

ECO-ACTIVISM

Case Studies





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Real stories, real impact. Explore inspiring examples of youth-led digital eco-campaigns and discover how they were built — including strategies, platforms used, and what made them successful.

1. Italy – “Fridays For Future Italia”

Focus: Climate justice and youth policy engagement

Born as part of the global Fridays for Future movement inspired by Greta Thunberg, *Fridays For Future Italia* has grown into one of Europe’s most active youth-led climate networks. What started as spontaneous school strikes evolved into a ****decentralized national structure**** that connects dozens of local groups through digital communication hubs and collaborative online campaigns.



<https://www.instagram.com/p/DNa4lEciMHq/>

Platforms used: Instagram, Twitter/X, TikTok, Telegram

Digital Strategy

- **Coordinated digital mobilizations** — nationwide hashtags such as *#GlobalStrikeForFuture*, *#NoMoreEmptyPromises*, and *#RitornoAlFuturo* amplified local events and kept the national narrative coherent.
- **Multi-platform communication** — visual storytelling on Instagram, fast-paced updates on X/Twitter, and interactive TikTok videos helped reach diverse youth audiences.
- **Collaborative decision-making** — Telegram channels and shared online workspaces allowed hundreds of young volunteers to coordinate campaigns, share resources, and co-create policy messages in real time.
- **Bridging online and offline activism** — digital strikes and livestreams complemented physical demonstrations, maintaining engagement beyond single events.



Fridays For Future Italia mobilized **hundreds of thousands of young people** both online and offline, sparking new forms of youth participation in environmental debates. The movement's visibility led **numerous municipalities to declare climate emergencies** and integrate youth perspectives into local sustainability policies. It also inspired similar structures in other Mediterranean countries.

Why it's a good case study

- Demonstrates **effective use of digital platforms for large-scale mobilization** while maintaining horizontal, democratic governance.
- Shows how online communication can **translate into tangible policy influence**.
- Offers an example of **youth-led sustainability advocacy** that combines civic engagement, digital literacy, and social creativity.
- Balances **activism and education**, using accessible language and storytelling that empowers peers rather than polarizing audiences.

How youth workers can use this case

- As a **discussion starter** on how young people can use social media ethically and strategically for civic causes.
- To **analyze campaign design**, exploring message framing, hashtag coordination, and content formats that build community engagement.
- For **role-play or simulation exercises**, where learners design their own local digital climate action inspired by FFF's model.
- As an example in **training on youth participation and policy dialogue**, showing how grassroots online movements can interface with institutions constructively.
- To reflect on **well-being and burnout prevention** in activism, drawing lessons from FFF's internal practices for mutual support and rotation of roles.

2. Turkey – “Think Twice Before You Trash” by Youth Eurasia (Kocaeli)

Focus: Waste reduction and environmental education

The **Think Twice Before You Trash** campaign, developed by the youth NGO **Youth Eurasia** in Kocaeli, Turkey, aimed to raise awareness about **marine litter, waste reduction, and recycling culture** among young people. Through an engaging blend of **digital storytelling, creative art, and interactive challenges**, it connected environmental education with artistic expression. The campaign exemplifies how local youth organizations can combine creativity and media skills to inspire sustainable habits within their communities.



Think Twice Before You Trash

7 maggio 2022 · 🌐

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The zero waste stand served in the event tent in Başakşehir city square during the month of Ramadan. Adults and children visiting the stand were informed about the importance of recycling, zero waste and environmental awareness. The residents of the district, who were encouraged to sort plastic waste for 15 days, were awarded points based on the amount of plastic waste they brought to the tent through the "waste cash" application. At the end of 15 days, a total of 1 ton of plastic waste was collected.



https://www.facebook.com/thinktwicebeforeyoutrash/posts/pfbid02U7WCwDvRgDpcnd9t41mDpCA_sPEijkivRqBUHcpUHuX9jH6nYzAvxcFgv7KpxPQCL



Platforms used: YouTube, Instagram, local digital radio

Digital Strategy

- **Youth-led media production** — Young volunteers created a series of short videos and podcasts highlighting waste problems and practical eco-friendly actions. The content was produced collaboratively, allowing participants to learn both communication and environmental skills.
- **“Splash Trash Art” digital exhibition** — A highlight of the project, this online gallery showcased upcycled artworks made from collected waste, using visual art as a medium to talk about marine pollution and creativity in sustainability.
- **Social media engagement** — Using the hashtag **#ThinkTwiceTurkey**, the team launched online challenges that invited followers to share photos or short clips of their own recycling and upcycling efforts, turning awareness into action.
- **Community partnerships** — The campaign collaborated with schools, local youth centers, and municipal platforms to expand its reach offline and ensure long-term visibility.

