

COMMONWEALTH

YOUTH AWARDS

FINALISTS 2025



The Commonwealth
Youth Programme



Khalili
Foundation



Commonwealth
Foundation

COMMONWEALTH

YOUTH AWARDS

The Commonwealth Youth Awards for Excellence in Development Work aim to recognise the contribution young people aged 15–29 make towards promoting and enhancing democracy and achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It raises the profile of committed and innovative Commonwealth youth who are working hard to address pressing issues such as poverty and conflict.

The Commonwealth believes that this work should not go unnoticed, and our Youth Awards give international, regional and national recognition and support to men and women who are shining examples of young people's capacity and potential to make positive contributions to their communities, nations and the world at large.

The Awards show that our youth are not passive beneficiaries or spectators of the policies and programmes that drive development. Rather, they are actively involved in catalysing and implementing change, and are integral to the decision-making process that will lead to a more innovative and interconnected future.



Specific objectives of the 2025 Commonwealth Youth Awards

- **Highlight contributions:** Recognise and celebrate the outstanding contributions of young people in promoting a future built on fairness, peace, prosperity and sustainability. This includes efforts toward achieving the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Encourage youth-led development:** Foster an environment that encourages and sustains investments in youth-led development initiatives, empowering young leaders to drive change in their communities.
- **Showcase talent and creativity:** Illustrate the depth and breadth of talent, commitment and creativity among young people across the Commonwealth by sharing nominees' success stories, thereby inspiring others.
- **Motivate and challenge young people:** Motivate, encourage and challenge young people to set high standards for their work and service at community, national, regional or international levels.
- **Recognise Peace and Development Efforts:** This year, in collaboration with the Khalili Foundation and the Commonwealth Foundation, additional grants and prizes are being offered. As part of the Commonwealth Faith Festival, the Khalili Foundation will present five additional PEACE (Peacebuilding, Education and Community Engagement) Awards, recognising and supporting aspiring young changemakers who harness faith and shared values to advance peacebuilding efforts within their communities. In addition, the Commonwealth Foundation will also offer special recognition to outstanding young individuals with the potential to award Capacity Strengthening Grants to selected regional finalists, pending successful reporting and assessment.

Fredrick Kioko Kilonzo

Country: **Kenya**

Area of work: **SDG 15: Life on land**

Fredrick Kioko Kilonzo is the founder of Naturehub Collective, a pioneering, innovative community-based conservation organisation in Kenya. His work integrates traditional ecological knowledge with modern conservation, protecting 500 hectares of critical habitat while engaging over 1,000 community members and creating 50 green jobs. Recently awarded the Marion Paviour Award 2024 and True-Blue Fellowship 2025, his initiatives have successfully reduced human-wildlife conflicts by 60 per cent.

**Comfort Peace Ayikoru**

Country: **Uganda**

Area of work: **SDG 3: Good health and well-being**

Ayikoru Comfort is the founder of BuriCare Limited, a social enterprise that creates neonatal carriers equipped with vital sign monitors for remote tracking to reduce neonatal mortality which has positively impacted over 1,500 babies and reached 3,000 mothers. Ayikoru's accolades include Digital Health Africa's Youth in Digital Health Award and African Women in Development 2024.



Faith Sebastian Kuya

Country: **United Republic of Tanzania**

Area of work: **SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation**

Faith Kuya, CEO of SafeSip, delivers clean water in Tanzania and beyond via SafeSip Straws – portable water filters. Her initiative has impacted 9,500 rural people, purified 2.8 million litres of water and replaced 14 million single-use bottles. A 2024 East Africa Community Hackathon and Social Shifters winner, Global Student Entrepreneur Awards finalist, Because International Fellow, MasterCard Foundation Fellow and World Bank innovator, she combines sustainability with scalable impact.



Stanley Chidubem Anigbogu

Country: **Nigeria**

Area of work: **SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy**

Stanley Anigbogu is a Nigerian creative technologist and the founder and CEO of LightEd, inspired by childhood experiences with energy poverty. Determined to create change and foster sustainability and climate resilience, by transforming waste into solar innovations he has impacted more than 26,000 people, provided clean energy to over 10,000 refugees, trained 6,000 students and recycled over 20,000 kilograms of waste.



Smriti BhayaCountry: **India**Area of work: **SDG 3: Good health and well-being**

Smriti Bhaya aims to revolutionise public maternal healthcare in India. She co-founded Sakhi, an AI-powered platform that provides personalised maternal health information in local languages while enabling NGOs to track impact through real-time analytics. In its first quarter, Sakhi served 150 rural Indian families, improving care compliance by 15 per cent and winning UNICEF's Gender Innovation Challenge and awards from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Through partnerships with major Indian NGOs and CSRs, Sakhi aims to reach 25,000 women in 2025.

