THE YOUNG CIVIL SOCIETY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS/PARTICIPATION - DEADLINE: 26th September 2023 (23:59 CET)

The **Young Civil Society Leadership Program**, part of the EU-funded **Med Dialogue for Rights and Equality II,** is launching a call to engage 25 young Mediterranean leaders to form the first among three cohorts to come. The program focuses on improving the skills of civil society leaders in policy making process, policy dialogue and advocacy through the selection and capacity building of Young Civil Society Leaders who show civil society leadership potential and with the ultimate goal of identifying, building the capacity and nurturing the establishment of a network of highly skilled and empowered youth leaders in the in the EU Southern Neighbourhood countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, and Syria).

The selected participants will benefit from:

- A tailor-made empowerment program that will run over 12 months and include online and physical meetings.
- Build and connect to a network and a community of young leaders from the Southern Mediterranean region.
- Appropriate assistance to implement a concrete common action.
- The best participants will be recommended and supported to participate at high level policy dialogues within the Euro-Med space.
- Best participants will be invited with all expenses covered to attend the ALF Forum in 2025.

Participants will commit to:

- Attend the full skills development program including online training, working groups; physical meeting in a bootcamp;
- Develop and implement a common action related to the program topic
- Contribute to the conversations, networking and peer to peer learning of the Alumni network.

PROGRAM THEMATIC FOCUS:

Applicants are encouraged to think creatively and pursue **objectives that promote the responsible use of AI in governance. Examples of such objectives include** (but are not limited to):
- Ensure transparent, ethical, and accountable use of advanced technologies including AI in government practices.
- Empower civil society to use advanced technologies including AI in influencing and contributing to good governance effectively.

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- Enrich the debate and strengthen the role of young leaders from civil society in building responsible AI governance frameworks in the Euromed space.

Good governance includes **several crucial aspects necessary for governments' ethical and efficient operation. Applicants are encouraged to pay attention to the following key dimensions when designing your common action:**

- Transparency: This aspect concerns information transparency, availability, and comprehensibility. Transparent governance guarantees that decisions, procedures, and actions are visible and clear to the general public. This involves revealing pertinent information, providing access to data, and being responsible for decisions.
- Accountability: Being accountable means taking responsibility for your actions, decisions, and being open to scrutiny. Good governance requires clear mechanisms to hold individuals and institutions accountable for their performance and use of resources.
- Participation involves stakeholders, citizens, and affected parties in the decision-making process. This helps to promote inclusivity, diversity of perspectives, and a sense of ownership among those involved.
- Rule of Law: To achieve good governance, it is essential to follow the law, which mandates that laws be implemented equally for everyone without bias or partiality. This principle guarantees impartiality, consistency, and reliability in governance.
- Effectiveness and Efficiency: For governance to succeed, it must achieve its goals effectively and utilize resources efficiently. This means that policies and programs should generate the intended results, while resources should be utilized optimally.
- Responsiveness: A key aspect of good governance is being responsive to the needs and concerns of citizens and stakeholders. It's important for decision-makers to pay close attention to feedback and changing circumstances and be willing to adjust policies and strategies accordingly. By doing so, they can better serve and support the people they represent.
- Equity and Inclusiveness: Promoting fairness and inclusivity, good governance ensures that everyone has equal access to opportunities and benefits. Its objective is to reduce disparities and address the needs of marginalized groups.
- Integrity: This dimension highlights the importance of honesty, ethical conduct, and the lack of corruption. Maintaining integrity ensures that government officials prioritize the public's well-being over their gain.
- Sustainability: When making decisions and policies, those in charge need to consider the long-term effects on society, the economy, and the environment to ensure sustainability.

To promote the responsible use of AI in governance and tackle relevant dimensions of good governance, applicants should propose a common action focusing on specific actions. These could include (but, again, not being limited to):

- Data Analysis and Insights: Gather local evidence and analyse data to inform policy and advocacy efforts, promoting evidence-based decision-making for good governance.

- Transparency and Accountability: Utilize advanced technologies including AI-driven methods to monitor government activities and results, holding public officials accountable, promoting transparency, and advocating for ethical decision-making.
- Citizen Engagement and Feedback: Experiment with advanced technologies including AI to facilitate citizen engagement, collect feedback on government policies, and promote transparency while enhancing citizen participation in decision-making processes.
- Policy Analysis and Impact Assessment: Use advanced technologies including AI to analyse proposed policies, predict their impact, and identify potential unintended consequences. Nurture public policy dialogue and advocacy efforts to prioritise good governance and public interest.
- Technology for Social Change: Leverage technology, including AI-powered sensors and monitoring systems, to advocate for sustainable policies, overcome language barriers, and ensure inclusivity.
- Smart Decision-Making: Use AI algorithms to analyse complex scenarios, predict outcomes, and recommend optimal courses of action, contributing to more informed decision-making in governance.
- Fighting Disinformation and Stereotypes: Utilize advanced technologies including AI tools to combat disinformation, fake news, and harmful stereotypes, promoting transparency, trust, and social harmony in the community.
- AI Public Policy Dialogue/Policy Making: Engage with policymakers and stakeholders to influence AI-related policies, build coalitions, and support effective policy changes.
- Watchdog Role: Promote transparency and accountability, monitor AI-related human rights violations, and defend civil society space in AI debates.
- Digital Security and Privacy: Protect personal data and ensure digital security when using online platforms, especially those using AI for advocacy or activism.
- Educational/Informational Materials and Awareness Campaigns: Develop materials, data, workshops, and awareness campaigns emphasizing the ethical implications of AI.

