



**REGIONAL**  
**YOUTH LEADERSHIP**  
**MOBILITY PROGRAMME**

# REGIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP MOBILITY PROGRAMME/ CALL 2022/2023

Center Science and Innovation for Development (SCiDEV), Albania, Centre for Education Policy (CEP), Serbia, and Youth Educational Forum (YEF), North Macedonia, are launching a Call for Participation in the **Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Programme (RYLMP)** for 2022/23. Support for the implementation of this programme is provided by the Open Society Foundations.

The Programme is open to youth (21–30 years old) from academia and civil society organizations, young professionals, and youth activists in the respective countries interested in developing capacities in the field of informed and data-driven advocacy, leadership, activism, and intercultural exchange, and in strengthening regional cooperation among Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

Candidates shall apply with their individual proposals for informed and data-driven advocacy actions focusing on one of the topics: a) Regional cooperation, b) Education and employability, c) Migration and brain drain, d) Youth participation, and e) Youth action for the environment.

After the evaluation, selected participants will be matched in mixed teams in line with their areas of interest. They will work with colleagues from other countries on their data-driven advocacy with combined capacity-building and mentoring support. Selected participants will spend three weeks mobility period in each country according to the timeline detailed below. During the project duration, participants will participate in a capacity-building programme focused on relevant competencies and skills for their work and mentoring programme.

Selected participants will benefit from the financial support provided by the Open Society Foundations to complete their projects and cover mobility costs. The working language of all activities will be English.

**DEADLINE: 22ND OF DECEMBER 2022**

# WHAT IS REGIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP MOBILITY PROGRAMME?

Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Programme (RYLMP) was a seven-month project developed jointly by the Centre for Education Policy (CEP), Serbia, and Center Science and Innovation for Development (SCiDEV), Albania, targeting young individuals who want to participate actively and contribute to change in the society and/or local community and have the capacity to influence societies in the future. RYLMP showed a unique opportunity for youth from Serbia and Albania to meet and work together, breaking the cultural and other barriers and improving the research competencies of participants. The implementation of the RYLMP in 2021 and early 2022 paved the way for the continuation and scaling up of the programme, this time including Youth Educational Forum (YEF), North Macedonia, into the programme. Please see a short video for those wanting to learn more about the previous Call.

RYLMP 2022/2023 draws from the accomplishments and lessons learned in the first implementation phase and answers to the Open Society Foundations' initiative of creating a platform for regional cooperation on strategic priorities. The Open Society Foundations' strategic priorities aim to respond to multiple challenges, ranging from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic to climate change and the seemingly inevitable economic and social crises that are likely to ensue. To that end, one of the pillars of Open Society Foundations' work in the region is Economic and Social Justice. Increased cooperation between Albania, Serbia, and North Macedonia, and support to Open Balkan, including establishing the Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Platform, feeds precisely into this goal. All three countries are committed to creating a platform for youth cooperation and expanding opportunities created by the Open Balkan initiative.

RYLMP specifically targets youth interested in active participation in solving youth-related challenges and creating new solutions through data-driven advocacy. This includes recently graduated students, MA or Ph.D. students, and youth activists from Albania, Serbia, and North Macedonia interested in the above-mentioned topics. Candidates also should have the capacity to work in English (both orally and in writing), are willing to spend designated time in another countries, work in a team, are keen on regional cooperation, and be engaged in decision-making processes through evidence-based activism and data-driven advocacy.



The selected participants will be offered tailored capacity development activities through e-learning and mentoring programme to improve further their skills and knowledge on how to develop evidence-informed / data-driven advocacy actions, actively participate in policy development, and relevant methods for participation at the local and regional level. Implementing partners will facilitate effective collaboration among youth in Albania, Serbia, and North Macedonia. They will also have an opportunity to spend three weeks in Albania, Serbia, and North Macedonia, experience how their peers live there and gain intercultural experience. During this time, participants will work with designated mentors to support the teams through the process and with the selected topic. The programme will organize several joint events, such as opening and closing conferences, regional advocacy actions, and cultural activities for participants during their mobility period.

# CALL OBJECTIVES AND THEMATIC AREAS

The overall objective of RYLMP is to strengthen regional youth cooperation and advocacy for youth-related issues in Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

The programme seeks to support young people, students, and youth activists with opportunities to improve their competencies and pursue areas of their interest. The specific objectives are:

1. To enhance youth mobility and cultural understanding among young people from Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia;
2. To strengthen and promote young people as advocates by improving their skills and competencies for research, leadership, advocacy, creation, and monitoring of youth-related policies;
3. To support the regional networking of civil society organisations/implementing partners.

