations

The Great Wall of China

Village tours — local community life

## Xi'an

Terracotta Warriors Museum — 6,000+ life-size warriors of the Qin Dynasty

Ancient Xi'an City Wall

Village visits — grassroots rural China

# Key Takeaways

## Big ideas start locally

ScrapSnacks Soko was born from a simple observation — wasted food exists right next to hungry people. The most powerful ideas connect dots others overlook.

## Inclusion wins

The community ownership model — women-led cooperatives, local training, microgrants — was what made judges say 'this can actually work.'

## Policy fluency matters

Tying your solution to real constitutional and policy frameworks signals credibility. It shows you understand systems, not just ideas.

## Youth voices are powerful

This competition proved that young people can compete on the same stage as academics, government officials, and professionals — and win.

**"No food should go to waste  
when people go hungry."**

---

## **ScrapSnacks Soko**

*Thank you — I'm happy to take questions.*

**SDG 1**  
No Poverty

**SDG 2**  
Zero Hunger

**SDG 5**  
Gender Equality

**SDG 10**  
Reduced Inequality

**SDG 12**  
Responsible Consumption

**SDG 13**  
Climate Action



Global SDGs and Leadership  
Development Center



**unitar**

United Nations  
Institute for Training and Research

# Interactive Q&A Session





Global SDGs and Leadership  
Development Center



**unitar**

United Nations  
Institute for Training and Research

# Closing Remarks





Global SDGs and Leadership  
Development Center



**unitar**

United Nations  
Institute for Training and Research

# Group Photo

INFO SHARING SESSION

3rd April, 2026





Global SDGs and Leadership  
Development Center



unitar

United Nations  
Institute for Training and Research

# SDGs Youth Public Policy Innovation Challenge

## Theme: Protecting Cultural Diversity



 Inquiry: [jay.ngoun@ungyldc.org](mailto:jay.ngoun@ungyldc.org)

 [unsdgleadershipcenter.org](http://unsdgleadershipcenter.org)

DEADLINE:

~~10th April~~ **20th April**

**New!**





Global SDGs and Leadership  
Development Center



**unitar**

United Nations  
Institute for Training and Research

# Thank you for joining!

INFO SHARING SESSION

3rd April, 2026





Global SDGs and Leadership  
Development Center



**unitar**

United Nations  
Institute for Training and Research