**Putri Humairah Binti Monashofian Putra**Country: **Malaysia**Area of work: **SDG 2: Zero hunger**

Putri Humairah is the co-founder of ProLadang, a social enterprise that uses satellite technology to empower paddy farmers to monitor crop health, including early pest and disease detection which enables preventive action. In collaboration with SEEd.Lab and Yayasan Bursa Malaysia she promotes sustainable agriculture with a vision for carbon credit generation to increase farmers' income. ProLadang was a finalist in the Southeast Asia region at the International Talent Entrepreneurship Conference 2024.



Keyaan Shah

Country: **India**

Area of work: **SDG 10: Reduced inequalities**

Keyaan Shah is a 16-year-old social innovator and founder of AbiliTec, an initiative addressing accessibility challenges for underserved persons-with-disabilities. His low-cost assistive technologies – SignKraft, SpeechKraft, SightKraft and Chirpies – support individuals with speech, hearing, visual and intellectual impairments, and have benefited more than 600 marginalised individuals by improving their communication and independence. His work has earned recognition from UNICEF, India's Ministry of Science and Technology and global science fairs.



Murad Ansary

Country: **Bangladesh**

Area of work: **SDG 3: Good health and well-being**

Murad Ansary is an international award-winning mental health entrepreneur and a clinical psychologist from Bangladesh. He is the founder and CEO of Psycure, a one-stop digital solution platform for mental health and emotional well-being, working towards empowering Bangladesh by breaking stigmas and providing holistic services. Psycure has provided one-to-one counselling sessions to over 3,367 individuals and trained 13,194 youths to better manage mental health challenges.



Kaché Hanna

Country: **The Bahamas**

Area of work: **SDG 3: Good health and well-being**

Kaché Hanna, Prime Minister's Cup winner and National Youth Ambassador-at-Large for The Bahamas, was the 2023/24 President of the University of the West Indies Bahamas Women's Health Initiative, a non-profit focused on healthcare education, stigma reduction and community empowerment. She led impactful initiatives, including sexual health and suicide prevention panels, educational lectures and outreach programs, reaching over 8,000 people through media channels.

**Romario Romaine Simpson**

Country: **Jamaica**

Area of work: **SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals**

Romario Simpson is a registered medical doctor, social entrepreneur, philanthropist and advocate who is passionate about the sustainable development of Jamaica and the wider Caribbean region. The Destiny of Hope Foundation of Jamaica, which he launched in 2017, has a transformative mandate for poverty reduction, access to quality education and healthcare, advocating for the social inclusion of persons living with disabilities and mitigating the effects of climate change.



Joshua Andall

Country: **Grenada**

Area of work: **SDG 10: Reduced inequalities**

Joshua is a CARICOM Youth Ambassador and director of Generation Grenada, committed to youth empowerment and inclusive education. He pioneered AI-driven chatbots to support special needs education, ensuring accessibility for diverse learners. Through regional partnerships with CARICOM, OECS and UNESCO, he advocates for technology-driven solutions to transform youth development.



Nicholas Kee

Country: **Jamaica**

Area of work: **SDG 14: Life below water**

Nicholas Kee is co-founder and CEO of Kee Farms, a regenerative ocean farm network focused on growing seaweed, oysters and other organisms to reduce greenhouse gases and increase ocean biodiversity. He was previously co-founder and executive director of Next Gen Creators, a non-profit promoting software development, digital literacy skills, employment and tech-entrepreneurship for youths in the Caribbean. He is Jamaica's Youth Ambassador to the Commonwealth; a UNICEF U-Reporter; and a member of the World Bank Solutions for Youth Employment Coalition.



Christopher LeeCountry: **Canada**Area of work: **SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals**

Christopher Lee is the CEO and co-founder of the Helping Hearts Youth Foundation, a youth-led non-profit organisation dedicated to being 'The Change We See'. Christopher constantly strives to create a positive impact on his community through empowering youth. Through his dedication, Helping Hearts has raised over CA\$51,150 in funds and impacted thousands.

**Justin Langan**Country: **Canada**Area of work: **SDG 13: Climate action**

Justin Langan, a 26-year-old Métis leader from Swan River, Manitoba, is dedicated to empowering Indigenous youth and fostering community development. He founded O'KANATA, a federally incorporated non-profit providing educational, cultural and career opportunities that has earned the 2024 Small Business Champions Award and other accolades. Justin's work includes launching the Indigenous Film Archive, an Indigenous youth podcast, and Heartwarmers, a business supporting community initiatives; he is also a 2024/25 parliamentary intern.



