



United Nations



Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust
Sri Sathya Sai Seva
Organisations, India



International
Society of Waste
Management Air
and Water
ISWMAW



IPLA
GLOBAL



CATCH THEM YOUNG:
Zero Waste &
Circular Economy in Campus



4TH SCHOOL CHILDREN'S CONGRESS

ON WASTE MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

DECEMBER 10, 2026

**SAI HIRA GLOBAL CONVENTION CENTRE
PRASANTHI NILAYAM, PUTTAPARTHI
ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA**



Students from Grades 6-12 across the globe presenting sustainability solutions

ORGANISED BY

Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust (SSSCT), Prasanthi Nilayam, Andhra Pradesh, India •

Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, India •

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL), Prasanthi Nilayam, Andhra Pradesh, India •

International Society of Waste Management, Air and Water (ISWMAW), India

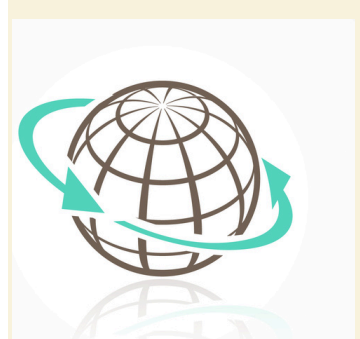
IN COLLABORATION WITH: UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (UNCRD)

The 16th IconSWM-CE & IPLA GF 2026 will unite global experts, policymakers, researchers, industries, ULBs, NGOs and stakeholders to advance sustainable waste management and circular economy solutions through collaboration and innovation.

As part of the conference, the School Children's Congress on Waste Management & Circular Economy will be held on December 10, 2026, engaging students from Grades 6–12 to promote environmental awareness and sustainable practices during the formative years of children.

This initiative is part of ISWMAW's mission, "Catch Them Young: Zero Waste and Circular Economy in Campus", launched in January 2024 to change the mindset of students from waste littering to waste reduction, utilisation and business development.

So far, nearly 5,00,600 students from schools, colleges and universities across nine countries — India, Nepal, Philippines, Indonesia, Kenya, Uganda, Georgia, Tanzania and South Sudan — have participated. In India, students from Meghalaya, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Uttarakhand are actively involved, and the mission is rapidly expanding for the benefit of society.



For more details, visit iswmaw.com/catch-them-young.php. Schools joining the School Children's Congress may be inducted into the mission activities.

Students engaged

5,00,600+

Countries participating

9

Age-appropriate tracks

Grades 6–12

GOALS OF THE CONGRESS

1

Build Foundational Understanding (Age-appropriate)

Introduce core ideas of:

Waste as a resource (not just garbage)
Basics of segregation, recycling, composting
Principles of circular economy — redesign, reduce, reuse, recover, regenerate, maximise resource efficiency

Anchored around the work of organisations like the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), which promotes 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) frameworks globally.

2

Develop Behavioural Change (Not just knowledge)

Children should leave with:

- Personal commitments (e.g. "no plastic lunch week")
- Household influence, becoming "green ambassadors" at home
- Habit triggers around segregation and mindful consumption
- Catch Them Young: Zero Waste & Circular Economy in Campus

3

Nurture Young Environmental Leaders

Create a sense that:

- "I can solve local waste problems"
- Leadership is not age-dependent

This aligns with the service philosophy of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust and Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations.

Students are expected to:

- Learn to live in harmony with nature
- Reduce resource consumption through attitudinal change ("Ceiling on Desire")
- Translate Human Values into responsible social action through selfless service to fellow human beings (Seva)

This differentiates our School Children's Congress from a typical technical event.

The Congress offers a series of engaging events for the students designed to foster critical thinking and innovation in sustainable waste management and the circular economy. Every event is meticulously structured to benefit children by enhancing their understanding of sustainability and empowering them to articulate their perspectives effectively.