PROGRAM PHASING:

The program will be implemented over 4 phases:

1. **SKILLS UPGRADING:** This phase will be conducted online and will provide all participants knowledge and skills in thematic areas, civil society-related skills, and technology literacy. This phase will be conducted through online modules, which will be organized in capsules, each with a duration of approximately 3 hours. Each capsule will consist of:
   o A list of readings, links to online resources and other relevant documentation (which will be distributed to participants prior to the online session) to enhance participants' understanding of the key concepts, challenges, and policy frameworks related to these topics.
   o One master class per topic, to be provided by a thematic expert (1.5 hours).
   o One session of exchange between the thematic expert and the participants to foster peer-to-peer learning and discussion (1.5 hours).

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2. **IDEATION (IDEA FAIR):** This phase will be conducted online to allow young leaders to continue finetuning their common actions ideas and will also aim at identifying potential synergies and duplication.

3. **COMMUNITY BUILDING BOOTCAMP:** This phase is a face-to-face gathering of three days that focuses on jointly formulating the actions and ideas, with the guidance of project team, mentors and experts. It will consist of:

   o Day 1: Final Development of Actions - Participants will work with their mentors to further develop their action plans, including work plans, calendars, and budgets. Mentors will provide guidance and support to ensure that the ideas are translated into actionable plans.

   o Day 2: Creation of Synergies among Actions - Participants will engage in discussions and workshops to identify and explore potential synergies among the different actions proposed by the participants. The aim is to align and coordinate the actions towards a common cause, and to identify opportunities for non-financial support among the actions. Mentors will facilitate these discussions and provide guidance on how to optimize synergies.

   o Day 3: Bonding among Participants - This day is dedicated to fostering a sense of community and building relationships among the participants. Activities may include team-building exercises, group discussions, and networking sessions. The goal is to promote collaboration, mutual understanding, and trust among the participants, which is essential for community building.

The face-to-face nature of the bootcamp provides an opportunity for participants to interact directly with mentors and their peers, facilitating deeper discussions, exchanges of ideas, and building meaningful connections. It aims to create a cohesive and collaborative community of young Civil Society leaders who are aligned around a common cause and are prepared to work together towards their action plans. The bootcamp also serves as a platform for further refining and strengthening the ideas and action plans before moving on to the next phase of the program. Overall, the Community Building Bootcamp is an important step in nurturing a supportive and dynamic community of Young Civil Society Leadership.

Travel and accommodation expenses, visa fees are taken in charge by Med Dialogue for Rights and Equality.

The meeting languages at the bootcamp is English.

4. **COMMON ACTION:** One of the end results of the bootcamp is the finalisation of the development of an advocacy action involving all participants, which shall take place simultaneously in the participants' home towns/regions. Therefore, this phase focuses on implementing common actions formulated during the bootcamp with the required support. This phase allows participants to take further the knowledge, skills, and ideas developed during the training and apply them and drive meaningful change. In this, the action initially proposed should be:

    a. toned and improved during the bootcamp (topic and activity types), building upon the ideas brought by the participants,

    b. Organised within a specific timeframe (from 1 week to 1 month),

    c. Given a common focus, a commonly agreed framework and a central operational coordination, while taking place through decentralized activities.

To carry out the activities of the common action, the required support will be provided. Objectives, format and timetable of the common action will be incubated and agreed upon during the bootcamp. The common action is expected to encourage networking and cooperation at regional scale. It should be able to produce a multiplier effect through simultaneous trans-national initiatives/ actions.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Candidates submitting their application through this Call must:
- Be nationals of the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, Syria.
- Be between 18 and 35 years old.

They should meet the following criteria:
- Applicant must have good track record of civic engagement, advocacy and policy dialogue
- Be actively engaged in their communities and having demonstrated to have an impact on the ground
- Have an expertise and experience in facing AI challenges and opportunities in the Mediterranean
- Be able to conceive a proposal for a common action to be discussed at the bootcamp
- Being part of a formal or informal CSO is not mandatory, although it will be considered an advantage. Whenever an applicant is a member of a CSO, it must be stated clearly in the application.