Rateb Ajamieh

Country: **Canada**

Area of work: **SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities**

Rateb Ajamieh is a high-schooler with a vision of alleviating the pressures of urban poverty on children across Canada and globally through innovation. He is building his vision through Prints4Play, a non-profit organisation he co-founded that recycles 3D-printing plastic waste into toys and functional items for underprivileged youth worldwide. He has impacted the lives of 10,000 children across three continents.



Zubair Junjuna

Country: **United Kingdom**

Area of work: **SDG 4: Quality education**

Zubair Junjuna is an award-winning social entrepreneur who, at the age of 16, founded ZNotes, an online learning platform promoting global educational equity. ZNotes has impacted six million students across more than 190 countries, offering high-quality resources and peer support for secondary school exams. Zubair was appointed a UNDP–Samsung Generation17 Young Leader, and presented ZNotes at the 79th session of the UN General Assembly for contributions to SDG 4.



Ruby Riethmuller

Country: **Australia**

Area of work: **SDG 3: Good health and well-being**

Ruby Riethmuller is the Founder and CEO of Womn-Kind, a leading youth mental health organisation focused on improving wellbeing education and support for adolescent girls and gender-diverse young people. Womn-Kind offers innovative, low-intensity mental health services through workshops, apps, podcasts and partnerships. With a focus on accessibility and prevention, Womn-Kind has supported over 25,000 young people, providing daily support to over 5,000.

**Jack Anderson**

Country: **Australia**

Area of work: **SDG 4: Quality education**

As a seven-time author and co-founder of Elucidate Education, Jack has provided more than 100,000 students with equitable access to textbooks and educational resources. He leads 70 volunteers and runs rural donation trips across Australia to donate textbooks and laptops to disadvantaged students. Jack is now serving as teaching fellow while pursuing a master's degree in education technology at Harvard University.



Bethalyn Kelly

Country: **Solomon Islands**

Area of work: **SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production**

Bethalyn Kelly is president of the Resilience Innovation and Social Change Girls Club (RISC-GC), a young-girls-led, community-based organisation that empowers young girls and youths in Tuaruhu Community and Honiara to be solution-oriented and positive agents of change. RISC-GC leads a number of activities, including the removal of plastic waste from the environment and recycling it into strong and durable pavement bricks.



Malaki Tito Taufao

Country: **Samoa**

Area of work: **SDG 2: Zero hunger**

Malaki Tito Taufao is the founder of Sonelau Development Group, driven by his passion for youth empowerment, community support and local food production. Under his leadership the initiative has engaged over 300 young men and families in sustainable agriculture, strengthening food security and self-sufficiency. His work continues to inspire communities, ensuring that local resources create a lasting impact.



PEACE AWARDEES

Abongdoh Maluyane Titus

Country: **Cameroon**

Area of work: **SDG 4: Quality education**

Maluyane Titus Abongdoh is a social innovator and founder of e-Mentor, a platform using cutting-edge virtual reality to democratise access to affordable, quality education for internally displaced students in conflict-affected areas. His leadership at e-Mentor earned the Globethics Youth Leadership Award in Geneva. With a vision to empower one million students by 2030, Titus is driving transformative education for marginalised communities.



Emmanuel Cosmas Msoka

Country: **Tanzania**

Area of work: **SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions**

Emmanuel Msoka is a Davis Peace Prize winner, UNICEF Youth Advocate and Global Student Prize finalist. He champions peace, education, sustainability and youth engagement. He built the Peace Library and leads Tanzania Youth Workshops, and has trained thousands of children and youth leaders to drive sustainable community change.



Daphine Namagembe

Country: **Uganda**

Area of work: **SDG 4: Quality education**

Daphine Namagembe is a social entrepreneur, a member of Uganda's 7th National Youth Parliament, a One Million Leaders Africa alumnus and a UNDP Uganda Youth IDEathon champion. Her Tutorfinda project creates sustainable learning opportunities for underserved children and youth, with the Tutorfinda App providing easy access to teachers and educational materials. Tutorfinda has impacted 3,323 underserved children from 43 schools, 51 underserved youth and 108 teachers.



Hafsah Muheed

Country: **Sri Lanka**

Area of work: **SDG 5: Gender equality**

Hafsah Muheed is an intersectional feminist with 10 years of experience in grassroots activism, focusing on human's rights, women's rights, governance, climate change and peacebuilding. She is a fellow of the Asia Society, a member of the 30 for 2030 Network hosted by UN Women APAC and a Member Advisory Group of CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation, and chair of AYC at PMNCH.