CATEGORIES

1

Category A
Classes 6-8

2

Category B
Classes 9-10

3

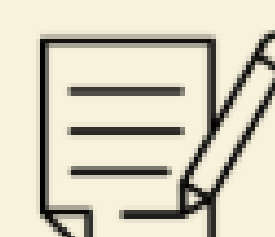
Category C
Classes 11-12



Model Building
Group/Individual



Drawing
Individual



Essay Writing
Individual

THEMES FOR MODEL BUILDING

1

Zero Waste & Circular Economy in School Campus

Conceptual and Practical Models, machines & equipment, Use of Robotics, AI and IoT

2

Sustainable School

Design a school building model that minimizes waste, incorporate rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling

3

E-Waste & Plastic Waste Management Facility

Electronic waste collection, processing and recycling

4

Urban Eco-Park

Eco-friendly Park, use green energy, biodiversity

5

Waste Recycling & Composting

Hand made recycled products using dry waste & biodegradable wastes recycling models

6

Waste Recycling & Recycled Products

Building blocks, pellets, eco-brick & recycled products using non-recyclable plastics

7

Water Treatment Plant

Depict a water filtration system that is both effective and environmentally friendly, wastewater treatment plants

THEME FOR DRAWING AND ESSAY WRITING

Any innovative theme on:

1

Zero waste

2

Circular economy

3

Solid Waste management

4

Liquid waste management

5

Agricultural waste management

6

Water saving

7

Energy management

Guidelines, Documentation and Registrations

04

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS FOR CONDUCTING THE EVENTS

The following guidelines are recommended for schools conducting preliminary rounds for all categories and events:

1

Preliminary Rounds

Schools internally should judge preliminary rounds to select participants for final round.

2

Submission

Schools must choose only one (the best) from all categories based on the criteria given.

List of selected students' along with the documentation should be sent to schoolcongress.iswmaw@gmail.com copy to iswmaw@gmail.com by **September 15, 2026**. Original materials (models, essays & drawings) should be carefully kept with the school until the announcement of shortlisted students by ISWMAW. **Please tap this link to fill-in the Google form and submit.**

DOCUMENTATION PROCESS OF THE EVENT SELECTED BY THE SCHOOL

1

Model Building

Submit a maximum 2-minute video of the finalized team and a 300-word summary of the model in a word document via email.

2

Drawing

Submit a scanned copy of the finalized drawing and a 200-word summary in a Word document via email

3

Essay Writing

Submit the word document and PDF copy of the finalized essay via email

The ISWMAW jury will review all entries. Shortlisted students will be informed by email by 30th September 2026.

Shortlisted students and their coordinating teacher will participate in the School Children's Congress at Prasanthi Nilayam on December 10, 2026.

Students traveling beyond 50 km may arrive on December 9 (with prior intimation) and depart on December 11. Final models, drawings, and essays must be brought for display.

All the models should be displayed in a specified space before 7:00 pm on 9th of December 2026.

Winners will be awarded during the valedictory program on December 10, 2026.

SUPPORT TO THE SELECTED STUDENTS AND COORDINATING TEACHERS

Accommodation and food (for 9th to 11th December, 2026) will be provided free of cost to students and teachers traveling more than 50 km one way.

REGISTRATIONS

- All participants must register for their respective events before the deadline.
- Schools are requested to handle the initial registration process for respective categories for model building, drawing and essay writing, respectively.
- All the entries must contain the following:
 - School Name and address
 - Team members' names, name and contact details of guardians
 - Name and contact details of accompanying teacher
 - Name and contact details of the principal/HM/TiC in the school

Documentation

Photographs and videos should be taken during the event to document the students' work in the school.

Resources

Provide students access to materials and information about sustainable waste management and the circular economy to aid their project development.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL CATEGORIES

MODEL BUILDING	• Ensure the model reflects the theme and sustainability. • Use recycled or eco-friendly materials. • Maintain proper detail, proportion, and neat finishing. • Make the model stable, durable, and realistic. • Add a short description explaining the model. • Advance intimation is required for any additional electrical connection or plug point requirements. • Maximum size: 40cm × 40cm × 40cm. • Working models are preferred but not manadatory. • The students will have to explain how the model works during the assessment by the jury members. • Mention in the top left corner: ◦ School Name & Address ◦ Category, Class & Theme Title ◦ Student Name
DRAWING	• Drawing should match the theme and sustainability concept. • Encourage creativity and eco-friendly materials. • Keep the artwork neat, clear, and visually appealing. • Use colors and textures effectively. • Add a short description of the artwork. • Use A3 size paper with any medium. • Mention on the top left corner: ◦ School Name & Address ◦ Category ◦ Class ◦ Theme Name ◦ Student Name
ESSAY WRITING	• Include introduction, body, and conclusion. • Show clear understanding and analysis of the topic. • Be concise, relevant, and well-organized. • Use proper references and credible sources. • Ensure correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. • Conclusion should summarize key points and suggest solutions. • Essay length: 2000 words on MS word A4 sheets, 12 font size in Times Roman, 1.5 Spacing. • Mention on the top left corner: ◦ School Name & Address ◦ Category ◦ Class ◦ Theme Name ◦ Student Name