The Call encourages participants to propose actions in the following areas:

1. **Regional cooperation:** Open Balkan initiatives and EU integration (perceptions of young people on cooperation; support for EU integration; benefit of Erasmus+ or youth mobility; youth strategies & comparisons with EU countries);
2. **Education and employability** (curricula and quality of education (VET)–the mismatch of the education and labour market; requalification policies; recognition of diplomas; recognition of non-formal education; employment policies analysis; the efficiency of Youth Guarantee Programme and similar Active Labour Market Policy);
3. **Migration and brain drain** (reasons to leave; career development; which professions are leaving; push and pull factors; from brain drain to brain gain or circulation – examples and success stories. Policy on the movement of students/education; Open Balkans as a place for brain gain; systemic shortcomings that underpin brain drain and generate opportunities to leave);
4. **Youth Participation** (social & political factors for non-participation; digital participation; laws on youth and implementation; participation in decision-making process; civic engagement; perceptions of youth on political participation; urban vs rural, monitoring youth participation at governing bodies at the universities, monitoring of the work of the local youth councils, etc.);

**5. Youth action in environment** (environmental protection, climate change, awareness raising).

**Each applicant will propose at least two topics of interest in application form in order to enable pairing in regional teams.**

Interested candidates should submit project proposal for evidence-based/data-driven advocacy actions and their implementation plans through the attached template, where they briefly identify main ideas/problems they want to address and reasons why these are relevant. Candidates will need to outline a proposed methodology for their evidence-based advocacy actions and provide background information on the topic. Additionally, their proposal should elaborate how their actions can be used in the future, e.g., for raising awareness, policy making, etc. Finally, considering the mobility dimension of this programme, candidates should also reflect on potential comparative aspects between Albania, Serbia, and North Macedonia.

**An online info session about the mobility programme will be organized on Friday December 9th, 2022. You can register by following this link. The info session will be recorded and available until submission deadline.**

## ELIGIBILITY

RYLMP 2022/2023 is open to 21 candidates, up to 7 from each country, which meet the eligibility criteria listed below and have their data-driven advocacy action proposal evaluated as satisfactory by a Selection Committee 1.

Following candidates are eligible for participation:

- Appropriate age (21-30 years old);
- Citizenship (Albanian, Macedonian OR Serbian), with a residence within the territory of the country of citizenship;
- Willingness to work on strengthening regional cooperation;
- Background (one of the listed):
- Youth activists;
- Young professionals from the civil society sector;
- University students of MA or PhD level;
- Recent graduates of BA studies;
- English language proficiency;

Candidates' affiliation with an organization active in youth participation, regional cooperation, or digital transformation will be considered as an asset.

**\*Evaluation criteria are found in the Annex 1 - Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Research Proposal Template.**

# EVALUATION PROCESS

A Selection Committee will evaluate submitted applications based on the relevance, the quality of the proposed action, and the potential to inform policymaking as outlined in [Annex 1 – Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Proposal Template](#).

A Selection Committee composed of project partners, representatives of the OSF, and one alumnus will evaluate the applications. The process will follow three steps:

1. Eligibility check as per the set application criteria;
2. Applications that pass the eligibility check will undergo quality assessment; and
3. Notification of applicants and mobility agreement. Interviews will be conducted with shortlisted candidates.

Each team of participants will have to develop and implement advocacy actions they find most suitable (e.g., round tables, media/social media campaigns, development of different materials, etc.) but, in addition, three regional events (one per country) with different stakeholders (including decision-makers in the fields, civil society organizations, youth representatives, representatives of the international community, etc.) will take place in order to achieve better understanding, higher impact, and visibility of the advocacy actions. The advocacy activities will also include social media campaign(s).

The capacity building programme offered to participants will have two main components as key pillars. First, the selected candidates will take part in online/offline training modules related to data collection (e.g., different data collection methodologies and tools, desk research, conducting interviews, reviewing documents, secondary data analysis, policy document writing, etc.) to have the solid evidence-based foundation for their advocacy activities. The capacity-building programme's second pillar will focus on designing and implementing data-driven advocacy actions.

# FINANCIAL SUPPORT

RYLMP 2022/2023 will provide financial support to selected candidates in the form of a mobility grant covering: travel, accommodation, and living costs during the mobility in each country; travel and accommodation and per diems for opening and final conference and other costs related to the advocacy actions.

## MOBILITY PROGRAMME CONTENT AND PLANNED RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

### Launching event and regional youth teams set up.

The launching event will last two days, and the time will be devoted to introducing and pairing participants and potential mentors based on their proposed topics and advocacy actions, a team-building workshop for participants and mentors and promotion of the project to interested audience (international and national civic society organisations, institutions etc). The launching event will be held in Tirana, Albania, on February 24–25th, 2023, with covered travel and accommodation costs in the mobility grant of each selected candidate.

