



Regional
Youth Compact
for Europe



Youth Fund

“We have a say”



Open Call for Proposals for

GRANT SUPPORT
YOUTH FUND “WE HAVE A SAY”
for local youth organisations

Guidelines for grant applicants

Deadline for submission of applications:
28 February 2020 at 15:00 (CET)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|------------------|
| <u>I BACKGROUND OF THE CALL</u> | <u>3</u> |
| <u>II RULES OF THE CALL</u> | <u>6</u> |
| 1. Objectives of the Call | 6 |
| 2. Financial allocation | 6 |
| 3. Eligibility of applicants..... | 6 |
| 4. Eligible projects..... | 7 |
| 5. Types of activity | 7 |
| 6. Location of activities foreseen by project proposals..... | 8 |
| 7. Duration of project and implementation | 8 |
| 8. Eligible costs..... | 8 |
| 9. Ineligible costs..... | 9 |
| 10. Visibility..... | 9 |
| <u>III HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW</u> | <u>10</u> |
| 1. Application | 10 |
| 2. Number of applications per applicants..... | 10 |
| 3. Supporting documents to be submitted | 10 |
| 4. Where and how to send applications | 10 |
| 5. Deadline for submission of applications..... | 11 |
| 6. Further information about applications | 11 |
| 7. Evaluation criteria..... | 11 |
| 8. Monitoring during implementation | 14 |

I BACKGROUND OF THE CALL

The Youth Fund “We Have a Say” for local youth organisations (hereinafter referred to as: **Youth Fund**) is an activity within the regional project “Regional Youth Compact for Europe” (RYCE), a three-year project implemented by 14 partners from the Western Balkans, Turkey and the EU. The RYCE aims to empower CSOs, particularly youth organisations, in the Western Balkans and Turkey to effectively participate in policy design and in monitoring reforms leading to EU integration of the countries of the Western Balkans. The thematic focus of the RYCE is the rule of law, fundamental rights (Chapter 23 and 24) and economic and social rights, especially employment (Chapter 19).

The partners of the RYCE are:

- Center for Democracy Foundation (Belgrade)
- European Association for Local Democracy ALDA (France)
- ALDA Skopje
- Local Democracy Agency, Subotica
- Local Democracy Agency Niksic
- Local Democracy Agency Mostar
- Local Democracy Agency Prijedor
- Local Democracy Agency of Kosovo*
- Local Democracy Agency Central and Southern Serbia, Knjazevac
- Local Democracy Agency Zavidovici
- Local Democracy Agency Albania
- CRTA (Belgrade)
- Youth Act Center (Tirana)
- SODEM (Turkey)

The RYCE is funded by the European Union as part of the Civil Society Facility and Media Programme for the years 2016-2017, Consolidating Regional Thematic Networks of Civil Society Organisations and co-funded by the Balkan Trust for Democracy (reference number is 2018/395-387).

The Contracting Authority for the **Youth Fund** is the Center for Democracy Foundation from Belgrade, Serbia, as the lead partner of the project (hereinafter referred to as: the Administrator).

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Youth in the Western Balkans are faced with similar challenges, such as high youth unemployment rates, low wages, low living standard, low approach to formal and non-formal education. As Eurostat data shows, the percentage of youths that are not in education, employment, or training is two times as high as in EU-28 countries, seeing no perspective in their countries of origin youth seek opportunities outside their borders. Research reveals that the people in the WB are more often faced with gender and minority discrimination. They are living in an ever more polluted environment without any clear signs of future improvement.

In their briefing titled “Youth challenges and opportunities in the Western Balkans”, the European Parliament describes youth situation in the WB region with the words “Deeply entrenched regional stereotypes, a lack of awareness of other cultures, demographic changes and a youth 'brain drain' are some of the pieces that make up this complex regional puzzle. Raising awareness about these challenges and the need for timely solutions is therefore crucial. The EU has been encouraging dialogue on the future of youth in the region through a number of projects and initiatives...” such as Regional Youth Compact for Europe.

Young people are an important resource for the future of the Western Balkans. On one side, young people are important part of every society and in this region, youth has a special advantage which reflects in the fact that young people can be a key factor for a building partnerships and bridging gaps in the Western Balkans. Young people themselves do not carry the burden of the past that has made series of conflicts in the region. That presents an added value resource that must be used for building peace based on mutual respect and trust. Regional cooperation is important for economic growth, intercultural exchange, building trustworthy institutions and democratic society and creating an environment that will entice youth to stay in this region.

In the WB there is especially a lack of youth participation in the processes of policy creation, especially on the local level where inclusion of all stakeholders is required most. Participation of young people is a key for the improvement of their being. One of the main goals in the RYCE project is to include more young people to engage themselves in addressing youth related problems and policies` priorities at the local level.