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creativity & Originality (Marks: 20)	• Innovation in approach or concept. • Unique perspective or solution offered.
Relevance to Sustainability & Current Issues (Marks: 20)	• For models and drawings: quality, material usage, & detailing. • For essays: structure, clarity, grammar, and language use
Creativity & Originality (Marks: 20)	• Shows understanding of sustainability concepts. • Explains the theme's environmental and social impact.
Practicality & Feasibility (Marks: 20)	• Presents practical and realistic solutions. • Addresses challenges and possible solutions.
Presentation (Marks:20)	• Maintains overall presentation quality and appeal. • Communicates ideas clearly and effectively.

EVALUATION PROCESS

- ISWMAW's international jury will review the submissions from schools across India.
- Shortlisted models will be informed via email to the Principal/HM/TiC
- Shortlisted students and one teacher must report on time.
- Students must bring original entries and ID cards.
- Winners will be announced during the valedictory session on 10th Dec.

Send the project information to the email to the
ISWMAW– SSSCT- SSSO School Children's
Congress Working Group to
Email:iswmaw@gmail.com; and
schoolcongress.iswmaw@gmail.com
Please fill-in the google form and submit:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdy-NTR5f1XudrFw98fILjq2ZAMZCXHdQ9_D2AgT3pxTwgkw/viewform?usp=sharing&ouid=101031790136689428194

ISWMAW– SSSCT- SSSO School Children's Congress Working Group

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Contact Phone no.: Dr. C Mukherjee M: 9163106210 and Mr. A. N. Seshasayee, M: 9945208809

Contact E-mail: schoolcongress.iswmaw@gmail.com and iswmaw@gmail.com

- Shri R. J. Rathnakar, Managing Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust
- Sri Nimish Pandya, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations; Vice Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai Global Council
- Prof. Dr. Sadhan Kumar Ghosh, Founder, "Catch Them Young: Zero Waste and Circular Economy in Campus", ISWMAW; and Chairman, School Children's Congress on Waste Management and Circular Economy
- Dr Gopi Krishna Pidatala, National Coordinator, Education Wing - Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations and Director, School Children's Congress on Waste Management and Circular Economy (9550190055)

State Coordinator Education Wing of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organizations (SSSSO)

- Andhra Pradesh: Mr. T. Madhusudan, M 9493300488
- Delhi NCR: Mr. Kush Bharadwajdwaj, M 9999071802
- Goa: Mr. Ganesh Kothatha, M 9373367248
- Karnataka North: Mr. Vikram Marali, M 9741923664
- Karnataka South: Mr. A. N. Seshasayee, M 9945208809
- Kerala: Mr. R Suresh, M 9497160009
- Madhya Pradesh: Dr. Rajesh Jaiswal, M 9406552280
- Maharashtra East: Mr. Nitin Deshpande, M 9922167899
- Maharashtra West: Mr. Pavan Galgalikar, M
- Maharashtra West 1: Mr. Anush Mohan, M 9987763998
- Odisha: Mr. Amiya Kanungo, M 9861623600 AND Mr. Gurudatta Jena, M 7978765627
- Tamil Nadu North: Mr. Suresh K Chander, M 8778803774
- Tamil Nadu South: Dr. K. Vimalanathan, M 9994127117
- Telangana: Mr. S. Harinath Reddy, M 9618972567

Coordinating Group in ISWMAW

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- Ms. Padma Gunde, ISWMAW, Hyderabad, Telangana, India (9153491536)
- Dr. Aswini Modi, Ujjayini, Indore, MP (98933 33469)