### Capacity building and mentoring

After the selection process, the candidates will be divided into teams composed of three or more people (at least one from each country) at the beginning of the programme as per the teaming up working after the launch event. The capacity building programme will have two main components as key pillars. First, these candidates will take part in online/offline training modules related to data collection (e.g., different data collection methodologies and tools, desk research, conducting interviews, reviewing documents, secondary data analysis, policy document writing, etc.) to have a solid evidence-based foundation for their advocacy activities. Depending on the topic they are working on, a mentor experienced in the topic will support team/s. The capacity-building programme's second part will focus on designing and implementing data-driven advocacy actions. The training modules will be conducted online and focus on how to do advocacy, use digital tools for advocacy, approach stakeholders, connect with media, and other techniques. Participation in the capacity-building workshops/training is mandatory.

### Mobility programme

Each participant will participate in a mobility programme for up to 9 weeks in total in Belgrade, Tirana, and Skopje (3 weeks per country; while in the home country, participants will participate in the joint activities intended for the whole group).



This will provide an opportunity to jointly collect comparative data on each selected topic and serve as a cultural exchange that will build lasting cooperation among the participants. The programme will include working meetings among the participants and the mentors and cultural activities in each country. At the end of the mobility programme, the participants will continue to work jointly on systematisation of the collected data online.

### **Mobility periods:**

- Mobility in Tirana is planned from March 20th to April 10th 2023.
- Mobility in Belgrade is planned from April 19th to May 10th 2023.
- Mobility in Skopje is planned from May 22nd to June 11th 2023.

### **Alumni network**

A special set of activities will be developed and dedicated to facilitating an alumni network and future joint regional cooperation for project sustainability. In addition, programme alumni will be potentially engaged in the future project activities of partners. Throughout the programme implementation, partners will support participants with networking, reaching out to stakeholders, and exploring new opportunities, thus enabling them with skills and knowledge to continue their advocacy actions after the project's life, maintaining the momentum, and building up on regional cooperation.

### **Data-driven Advocacy Actions**

The participants will develop evidence-based or data-driven advocacy actions and their implementation plans to address the issues and advocate for solutions that decided to be part of the advocacy actions. Each group of participants will be free to develop and implement advocacy actions they find most suitable (e.g., round tables, media/social media campaigns, development of different materials, etc.) but, in addition, three regional events (one per country) with different stakeholders (including decision-makers in the fields, civil society organizations, youth representatives, representatives of the international community, etc.) will take place to achieve better understanding, higher impact, and visibility of the advocacy actions. The advocacy activities will also include social media campaign(s).

### **Final event**

Closing event will take place in Belgrade, Serbia, in September 2023. The event will be attended by the relevant national and international stakeholders and will disseminate the achievements of the programme. The organizers will cover travel and accommodation costs. For the final event, there will also be an alumni event for both generations to devise ideas for further steps. Locations and timing for joint events will be decided early in the 2023.

It is obligatory for the selected participants to participate in all activities and mobilities. All selected participants must sign a commitment letter and a code of ethics. To promote the project and regional cooperation, each partner will dedicate special effort to document project activities in different stages and make them available on social media.

## TIMELINE

1. Info session: December 9, 2022 at 14:00 [Registration Link](#)
2. Closing date for submitting applications: December 22nd, 2022
3. Notification to applicants of the Selection Committee's decision on pre-selected candidates: on or before January 15th, 2023
4. Interviews with preselected candidates: January 16–20, 2023.
5. Notification on Selection Committee's decision on selected candidates: January 25th, 2023.
6. Participation at the 1st launch event in Tirana: February 24–25, 2023
7. Participation in online capacity building programme: TBC
8. Mobility periods:
  - Mobility in Tirana from March 20th to April 10th, 2023.
  - Mobility in Belgrade from April 19th to May 10th, 2023.
  - Mobility in Skopje from May 22nd to June 11th, 2023.
9. First data-driven advocacy action draft: end of June 2023.
- 10.1 Participation in closing/promotional event in Belgrade: September 2023

***\*Please note dates are tentative and might change slightly, and selected candidates will be informed in due course.***

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### REMINDER

An online info session where candidates can learn more about the RYLMP and ask questions will be organized on December 9, 2022

[Registration Link](#) Info session will be recorded and available until the submission deadline.

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# HOW TO APPLY?

The application process has two steps:

## Step I – submitting the following:

- Interested candidates should fill in the Application Form, and upload
- The [RYLM Data Driven Advocacy Action Proposal Template](#)
- Curriculum Vitae
- Letter of Recommendation, including a contact of the referee.
- Only fully completed applications will be processed.

## Step II – interviews with short listed candidates.

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# WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Interested applicants can obtain more information through the websites of [CEP](#), [SCiDEV](#) or [YEF](#) by registering and participating in an [online info session](#) or by sending written inquires to the following e-mail address: [rylmp2021@gmail.com](mailto:rylmp2021@gmail.com) by December 20th 2022.