The RYCE’s approach is complementary with the 11 goals of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 goals, especially with Goal 9: Space and Participation for All and Goal 1: Connecting EU with Youth. The aim of first field of action, as formulated in the EU Youth Strategy, is that: "Young people’s participation in representative democracy and civil society at all levels and in society at large should be supported." One of the main indicators in this domain is: Young people's participation in political or community/environmentally-oriented NGOs. Young people's engagement in politics and participation in political initiatives aimed at improving something in their own local community (not formal membership, but, involvement in

activities). Making EU values and policies more visible from a youth perspective is crucial – to educate young people about benefits that EU bring to them and whole society and to empower youngsters to implement and monitor the EU reforms. The advantages that the EU integration can bring to the WB countries must be better communicated to youth. The advantages of EU integration are most reflected in establishing the rule of law, good governance and ensuring the respect everybody's social rights. Youth have to see a clear picture of importance of the EU transformational framework and potential and all the good it brings, for example the EU can be source of higher employment, a better future and travel opportunities. In this context, through RYCE young people are getting familiar with the process of their countries becoming closer to the EU (stabilization and association process, accession negotiations). In particular, the RYCE focuses on policies that are highly relevant for the youth – those enlisted in the Chapter 19 (Employment and social rights), Chapter 23 (Judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (Justice, freedom and security) as these Chapters that have tangible effects on the everyday lives of citizens and young people.

The RYCE project, through education (workshops, summer schools, training sessions), innovative mechanisms of connecting local authorities with citizens (Multi stakeholders platforms, Open Local Assemblies), regional cooperation (Regional Forum, Internship program) aims to create a better society for youths and to ensure that young people can stay and improve themselves while staying in their own countries/region. This is of particular importance in view of the large brain drain that all countries in the region are faced with. Through the Youth Fund, the grantees will participate in creating a better environment for youth at the local level.

II RULES OF THE CALL

1. Objectives of the Call

The overall objective of the Call for Project Proposals is the improvement and development of participatory youth policies and enhancement of local democracy in communities of Western Balkans through support to local youth organisations fostering active citizenship and participation of young people at the local level.

Specific objectives of the Call:

1. To strengthen the capacities of youth from targeted communities for active citizenship and participation in the life of their communities, and particularly in policy and decision-making processes;
2. To increase inclusion of youth with fewer opportunities in local activities promoting youth participation;
3. To increase focus of public authorities in targeted communities on the needs of youth in policy-making and decision-making processes;
4. To promote the EU standards of active citizenship towards achieving equality, inclusive growth and tolerance of diversity.

2. Financial allocation

Total budget of the Youth Fund amounts to 78.000 EUR. The budget will be shared among at least 13 CSOs, in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, where the applicants are based and active.

The Administrator reserves the right to not grant the whole amount of the Youth Fund should the received applications not satisfy the criteria presented in this call.

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amount:

- minimum amount: 3,000 EUR
- maximum amount: 6,000 EUR

3. Eligibility of applicants

In order to be eligible to receive the grant within the Youth Fund the applicant must:

1. Be a legal entity registered in one of the following: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia;
2. Be non-profit making, in accordance with relevant legislation in the place of registration;
3. Be a civil-society organisation active in work with youth (proved by the Statute and list and summary of previous projects and activities during the last two years¹);
4. Be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the work plan, not acting as an intermediary;

¹ If applicable

5. Has not been the beneficiary of EU funding as a lead applicant in the past 2 years (co-applicants in projects supported by the EU are accepted);
6. Has an annual turnover of up to 10.000 EUR.

The applicants are expected to act alone and not in partnership as the applicant shall be the only beneficiary of the grant allocated from the Youth Fund.

Youth Fund grants cannot be used for co-financing of already existing projects of applicants, nor can they be co-financed in their implementation.

4. Eligible projects (actions)

Projects for which an application may be made are as follows:

- Projects in support to empowerment of youth and social inclusion of marginalized groups of youth;
- Projects promoting dialogue between young people and local institutions and/or local authorities;
- Projects promoting youth participation in policy/decision making at local level;
- Advocacy and lobbying Projects in favour of better position of youth in local community;
- Projects in support to participation of youth in implementing local social, economic development or cultural policies;
- Projects in support to promotion of human/minority rights in local community, intercultural dialogue and understanding;
- Projects supporting cultural participation and intercultural dialogue among youth
- Promoting inter-generational dialogue and solidarity;
- Projects promoting social cohesion and inclusive development.

The following types of action are ineligible:

- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- Actions essentially focused on construction activities, purchase of equipment, purchase and/or renovation of building or offices;
- Actions aiming predominantly at charitable donations and profit making activities;
- Actions which are already funded by other EU programmes and undertaken before the date of contract signature.

