

ista

Global
Learning
Through
the Arts

FESTIVAL

COLLABORATION. CREATIVITY. CONNECTION.



Rooted & Reimagined

2026 - 2027

Global Challenge

 www.istaglobal.org



As the world continues to shift, we find ourselves pulled between the roots that ground us and the possibilities that inspire us. Our histories, traditions, and values offer strength, belonging, and identity, while imagination allows us to question, adapt, and transform. ISTA's global challenge for 2026–2027, *Rooted & Reimagined*, invites young people to explore how we can honour the roots that shape us while reimagining new futures that are inclusive, creative, and sustainable. Through theatre and the arts, we can investigate how our past informs our present, how our communities nurture resilience, and how our imaginations empower us to dream boldly. This theme encourages participants to reflect on what anchors them, to embrace the familiar while daring to reinvent, and to discover the power of creativity to carry us forward.

Festival focus options

- **Rooted in community:** Exploring the traditions, rituals, and values that give us belonging and identity.
- **Reimagining the familiar:** Looking at everyday practices, spaces, and relationships with fresh perspectives.
- **Roots of change:** How history, ancestry, or cultural memory influences who we are and what we become.
- **Reimagining identities:** Considering how individuals and groups can evolve beyond labels, stereotypes, or expectations.
- **Rooted in the earth:** Deepening connections to nature, land, and sustainability while imagining new futures for our planet.
- **Reimagining through creativity:** How imagination, theatre, and the arts allow us to reshape stories and possibilities.
- **Rooted resilience:** Drawing strength from what grounds us to navigate uncertainty.
- **Reimagining futures:** Imagining bold, alternative futures that honour our roots but break new ground.



EXPLORE MORE

Learn more about the
Festival Framework

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