



**REGIONAL
YOUTH LEADERSHIP
MOBILITY PROGRAMME**

**Regional Youth Mobility
Leadership Programme
CALL 2023/2024**

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Center Science and Innovation for Development (SCiDEV), Albania; Youth Educational Forum (YEF), North Macedonia, and Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR), Serbia, are launching a **Call for Participation** in the Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Programme (RYLMP) for 2023/24. 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, young researchers, and youth activists in Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia interested in developing capacities in the field of informed and data-driven advocacy, leadership, activism, and intercultural exchange, and in strengthening regional cooperation.

Candidates shall apply with their individual proposals for **data-driven advocacy actions** focusing on one of the priority thematic areas: a) Regional cooperation and European integration, b) Education and employability, c) Migration and brain drain, d) Youth participation, and e) Youth action for the dual transition: digital and green. Candidates are encouraged to apply with specific and narrow data-driven advocacy actions within the priority thematic areas mentioned above.

After the evaluation, selected participants (RYLMP Fellows) will be matched in groups of three, one participant per country in line with their areas of interest. They will work with their peers on their data-driven advocacy actions with combined **capacity-building, research mobility, and mentoring support**. Selected participants will spend a **two-week research 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 for their work and mentoring programme to support their journey of data-driven advocacy actions.

Selected participants (RYLMP Fellows) will benefit from **the financial support** provided by the Open Society Foundations to complete their data-driven advocacy actions, including capacity-building, research mobility, and mentoring. The financial support includes travel, accommodation, allowances, and other related expenses to completing the mobility and data-driven advocacy actions. The working language of all activities will be English.

DEADLINE
29th of December 2023

About the Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Programme

The Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Programme (RYLMP) 2022-2025 enables around 40 young researchers from Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia to develop data-driven advocacy plans in fields related to regional cooperation and European integration, education and employability, migration and brain drain, youth participation and youth actions in the dual transition: digital and green. This programme, through capacity building, research mobility, mentoring, and data-driven advocacy actions, helps youth in Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia improve their competencies and knowledge on how to develop evidence-informed/data-driven advocacy action at the local and regional levels. The current RYLMP 2023-2024 is implemented jointly by the Center Science and Innovation for Development (SCiDEV) in Albania, the Youth Education Forum (YEF) in North Macedonia, and the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) in Serbia.

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, young researchers, and youth activists in civil society from Albania, Serbia, and North Macedonia interested in the above-mentioned topics. Candidates should also be able to work in English (both orally and in writing), be willing to spend designated time in another country, work in a team, be keen on regional cooperation, and be engaged in decision-making processes through evidence-based activism and data-driven advocacy.

The selected participants (RYLMP Fellows) will be offered tailored capacity development activities through e-learning and mentoring programme to improve further their competencies 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 levels. Implementing partners will facilitate effective collaboration among youth in Albania, Serbia, and North Macedonia. They will also have an opportunity to spend a two-week research mobility in Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia, 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 events and workshop, regional advocacy actions, and cultural activities for RYLMP Fellows during their mobility period.

The first cycle or cohort of the RYLMP Phase II (2022-2023) was completed in October 2023 with 19 RYLMP fellows from Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia successfully completing their research mobility schemes, finalizing policy documents and research advocacy reports and carrying out evidence-based advocacy actions and awareness raising campaigns on regional cooperation, youth participation, migration, and brain drain and employability. In the second cycle or cohort of the RYLMP Phase II (2023-2024), we seek to attract 21 young activists, researchers, PhD students, and professionals from Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia. The target group is youth (from 21 to 30 years old) from Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

Historical background of RYLMP

RYLMP builds upon the pilot seven-month project developed jointly by the Center Science and Innovation for Development (SCiDEV), Albania, and the Centre for Education Policy (CEP), Serbia, targeting young individuals wanting to actively participate and contribute to change in the society and/or local community and have the capacity to influence societies in the future. The implementation of the RYLMP in 2021 and early 2022 paved the way for the continuation and scaling up of the programme, including North Macedonia into the programme. Learning from the strengths of the initiative that broke barriers and gave participants the flexibility to work and build their capacities in small groups and by providing mentorship, the project partners have advanced the programme in a multiyear project with a 3-year duration of 2022-2025 that includes three project partners from three countries with the support of Open Society Foundations. In the new iteration 2023-2024, RYLMP welcomes a new partner from Serbia, namely the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR), thus strengthening outreach to youth and stakeholders working on youth empowerment.