The initiative reached **over 10,000 young people** across the Kocaeli region, inspiring a tangible local movement. Following the campaign, **eco-art clubs** were established in several youth centers in Izmit, where young people continue to meet, create, and discuss sustainability topics. The campaign demonstrated how art-based approaches can make environmental messages accessible and engaging for diverse audiences.

Why it's a good case study

- Demonstrates **how to transform environmental education into participatory digital action**.
- Uses **creative methods (art, design, and media)** to build emotional connection with ecological themes.
- Represents a **scalable local model** adaptable to schools, youth clubs, or non-formal education contexts.
- Highlights the potential of **cross-sector collaboration** between NGOs, artists, and educators.
- Offers a positive, solutions-oriented narrative — focusing on small daily actions and shared creativity.

How youth workers can use this case

- As a **creative workshop example** to combine environmental topics with art, media, or storytelling activities.
- To **analyze participatory communication techniques** — how challenges, hashtags, and co-creation increase youth engagement.
- As inspiration for **hands-on upcycling or digital exhibition projects** in youth centers or community spaces.
- To discuss **how digital tools can complement local action**, showing that awareness and behavioral change can reinforce each other.
- To encourage **youth empowerment through content creation**, helping young people find their voice in sustainability education.



3. Spain – “Maracena Verde” Initiative (Andalusia)

Focus: Sustainable urban life & youth participation in policy

Maracena Verde is a youth-driven initiative launched in the Andalusian city of Maracena to promote **sustainable urban lifestyles** and **youth engagement in local environmental policy**. The project emerged from the municipal youth department’s collaboration with young activists who wanted to make their city greener, more livable, and more inclusive. Using a mix of **digital storytelling, participatory design, and community workshops**, the campaign shows how local governments and youth can co-create climate actions that directly impact everyday life.



<https://www.instagram.com/p/DKwMgQeP1Cd/>

Platforms used: Facebook, YouTube, municipal youth web portal

Digital Strategy

- **Hybrid engagement model** — Online platforms were used to share progress updates, run surveys, and collect ideas from local youth, while offline events — like clean-up actions or “green walks” — created real-world impact.
- **Storytelling and challenges** — The team launched short video contests and posts showing “one small change” youth could make for sustainability — reducing plastic use, promoting bike mobility, or sharing eco-tips at home.
- **Digital co-creation spaces** — Through the municipal web portal, young citizens could contribute suggestions for urban greening and vote on local environmental priorities, turning



civic participation into an accessible digital process.

- **Visibility and transparency** — Regular video updates and reports shared via Facebook and YouTube kept the public informed about decisions, ensuring accountability and continued engagement.

The initiative led to **youth representatives being included in Maracena's municipal climate planning group**, ensuring that young voices became part of local decision-making. As a result of awareness campaigns, **single-use plastic was reduced by 60%** in youth events organized by the municipality. Moreover, the model inspired similar participatory approaches in other Andalusian towns.

Why it's a good case study

- Illustrates **how youth participation can shape local climate policies** through dialogue and digital collaboration.
- Demonstrates the value of **hybrid digital/offline engagement**, showing how social media can complement community-based activities.
- Offers a **replicable model for municipalities and youth councils** interested in integrating sustainability into youth programs.
- Emphasizes **ownership and empowerment**, as young people become agents of change in their own cities.
- Encourages the shift from awareness to policy influence — a crucial step for long-term climate action.

How youth workers can use this case

- As a ****starting point for civic engagement workshops****, exploring how young people can work with local authorities on environmental issues.
- To discuss **co-design methods** — participatory mapping, online surveys, and youth consultations — in environmental education.
- For **simulation exercises** where learners design their own “green city” campaign combining online tools and local actions.
- As a **model for youth councils or municipal youth offices**, integrating sustainability themes into their agendas.
- To encourage reflection on **how to balance advocacy with collaboration**, teaching constructive approaches to policy dialogue.



4. Germany – “Letzte Generation” Youth Digital Movement

Focus: Climate emergency and government accountability

The **Letzte Generation** (“Last Generation”) Youth Digital Movement emerged in Germany as part of a broader wave of climate activism demanding urgent political action on the climate crisis. What sets the youth component apart is its **strategic use of digital tools** to raise awareness, coordinate actions, and foster intergenerational dialogue about environmental responsibility and activism ethics. The movement’s communication style combines **emotional storytelling, data-based advocacy, and real-time documentation**, positioning young activists as both witnesses and narrators of the climate emergency.



<https://www.instagram.com/letztegeneration/p/DJ8c3qpMAic/>

Platforms used: TikTok, Instagram, Twitter/X, Discord

Digital Strategy

- **Viral storytelling** — Through short, impactful videos on TikTok and Instagram, the movement captured direct actions, personal testimonies, and behind-the-scenes moments — fostering empathy and curiosity rather than confrontation.
- **Real-time reporting** — Activists livestreamed from events and protests, creating transparency and connecting followers to unfolding actions, while also countering misinformation.
- **Community coordination** — Discord servers and encrypted messaging channels allowed young participants to collaborate safely, share resources, and plan decentralized actions in different cities.



