

About Roots & Shoots

Roots & Shoots is the global youth leadership program of the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI). Founded in 1991, it is now active in almost 100 countries with hundreds of thousands of young people who are inspired by Dr. Jane Goodall to make the world a better place. Dr. Goodall and a group of Tanzanian students founded Roots & Shoots on their shared belief that the world is in peril, and that young people can play a huge role in creating a more hopeful future. Today, Roots & Shoot is growing the next generation of Dr. Jane Goodalls, mobilizing an entire generation of young citizens with the knowledge and skills to become compassionate leaders to make change happen in their own backyards.

A clear path to action and impact

Roots & Shoots builds on the vision of Dr. Goodall to place the power for creating practical solutions to big challenges in the hands of young people. The program gives them a clear process for taking action and getting results as they:

- Identify challenges for people, animals and the environment in their own communities.
- Collaborate with community leaders and experts to develop a plan to address a specific need.
- Take action through youth-led projects and service campaigns to carry out their plan and address the need they identified.
- Take stock of their impact, celebrate what they accomplished, and apply what they learned to the next issue they decide to take on.

Through this process, young people develop the skills to become compassionate leaders, are engaged in the world around them and develop the behaviors and attitudes to be good stewards of the environment.

Sharing science-based conservation techniques

To help assess local needs, Roots & Shoots participants use community mapping, a hands-on tool used by leaders in chimpanzee-range countries for conservation planning in their own communities. Roots & Shoots groups head outside to explore their surroundings—both built and natural—making observations and identifying where they could make improvements. Based on their observations, they create a map of all the ways their community could be improved. Their Roots & Shoots community map serves them as a guide for developing a community-specific service campaign.

Tools and training for educators and mentors

With the guidance of an adult mentor or educator, the Roots & Shoots program model thrives within traditional classrooms, after-school programs, zoos, libraries, faith communities and anywhere else young people have the opportunity to work together.

Roots & Shoots provides support to both young people and their adult facilitators, who are often educators. For young people, we provide the model, tools and network to thrive as leaders in their communities and beyond. For their adult mentors, we offer online training on service learning and community mapping. We can also support educators' service learning campaigns and help them receive mini-grants from JGI.

Promoting youth leadership

Roots & Shoots members are becoming the informed generation of conservation leaders that the world urgently needs. We help them gain the knowledge and confidence to be innovative stewards of the environment and grow into compassionate leaders for a sustainable planet.

Exemplary Roots & Shoots youth who demonstrate strong leadership by making a measurable impact on their communities are invited to join the Roots & Shoots U.S. National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC). Members work as mentors and youth ambassadors to strengthen the Roots & Shoots network and create and lead special projects. NYLC members have been featured in Animal Planet documentaries, developed and implemented global conservation campaigns, participated in international leadership immersion trips to Africa and Central America, and represented Roots & Shoots at the United Nations.

Connecting young people around the world

Roots & Shoots makes it a priority to help young people connect with each other across boundaries and cultures. The website features project sharing, social media, blogs, e-newsletters and downloadable resources that enable youth to join forces and take action.

Stellar examples of Roots & Shoots in action

Around the world, Roots & Shoots members are planting trees, leading public awareness campaigns, saving abandoned animals, helping the homeless, reducing their communities' waste, protecting clean water and promoting biodiversity, among many other admirable goals. They are making a world of difference, one community project at a time.

- Multiple Roots & Shoots groups in Tanzania have planted thousands of tree seedlings in community nurseries that provide wood for fuel and construction purposes to the community, as well as trees to restore deforested land.
- In Dillingham, Alaska, a Roots & Shoots group created the Kenkamken Memorial Community Garden in the name and memory of a young Yup'ik Eskimo woman who committed suicide when she was 16. The garden allows Alaska First Peoples living in the tundra to grow plants free of pesticides and herbicides for food and medicinal purposes. It also serves as an educational tool for youth on plants and their many uses.
- A Roots & Shoots group in Cambridge, Massachusetts, wrote and published a book about energy to educate youth on their energy use and its impact on the planet.

For more information, please visit us at www.rootsandshoots.org.