5. Types of activity

An exhaustive list of types of activity, which may be financed under this call:

- Local capacity building and awareness raising projects in support to youth participation in monitoring reforms, in promoting rule of law and EU values, in civil dialogue with local stakeholders;

- Organising local public events, debates, workshops, seminars;
- Conducting research work and local public surveys;
- Creation of products promoting youth participation – exhibitions, film/video materials or similar;
- Advocacy activities.

6. Location of activities foreseen by project proposals

Planned activities must be implemented on the territory of one of the RYCE project partners: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

Applicants can apply for a grant that will be implemented only in the country of registration (e.g. applicants from Serbia can apply for grants that will be implemented only in Serbia, applicants from North Macedonia, can apply for grants that will be implemented only in North Macedonia, etc).

7. Duration of project and implementation

The duration of a project may not exceed **6 months**.

The projects must be completed at the very latest by **31st January 2021 and no extension periods will be allowed**.

8. Eligible costs

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by the grant and included in the budget of the project proposals. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

Eligible costs are actual costs incurred by the grantees which meet all the following criteria:

- They are incurred during the implementation of the project;
- They are indicated in the estimated overall budget for the project;
- They are necessary for the implementation of the project;
- They are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the grantee and determined according to the accounting standards and the usual cost accounting practices applicable to the grantees;
- They comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- They are reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

Eligible direct costs, the following direct costs of the grantees shall be eligible:

- The cost of staff assigned to the project, corresponding to actual gross salaries including social security charges and other remuneration-related costs; salaries and costs shall not exceed those normally borne by the grantee, unless it is justified by showing that it is essential to carry out the project;

- Travel and subsistence costs for staff and other persons taking part in the project, provided they do not exceed those normally borne by the grantee according to its rules and regulations, or the rates published by the European Commission at the time of such mission if reimbursed on the basis of simplified cost options;
- Purchase costs for equipment (new or used) and supplies specifically for the purposes of the project;
- Costs of consumables;
- Costs entailed by contracts awarded by the grantee for the purposes of the project;
- Costs deriving directly from the requirements of the contract (dissemination of information, evaluation specific to the project, audits, translation, reproduction, insurance, etc.) including financial service costs (in particular the cost of transfers and financial guarantees where required according to the contract).

Indirect costs are costs that cannot be identified as specific costs directly linked to the project. However, they are incurred by the beneficiary(ies) in connection with the eligible direct costs for the action. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. They are limited to a flat-rate of 7% of the total eligible direct costs for the action.

9. Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible under the Youth Fund:

- Credits to third parties;
- Debts and debt service charges (interest);
- Provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- Costs declared by the beneficiary and financed by another Project or work;
- Purchases of land or buildings;
- Currency exchange losses;
- Activities and items already financed in another grant scheme or framework;
- Taxes, including VAT - please note that all expenses under the Program are VAT exempted therefore should budget the costs without VAT.

10. Visibility

The Applicants must incorporate a visibility plan in their project proposals and foresee steps to publicize the fact that the European Union is funding the Youth Fund through the “Regional Youth Compact for Europe” RYCE network in accordance with the instructions provided by the Administrator.

Youth fund grantees must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the Communication and Visibility in EU-Financed External Actions: Requirements for Implementing Partners (Projects) specified and published by the European Commission at:

https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/communication-visibility-requirements-2018_en.pdf

III HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

1. Application

The Application package must be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided in these Guidelines.

Applicants must prepare and submit their applications in the English language using Annex I (Grant Application Form), Annex II (Budget Form), Annex III (Logical Framework) and Annex IV (Declaration by the Grant Applicant) attached in the Call for Proposals. Hand-written Applications will not be accepted.

In the Application, applicants shall provide a detailed budget in the Annex II.

2. Number of applications per applicants

The applicant may not submit more than one (1) application under this Call for Proposals.

The applicant may not partner with another applicant under this Call for Proposals (Applications from two applicants, such as co-applicants are not eligible).

3. Supporting documents to be submitted

Additionally, applicants should submit by email, attached to the Application, the following scanned versions of original documents:

1. Court decision/Certificate of registration (with certified translation in English);
2. Annual financial reports at least for the last year (2018) (with certified translation in English);
3. Signed and stamped Checklist (part of the Application);²
4. Short biographies of the CSOs staff that will be involved in the implementation phase (as per described activities).

If available, grantees will be required to submit their financial reports for 2019 before Grant agreement signing.

4. Where and how to send applications

Applications should be submitted by email only at: RYCEYouthFund@centaronline.org

The subject of the email should be: **Country Name_YouthFund_Applicant's Name (example: Serbia Youth Fund Center for Democracy Foundation)**

² Applicants must verify that their Application form is complete using the Checklist for Application form which is part of the Annex I. Incomplete Application may be rejected.

