



The YOUNG ECONOMIST(S) OF THE YEAR 2026

UCD School of Education and School of Economics in association with Oide, Irish Economics Association (IEA), Central Bank of Ireland, Irish Economic and Evaluation Service (IGEES), The Economics and Social Research Institute (ESRI), Business Studies Teachers' Association of Ireland (BSTAI), Maynooth University, Galway University, Trinity College Dublin (TCD), University College Cork (UCC), University of Limerick, Munster Technological University (MTU), Atlantic Technological University (ATU), South East Technological University (SETU), Technological University of the Shannon (TUS), Ubuntu Network and Laois Education Support Service are delighted to announce that the Young Economist(s) of the Year 2026 has been officially launched.

The Young Economist of the Year is supported by Oide under the auspices of the Teacher Education Section (TES) of the Department of Education and Youth (DEY).

Projects may be on any area of economics. For examples and inspiration, previous winning entries can be viewed [here](#).

ENQUIRIES

✉ Please email all enquiries to info@youngeconomist.ie

CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF ENTRIES

On or before **Friday 13th March 2026 @ 6 p.m.**

SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES

Details of how to submit entries will be available @ youngeconomist.ie in due course.

THE AWARD CELEBRATION

The award ceremony to be held on:
Early May 2026 & Venue TBC

CERTIFICATION & PRIZES

All students who submit an entry will receive a certificate of participation. Gold medal winners will be shortlisted for further awards in relevant categories.

NUMBER OF ENTRIES

- Students can submit individual or group entries - student/groups can submit one entry for consideration.
- The maximum size permitted for a group is 5 students.
- The Maximum number of entries per class is 3.
- **Schools must engage in their own internal filtering process** and all students who participate at school level will receive a certificate of participation.
- Students' submissions will be evaluated by economist and educationalists from a range of universities and economic institutions.

Please note: We will also have a separate **“Creativity in Economics”** category where we welcome submissions on explanations/illustrations/explorations of economic concepts that

are articulated via animations, mind-map, visual presentation, poems, raps etc.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

This year we will continue to promote an **inquiry-based approach** by students. While we encourage students to integrate the use of digital media into their presentations the emphasis is on the **quality of the investigation and economic analysis**, through reasoned, well-informed arguments underpinned by relevant data and economic concepts and theories. We also encourage creativity and will accept submissions in a variety of forms such as essay, report, short video/documentary, powerpoint, prezi etc. The points below are important to consider when planning and preparing your submissions.

1. Relevance

Research questions must be relevant to economics and if you are applying be considered for a special interest category such as IGEES or Central Bank of Ireland, the research question must have particular relevance to their respective remits – *further details on special interest categories will be posted to youngeconomist.ie*

2. Sustainable Development Goals

Projects must clearly link to at least one of the Sustainable Development Goals -<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

3. Research Question & Motivation

Both the research question and motivation for choosing this question should be clearly stated and easy to understand **at the outset** of the project.

4. Data Gathering

- Secondary data must be relevant to the economic topic chosen, current and referenced accurately – see resources Scoilnet.ie. Other useful information may be found in “Appendix A:Guidance on Referencing Sources of Information” in *Leaving Certificate Economics – Guidelines to support the Research Study* (NCCA, 2021) available at curriculumonline.ie
- Primary data must be current and relevant to the topic.

5. Analysis of Data

Students should clearly articulate the useful information discovered from the data that may be used to inform the conclusion and demonstrate support for any decision-making.

6. Findings

Should include a summary of the analysis that either answers the research question or compels deeper or further investigation.

7. Conclusion

- Restate the topic as well as explaining why it is important
- Main points summarised
- “So what” question answered - i.e. recommendations, where to next etc.

8. Presentation

The presentation should be clear, informative and engaging. Information should be accurate and referenced appropriately where relevant.

9. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- The Department of Education and Youth in Ireland has issued new guidance on the use of AI in schools to help teachers and leaders navigate its use safely, ethically, appropriately. https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/dee23cad/Guidance_on_Artificial_Intelligence_in_Schools_2025.pdf
- Use of AI in Coursework – Key Guidelines (SEC)
According to the State Examinations Commission (SEC), any use of AI tools in coursework must be responsible, ethical, and clearly documented. AI cannot be used to generate coursework content. It may only support idea development, research, or improving clarity, and must always reflect the student's own understanding and effort.
- Unattributed AI-generated content is considered plagiarism and carries consequences. Students must reference AI tools in the same way as all research sources.
- Reference: State Examinations Commission, Coursework Rules & Procedures, Appendix – Use of AI in Coursework.
- The YEOTY judging panel will assess all projects in accordance with the Department of Education and Youth (DEY) and State Examinations Commission (SEC) guidelines as outlined.