

RYDE

Regional Youth Dialogue
for Europe



Funded by
the European Union

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Call for Proposals

YOUTH FUND FOR LOCAL YOUTH INITIATIVES

Guidelines for grant applicants

Deadline for submission of concept notes
8th May 2024 at 20:00 (CET)



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I SUMMARY

Youth Fund for Local Youth Initiatives provides grants to support civil society organizations for projects that will improve and develop participatory youth policies in communities of the Western Balkans by supporting youth initiatives and fostering active citizenship and participation of young people in monitoring reforms and policies impacting youth in the region.

Total budget of the Youth Fund for Local Youth Initiatives is 250.000 EUR.

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

- minimum amount: **15.000 EUR**
- maximum amount: **30.000 EUR**

Eligible organizations are civil society organizations registered in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*¹, North Macedonia and Serbia.

The duration of a project is 8 to 12 months (exceptionally 15 months).

Implementation of the selected grants is previewed to start in July 2024.

The projects must be completed at the very latest by **30th September 2025. No extension period will be allowed.**

Project proposals within this Call will be submitted in a two-step procedure.

1st step - Concept Note submission: Deadline for submitting concept notes is 8th May 2024 by 20:00 (Belgrade time); Applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the Concep note form annexed to these guidelines (Annex Ia). The applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the concept note and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order. General preview of the budget is to be submitted in the concept note. It is of utmost importance that concept note contains ALL relevant information concerning the project. Please note that incomplete Concept notes will be rejected. Concept notes sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by post) or delivered by hand will be rejected. Hand-written concept notes will not be accepted.

¹ 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.

Applicants must apply in English, **online to the email address: youthfund@centaronline.org**

Information session on this Call for proposals to be held online, on 12th April 2024, from 12:00 to 13:30 (Belgrade time). Should you be interested in this session, please fill in the form by 11th April 2024 to be found [here](#).

Questions requesting further explanations of the Call may be sent by e-mail no later than 20th April 2024 to the E-mail address **youthfund@centaronline.org**. Replies will be individually sent to applicants by 25th April 2024.

2nd step - Full application submission:

The applicants invited to submit a full application following pre-selection of their concept note must do so using the full application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex Ib). The applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the grant application form and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order. A detailed budget is to be submitted only by the applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase.

Mentoring will be available for the applicants in the phase of the preparation of full applications.

II INTRODUCTION

2.1. Youth Fund Context

The Youth Fund “Local Youth Initiatives” (hereinafter referred to as: Youth Fund) is a FSTP (financial support to third parties) i.e. sub-granting activity of the three-year regional project “Regional Youth Dialogue for Europe” (RYDE), funded by the European Union in the period 2023-2026 through EU Civil Society Facility and Media Programme in favour of the Western Balkans and Turkey for 2021-2023 (IPA III). The RYDE project is being implemented by the Center for Democracy Foundation from Serbia as a lead partner in cooperation with the partnering civil society organizations from the Western Balkans: Academy of European Integrations and Negotiations (Albania), Youth Act Center (Albania), Kosovar Stability Initiative (Kosovo*), Network of Progressive Initiatives (Bosnia and Herzegovina), NGO Info Center Foundation (North Macedonia) and Regional Academy for Democratic Development (Serbia).

The Contract authority for the **Youth Fund** is the Center for Democracy Foundation from Belgrade, Serbia, as the lead partner at RYDE (hereinafter referred to as: the Administrator).

The overall objective of the RYDE project is to contribute to strengthening participatory democracy, EU integration and regional cooperation in the Western Balkans through increased impact of civil society organizations (CSOs) and particularly youth organizations in promoting democratic values, political, economic and social benefits of the EU integration of the WB. Specific objectives of RYDE project are:

- **Specific objective 1:** Increase participation of CSOs and youth in structured dialogue on public policies on national/ regional level, with focus on human development and social investment policies relevant for youth and other marginalized groups
- **Specific objective 2:** Strengthen capacities and foster cooperation of CSOs and youth in the WB in addressing political, economic and social challenges in the context of EU integration and development of the social resilience;
- **Specific objective 3:** Promote participatory democracy, democratic values and tolerant political culture, and political, economic and social benefits of the EU integration for the WB societies.

RYDE project refers to the **key challenges** common to all Western Balkan economies:

- a) Slow advancement of democracy with rising political polarization with authoritarian tendencies in some WB economies, periodical/ continuous crisis of democratic institutions, lack of quality public dialogue and general lack of trust in institutions which all result in low participatory practice of citizens in general, and particularly of youth;
- b) Slow socio-economic development - even when there is economic growth, poverty is very high in all WB economies, with high youth unemployment, informal economy, gaps between education and labour markets, with deep rifts between urban and rural areas, coupled with serious demographic challenges as result of ageing societies and high brain drain of young people. There is a need for more human development strategies and wise social investments that would open perspectives for youth and thus produce more social resilience. In view of the rising depopulation, improved socio-economic perspectives for youth, coupled with reforms in the rule of law and improved respect for fundamental rights, are urgently needed.
- c) Long lasting EU integration processes have diminished the transformational strength and appeal of the EU perspective in the eyes of citizens, while other international actors in the region have gained strength and visibility, bringing in new wave of re-traditionalization. However, in all WB economies there is still substantial commitment to reforms and the EU integration.
- d) Nearly all the economies in the Western Balkans have been developing structures for institutional/structured dialogue for monitoring reforms, with specifics that reflect political and civil society situation in each of them, but youth participation is not satisfactory. Capacities for measuring reforms impact are still insufficiently developed; CSOs play an important role in

providing more public dialogue on reforms, but their real impact shall be improved. The need to involve and empower youth has emerged as a critical part of societal growth in the dynamic terrain of the Western Balkans.