Call Objectives and Thematic Areas

RYLMP aims 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 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 organizations/implementing partners.

The Call encourages participants to propose data-driven advocacy actions in the following priority thematic areas:

1. **Regional cooperation and European Integration:** Regional initiatives and EU integration (perceptions of young people on regional cooperation; challenges and opportunities of 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 labor 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; higher education and research opportunities for youth);
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; Regional initiatives 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 the dual transition:** digital and environment (digitalization, Artificial Intelligence, ethics, challenges, impact, digital competencies, environmental protection, climate change, awareness raising).

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

Interested candidates should submit project proposals for data-driven advocacy actions and their implementation plans through the [attached template](#), where they briefly identify the main ideas/problems they want to address and reasons why these are relevant. Candidates must outline a proposed methodology for their data-driven advocacy actions and provide background information on the topic. Additionally, their proposal should elaborate on 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, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

An online info session about the RYLMP Call 2023/24 will be organized on December 11th, 2023, at 16:00. You can register by following this [LINK](#). The info session will be recorded and available until the submission deadline.

Eligibility

RYLMP 2023/2024 is open to **21 candidates**, up to 7 from each country, who meet the eligibility criteria listed below and have their data-driven advocacy action proposal evaluated as satisfactory by a Selection Committee.

Following candidates are eligible for participation:

- Appropriate age (**21-30 years old**);
- **Citizenship** (Albanian, North 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;
 - Your researchers from the civil society sector;
 - University students of MA or Ph.D. level;
 - Recent graduates of BA studies;
 - English language proficiency.

Candidates' affiliation with an organization active in the priority thematic areas will be considered an asset.

Evaluation process

A Selection Committee will evaluate submitted applications based on the relevance, the quality of the proposed action, and the potential to inform policy-making 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 2023/2024 will provide financial support to selected candidates in the form of a mobility grant covering travel, accommodation, and living costs (allowances) 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 the interested audience (international and national civic society organizations, institutions, etc.). The launching event will be held in Skopje, North Macedonia, on 28.02.2024-29.02.2024, with covered travel and accommodation costs in the mobility grant of each selected candidate. YEF will host the event.

Capacity building and mentoring

After the selection process, the RYLM Fellows 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, the RYLMP Fellows 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 6 weeks in total in Belgrade, Skopje, and Tirana (2 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 to build lasting cooperation among the participants. The programme will include working meetings among the RYLMP Fellows and the mentors and cultural activities in each country. At the end of the mobility programme, the participants will continue to work jointly on the systematization of the collected data online.

Mobility periods:

Mobility in Skopje: 25.03.2024 - 07.04.2024

Mobility in Tirana: 01.05.2024 - 15.05.2024

Mobility in Belgrade: 10.06.2024 - 23.06.2024.

Alumni network

A special set of activities will be developed and dedicated to facilitating the engagement of RYLMP Fellows within the RYLMP 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 momentum, and building up regional cooperation.

Data-driven Advocacy Actions

The participants will develop evidence-based/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