The following profiles are invited to submit their candidature:
- Activists or planners engaged in addressing governance and advanced technologies including AI challenges
- Journalists investigating on or covering governance and/or advanced technologies related matters and challenges in the region
- Businessmen and experts working in the advanced technologies including AI fields

Through this Open Call, up to 25 candidates will be selected. During the selection, the Program will take into account the following aspects:
- Fulfilment of the criteria listed above,
- Balanced representation of all the target countries,
- Gender balance,
- Indication of the capacity to assume responsibility for the common action proposed.

The Program reserves the right to eventually directly identify up to 5 highly qualified participants.

SELECTION PROCESS

1. Preselection: The applications will be screened based on a set of pre-established criteria such as relevance, feasibility, originality, and potential impact. The 50 best applications will be shortlisted for the next stage.
2. Guidance Session: The 50 shortlisted applicants will participate in a 2-hour guidance session aimed at helping them develop their proposals further. This session will be led by experienced trainers or experts in the respective fields, who will provide valuable feedback and advice.
3. Final Selection: Based on the updated proposals submitted by the 50 preselected participants, a final selection of 25 participants will be made by the selection committee. The final selection will be based on the quality and originality of the proposal, the applicant's potential to become a young Mediterranean leader, and the applicant's ability to contribute to the community of practice.

CALL OPEN UNTIL September 26th 2023 (23:59 CET)

Applications in English or French must be submitted before the 26th September 23.59 CET via the online application form only.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates must apply online through the following link
(EN https://4w1uxk1pf0v.typeform.com/to/yXZQetsC, FR https://4w1uxk1pf0v.typeform.com/to/S14p88ZB). The application must be completed and submitted in English or French before 26 September 2023 at midnight Central European Time (CET) Including:

- a motivation letter of no more, nor less than two pages (Arial 11, simple space) and a detailed Curriculum vitae of no more than four pages, which has to follow the Europass template (https://europa.eu/europass/en), **both in English only.**
- a common action idea relevant to this cycle's theme as described above in English or French.

Only complete applications, meeting the eligibility criteria and submitted before the deadline will be considered. Due to the high volume of requests, responses to individual requests will not be provided.
Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

In case of technical problems or questions related to the call, please send questions to: YOUNGCS.LEADERSHIP@bibalex.org.

INDICATIVE TIMELINE

27/08/23	Launch of the call.
07/09/23	Online information session (details will be published on the ALF' website).
14/09/23	Deadline to receive requests for clarifications.
18/09/23	Deadline to publish answers to requests for clarifications on ALF's website.
26/09/23	Deadline to receive submissions.
31/09/23	Notification of pre-selected applicants.
03/10/23	Tenure of the Guidance Session to provide recommendation to revise the common action ideas and develop them further.
08/10/23	Submission of the revised ideas.
20/10/23	Publication of the final selection results.
20/10-11/23	Skill upgrading program (online).
15/01/24	Ideation camp (online).
15/02/24	Community building Bootcamp.
15/03/24	Common action rollout.
20/06/24	Closure.

Application form

About You
First Name/Last Name
Gender

Nationality (10 CSFM partner countries)
Date of Birth
Mother tongue
Country of residence
Contact Details (E-mail Address, Mobile Number)

Are you part of a formal or informal CSO?

If yes, state the name of the CSO:

Do you have a track record of civic engagement, advocacy and public policy dialogue and accountability in the Southern Mediterranean? If yes, please elaborate a short response regarding common action you initiated and/or contributed to.

Do you have knowledge of advanced and AI technologies and its related issues and debates, including the link between AI and good governance and public policy discussion and accountability?
If yes, please specify

Please elaborate and upload a concept note of a small to mid-size innovative and achievable action (to be implemented within a 3-month timeframe as part of common action) related to the following theme: "Promoting Ethical AI for Civic Engagement and/or Participatory Governance" (please read carefully the guidelines, specifically the theme outlines before submitted your common action idea). Please present your idea following this template:

- The common action's objective: what do you want to achieve, what is the change you want to see happen.
- The common action's deliverables: what are the products or results the common action will produce (video content, workshop, a tool kit etc.)
- What are the activities you propose to implement to produce the common action deliverables and reach its objectives.
- Who are the target beneficiaries of the common action's activities?
- What is the duration of your common action?
- Who are your common action partners if any and what will be their role in your common action?

Do you have proficient knowledge of standard computer software (MS Word®, Excel®, PowerPoint and Outlook®) and internet online tools (zoom, airmeet, meet etc.)?
If yes, please specify

English language level B2 is required.

Other languages (Please indicate the language, if any, and the level from A1 to C2)

File Uploads

Please upload a motivation letter of no more, nor less than two pages (Arial 11, simple space) and a detailed Curriculum vitae of no more than four pages, which has to follow the Europass template (https://europa.eu/europass/en), both in English only.

Where did you hear about this call?

By participating in this call the applicant accepts the provisions of the ALF regarding patents, privacy and intellectual property, the protection of personal data.

Subscribe me to the ALF monthly Newsletter to stay updated about new opportunities.