Every Application received by email shall be responded to by reply email acknowledging the reception of the Application. Applicants are responsible for receiving the reply email acknowledging the reception of the Application.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by post) or delivered to other e-mail addresses will be rejected.

5. Deadline for submission of applications

The deadline for the submission of Applications is 28 February 2020 at 15:00 CET (Central European Time).

Any Application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

The lead applicant is strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit their application, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Administrator cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

6. Further information about applications

Questions may be sent by e-mail **no** later than **14 February 2020** to the below address, indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals:

Email address: QAYouthFund@centaronline.org

The Administrator has no obligation to provide responses to questions received after this date. Replies will be posted online no later than **20th of February 2020**.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Administrator cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants and work plans or specific activities.

No individual replies will be given to questions.

The subject of the email should be: **YouthFund_Country_Potential applicant's name**
e.g. YouthFund Serbia Center for Democracy Foundation

7. Evaluation criteria

An evaluation of the quality of the applications, including the proposed budget, will be subsequently carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid included below. The award criteria presented below enable the selection of applications which the Administrator can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities of the call. They cover such aspects as the relevance of the Project, its consistency with the

objectives of the Call for Proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Scoring:

The administrative check and eligibility criteria are graded on the basis of their fulfilment with a *yes* or a *no*. All answers must be *yes* for the application to proceed to further evaluation of the project proposal.

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 or 1 and 10. 1 is the lowest score, and means very poor fulfilment of the criteria, while the highest scores (5 or 10 depending on the subsection) signify very good fulfilment of the criteria.

| Administrative check | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| - The submission deadline has been met | | |
| - The applicant satisfies the eligibility criteria defined in the guidelines | | |
| - The proposal is written in English | | |
| - The supported documents were submitted in accordance with the guidelines | | |
| If previous answers were YES : | | |
| Decision: Application WILL BE FURHTER EVALUATED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA | | |
| Eligibility Criteria: | | |
| Applicants' eligibility: 1.Certificate of registration 2.Annual financial reports for the last years ³ 3. Applicant has not previously been the beneficiary of EU funds 4.Signed and stamped Checklist (part of the Application) ⁴ 5.Short biographies of the CSOs staff that will be involved in the work plan and | | |

³ If applicable

⁴ Applicants must verify that their Application form is complete using the Checklist for Application form which is part of the Annex I. Incomplete Application may be rejected.

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| - Annual turnover of the applicant: | | |
| - Budget of the application: The amount requested from the Youth Fund does not exceed 6.000 EUR | | |
| - Application: The application is submitted by only one applicant, not in partnership | | |

| EVALUATION GRID | |
|--|----------------------|
| SECTION | Maximum score |
| 1. Relevance of the Project | 40 |
| 1.1 Is the Project relevant to the objectives of the call? | 10 |
| 1.2 Is the Project relevant for the young people at the local level? | 10 |
| 1.3 Are target groups precisely identified, are their needs well defined and addressed in project? | 5 |
| 1.4 Does the Project encourage participation of a larger group of young people? Is such outreach feasible and realistic? | 5 |
| 1.5 Does the Project involve innovative elements and approaches addressing objectives? | 5 |
| 1.6 Does the project provide added value? (e.g. does it include vulnerable groups; does it have gender equality elements etc.) | 5 |
| 2. Effectiveness and feasibility of the project | 25 |
| 2.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results? | 10 |
| 2.2 Is the Project plan clear and feasible? | 5 |
| 2.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the Project? | 10 |
| 3. Sustainability of the Project | 15 |
| 3.1 Is the Project likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups? Is it likely to have multiplier effects? | 10 |
| 3.2 Are the expected results of the proposed Project sustainable? | 5 |
| 4. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the Project | 20 |
| 4.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget? | 10 |
| 4.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory? | 10 |
| Maximum total score | 100 |

After the evaluation and selection of project proposals is completed, the Administrator will notify the applicants on the decisions of the evaluation team. The first selected applicants may be required to revise their proposals and the respective budgets in accordance with the suggestions of the evaluation team.

Grants will be awarded during **May 2020**.

Signing of the grant agreements and disbursement of funds allocated by the grants and start of the implementation is planned from **June-July 2020**.

8. Monitoring during implementation

Off-field monitoring of the implementation of projects which are awarded grants will be done by the Administrator via forms for narrative and financial reporting that will be provided to awarded organisations at the time of the Grant agreement signing.

On-field monitoring will be done by partners from the RYCE project partner organisations that operate in the territory of the grantees' operation. At least two monitoring visits will be conducted during project implementation.

Forms for narrative and financial reporting will be provided to awarded organisations at the time of the Grant agreement signing.