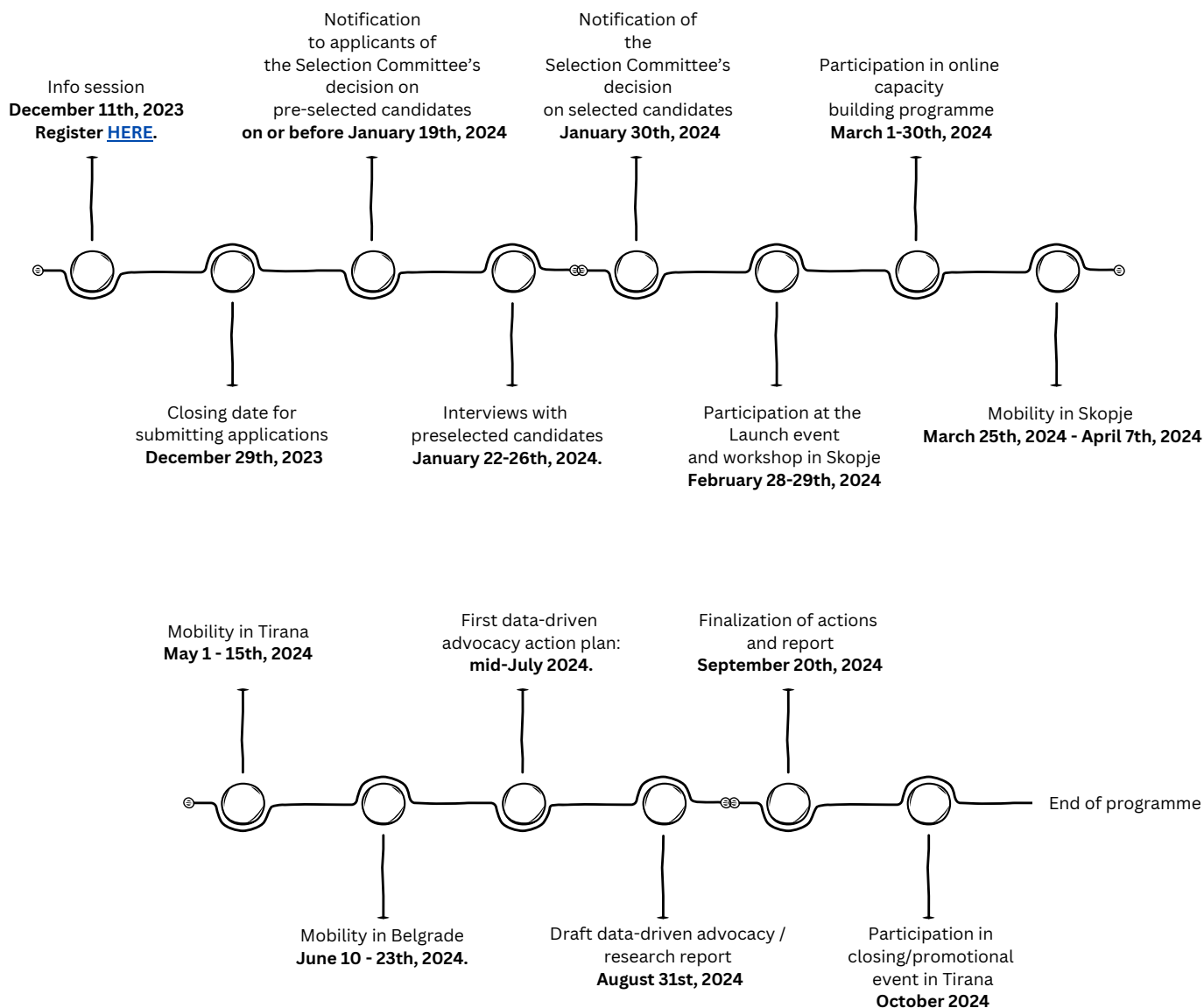
The closing event will take place in Tirana, Albania, in October 2024. The relevant stakeholders will attend the event and disseminate the program's achievements. RYLMP Fellows are expected to attend and present their results at the final event in Tirana. The costs are covered through their mobility grant. The final event will bring together the RYLMP alumni network to discuss lessons learned and plan future steps. SCiDEV will host the event; more details will be developed in 2024.

Regional advocacy event

A regional advocacy event will be organized in Belgrade in a hybrid format whereby RYLMP Fellows will have the opportunity to present their results to decision-makers and regional stakeholders. YIHR will host the event, and more details will be developed in 2024.

The selected participants must 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 documenting project activities in different stages and making them available on social media.

Timeline



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

An **online info session** where candidates can learn more about the RYLMP and ask questions will be organized on **December 11th, 2023, at 16:00**. Please register [HERE](#). The info session will be recorded and available until the submission deadline.

HOW TO APPLY?

The application process has two steps:

Step I – submitting the following:

1. Interested candidates should fill in the [Application Form](#)
2. The [RYLMP Data Driven Advocacy Action Proposal Template](#)
3. Curriculum Vitae (CV)
4. Letter of Recommendation, including a contact of the referee.

Only fully completed applications will be processed.

Step II – interviews with short listed candidates.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE

Interested applicants can obtain more information through the websites of [SCiDEV](#), [YEF](#), and [YIHR](#), by [registering](#) and participating in an online info session or by sending written inquires to the following e-mail address: rylmp.project@gmail.com by December 25th, 2023.