- **Media literacy and narrative framing** — Youth collectives received peer-led training on framing techniques and ethical communication — learning how to engage media attention responsibly and avoid sensationalism.
- **Intergenerational collaboration** — By partnering with scientists, educators, and parents, the youth wing opened spaces for discussion about sustainability and activism approaches across age groups.

The **Letzte Generation** Youth Movement successfully **pushed climate urgency into mainstream debate in Germany**, making the topic unavoidable in political and media discourse. It sparked **national conversations on civil disobedience, digital responsibility, and generational justice**, and motivated schools and youth centers to open dialogues on activism, democracy, and communication ethics.

Why it's a good case study

- Shows how **digital activism can maintain transparency and credibility** in highly polarized debates.
- Demonstrates **advanced media literacy and strategic communication**, valuable skills for modern civic engagement.
- Explores the **ethical dimensions of activism**, balancing urgency with responsibility.
- Highlights how young people can **build networks of solidarity and support online** while advocating for systemic change.
- Provides a model for integrating **digital storytelling into civic education** and policy discussions.

How youth workers can use this case

- As a **debate starter** on the boundaries between activism, ethics, and legality in democratic societies.
- To explore **critical media literacy**, analyzing how messages spread, what narratives gain traction, and how youth can frame issues constructively.
- For **simulation exercises**, where participants practice designing short awareness videos or digital advocacy strategies.
- As a basis for **discussion on emotional well-being in activism**, focusing on how young people manage exposure, criticism, and online pressure.
- To highlight the importance of **digital citizenship**, helping learners understand the impact and responsibility that come with online visibility.



5. Sweden – “Re-Earth Initiative Nordic Chapter” & “Greta Thunberg’s Digital Strikes”

Focus: Global awareness and intersectional climate education

The **Re-Earth Initiative Nordic Chapter**, together with Greta Thunberg’s **Digital Strikes**, represents a pioneering example of **digital eco-activism** that transcends borders and generations. Originating in Sweden, these movements translated the urgency of climate action into **accessible online participation**, empowering thousands of young people to join global climate conversations from their homes. Especially during the pandemic, they transformed isolation into digital solidarity — showing how social media can serve as a tool for **education, mobilization, and collective resilience**.



https://www.instagram.com/p/C3r5mjgCLEz/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==

Platforms used: nstagram, Twitter/X, Twitch, Discord

Digital Strategy

- **Weekly digital climate strikes** — When in-person gatherings were suspended, activists launched hashtags such as **#DigitalStrike** and **#ClimateStrikeOnline**, encouraging youth worldwide to post photos, stories, or messages every Friday in solidarity.
- **Interactive livestreams and digital panels** — Through Twitch and Instagram Live, activists hosted discussions on climate anxiety, sustainable lifestyles, and global justice, often featuring scientists and youth leaders from different continents.
- **Open-source advocacy toolkit** — The Re-Earth Initiative created freely available guides and



templates for planning digital campaigns — teaching participants how to build audiences, design messages, and measure impact.

- **Intersectional and inclusive approach** — The movement emphasized connections between climate change, social equity, gender, and global North–South justice, making its communication more holistic and educational.
- **Community-driven platforms** — Discord and social networks became safe spaces for young people to exchange experiences, support one another, and coordinate joint actions across borders

The digital strikes and Re-Earth campaigns reached **millions of young people globally**, with particularly strong engagement in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. They **trained thousands of young advocates** in online campaigning and sustainable communication, and contributed to a renewed sense of global citizenship among youth. By demonstrating how activism can adapt to digital contexts, the movement ensured that the climate debate stayed alive even in times of crisis and distance.

Why it's a good case study

- Exemplifies **adaptability and innovation in youth activism**, transforming obstacles (like lockdowns) into opportunities for global connection.
- Provides a **model for digital climate education**, blending emotional engagement with factual accuracy.
- Demonstrates **scalable campaign design** — simple, low-barrier actions that anyone can join.
- Integrates **intersectionality**, showing how environmental issues connect with social and human rights dimensions.
- Highlights **peer learning and empowerment**, where youth share knowledge and build confidence together.

How youth workers can use this case

- As a **model for online engagement**, inspiring digital campaigns or awareness challenges in youth groups.
- To explore **climate communication techniques**, including storytelling, visual identity, and message consistency.
- For **intercultural learning activities**, connecting environmental themes with social inclusion and global solidarity.
- To facilitate workshops on **digital well-being and emotional resilience**, discussing how youth can stay active online without burnout.
- As an example of **open educational resources** showing how toolkits and shared materials can democratize access to activism skills.



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