Fakhar Jabran

Country: **Pakistan**

Area of work: **SDG 9: Industry, innovation, infrastructure**

Fakhar Jabran is an award-winning entrepreneur, member of the Prime Minister's National Youth Council and innovator dedicated to advancing education through XR and metaverse technologies. As the founder of Kashmeta, he is revolutionising medical education with immersive learning. Recognised by global organisations, including the Prime Minister of Pakistan's National Innovation Award, Fakhar empowers youth in tech through his initiatives in Australia and Pakistan.



COMMONWEALTH

YOUTH AWARDS

2025

ADJUDICATION PANEL

Adjudicators:

- **HE Betty Palaso OBE CMG** – High Commissioner, High Commission of Papua New Guinea (online)
- **HE Dr Morie Komba Manyeh** – High Commissioner, High Commission of Sierra Leone
- **HE Dr Iruthisam Adam** – High Commissioner, High Commission of Maldives
- **HE Prof. Stephen Montefort** – High Commissioner, High Commission of Malta
- **Gerald Whyte** – Minister Counsellor, High Commission of Guyana
- **Shem Ochola** – Deputy Director-General, Commonwealth Foundation
- **Joshua Opey** – Chair, Commonwealth Youth Council (online)
- **Waqas Ahmed** – Executive Director, Khalili Foundation

Commonwealth Youth Awards Team:

- **Layne Robinson**
Head of Social Policy Development Section (Chair)
- **Dona Kannagara**
Project Manager
- **Charity Mwathi**
Stakeholder Engagement Officer



PAN-COMMONWEALTH

ADJUDICATION PANEL MEMBERS

Christabel Q A Derby	Ming Hong Choi	Yanique Williams
Sarika Katoch	Dario Camal	Suresh Singh
Sherif Ghali	Kendell Vincent	Paul Habineza
Muhammad Ali Malik	Malith Senevirathne	David Rupa
Janneth Mghamba	Nahjae Nunes	Tamara Babao-Sadgrove
Soumya Dabrial	Dominique Noralez	Charity Mwathi
Krystle Reid Wijesuriya	Sinama Tupou	Maya Nanan
Franc Kamugyisha	Ewura Adwoa	Sandra Ruhizi
Roma Anne Sashendranie Vedamuttu	Thomspon Auri	Hyacinth Augustine-Bradley
Vivin Mathew	Emily Gilmour	Tiffany Daniels
Lalita Gopaul	Sashagay Middleton	Diane Mushimiyimana
Deliwe Makata	Adeola Adesoba	Lucky Ninsiima
Jasmine Parker Thomas	Lilian Efobi	Akash Jha
Sachinda Dulanjana	Kusala Fernando	Bradley Yombon-Copio
Sowmyan Jegatheesan	Chrishna St. Brice	Bevon Chadel Charles
Ahmed Imtiaz Jami	Mathura Kannan	Saima Majeed
Ayobami Bakare	Shergaun Roserie	Sunge Makawa
	Bobby Siarani	
	Jonathan Andrews	

ABOUT THE COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PROGRAMME

The Commonwealth Youth Awards are sponsored and co-ordinated by the Commonwealth Youth Programme.

We engage and empower young people, provide thought leadership in youth development, and support governments, youth work professionals and young leaders to create policy and practice environments that help young people to fulfil their social, economic and political potential.

We encourage the effective participation of young women and men in development processes, and promote their engagement at all levels of decision-making, including with Heads of Government. We also showcase, celebrate and advance the capabilities and achievements of young people in driving democracy and development.

We place special emphasis on supporting youth-led initiatives, and giving young people a strong voice in decision-making processes. This includes convening youth forums at Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings and ministerial summits, as well as technical assistance and support for national, regional and global youth networks.

These youth networks include:

- Commonwealth Youth Council
- Commonwealth Students Association
- Commonwealth Youth Peace Ambassadors Network
- Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network
- Commonwealth Youth Human Rights and Democracy Network
- Commonwealth Youth Health Network
- Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs
- Commonwealth Youth Gender Equality Network
- Commonwealth Youth Sport for Development and Peace Network
- Commonwealth Children and Youth Disability Network
- Commonwealth Correspondents
- Commonwealth Sustainable Cities Youth Network
- Commonwealth Asia Youth Alliance

COMMONWEALTH

YOUTH AWARDS

2025

Contact us:

Commonwealth Youth Programme
Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough
House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX

youth@commonwealth.int

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7747 6462

Email: youth@commonwealth.int

thecommonwealth.org/our-work/youth



The Commonwealth
Youth Programme