Within this context, there is an assessed need to increase capacities of CSOs and youth to participate in structured dialogue on public policies relevant to youth (employment, education, green agenda, sexual and reproductive health, youth participation, culture etc.), to advocate for the adoption of European values and strengthening of democratic and responsible institutions, as well as to promote regional cooperation and political, economic and social benefits of the EU integration for the Western Balkans societies.

RYDE project and its Youth Fund, are being implemented in the context of the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy covering the period from 2019 to 2027 and Youth Action Plan for EU external action adopted by the European Commission, covering the years from 2022 to 2027, especially with Goal 9 of the Strategy: 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: "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 the following: 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). The first ever Youth Action Plan aims to provide a political framework and operational roadmap for a strategic partnership with young people in the EU's external action and it is based on three pillars of action: 1) Engage 2) Empower and 3) Connect.

RYDE project is closely related to the Economic-Investment Plan for the Western Balkans and its 10th flagship - Youth Guarantee program, which is at various stages of implementation in the Western Balkans economies.

RYDE project is also in line with the EU Youth Dialogue, the mechanism that provides a platform for active participation of young people in decision-making process at the EU level (formerly known as a Structured Dialogue). It is a consultative process between policy makers and young representatives based on the principle of co-management which ensures that the opinion and needs of young people are taken into account when adopting youth policies. Serbia is the only economy in the Western Balkans and the only one outside the European Union that implements the EU Youth Dialogue. The RYDE project is also complementary with the Western Balkans Youth Lab project established by Regional Cooperation Council, aimed to strengthen formal and informal mechanisms of youth participation in policy-making process and increase co-creation of relevant policies with youth.

RYDE has been implementing also in line with the Guidelines for EU support to CSOs in the enlargement region, EU Gender Action Plan, Western Balkan Green Agenda, Regional Common Market and other relevant programs, including the activities of RYCO.

RYDE project embraces the Human Rights-based approach (HRBA) and promotes LNOB principle and Agenda 2030 as complementary to the EU integration process.

Through RYDE activities related to knowledge sharing (Research on the Attitudes of CSOs and Youth, Comparative analysis of youth policies in the region, Politeia Regional School for Youth Participation, Politeia Thematic sessions etc.), conducting a public dialogue on youth-related public policies at all levels (Policy labs, public debates, regional conference), as well as through FSTP activities including *Youth Fund for Local Youth Initiatives* and *Active Achievement Fund for Informal Groups*, the RYDE project aims to empower CSOs, particularly youth organization activists and citizens to ensure better environment for young people in the Western Balkans and makes their voices better heard in society.

2.2. Youth in the Western Balkans

Out of nearly 18 million people living in the Western Balkans, approximately 3 million are young. The Western Balkan labour market involves roughly 7.5 million people (15-64), and only approximately 30% of the Western Balkan's youth are active in the labour markets, which is lower than the EU average of 37.8%². The average regional youth unemployment rate is 35.1%, more than double that of 14,5% in the EU³. Data show that 23.7% of young people in the Western Balkans are NEET (Neither in Employment nor in Education or Training), which compares poorly with the 11.1% in the EU.

According to the results of the Research on the Attitudes of civil society organisations and young people "Western Balkans Youth in Policy Making Processes"⁴ conducted within the RYDE project and published in January 2024, top 5 priorities recognized by Western Balkans youth are as follows:

- 1) Employment possibilities
- 2) Quality education
- 3) Housing and affordable living conditions

² Study on Youth Employment in the Western Balkans, Regional Cooperation Council, 2021, <https://www.rcc.int/docs/573/study-on-youth-employment-in-the-western-balkans>

³ Youth unemployment rate in the European Union for 2022, Eurostat, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tesem140/default/table?lang=en>

⁴ Research on the Attitudes of civil society organisations and young people "Western Balkans Youth in Policy Making Processes", 2024, Center for Democracy Foundation <http://www.centaronline.org/en/publication/1935/western-balkans-youth-in-policy-making-processes>

- 4) Youth participation and empowerment
- 5) Mental health support

Data from this Research also shows that 77% of young people in Albania have never participated in policy making process. That percentage is 70% in North Macedonia, 65% in Serbia, 62% in Kosovo*, 53% in Montenegro and 47% in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Even 93% of young people in Montenegro and Serbia believe that current public policies **do not adequately** address youth needs, as well as 89% in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 85% in North Macedonia, 76% in Albania and 67% of young people in Kosovo*. Therefore, it is crucial to continue investing in designing and implementing of youth policies and programmes to facilitate positive changes and improve the situation of young people in the region.

Young people in the Western Balkans participate in political and social processes through non-conventional mechanisms of participation (participation in protests, digital engagement, signing petitions, etc.) to a much greater extent than traditional mechanisms (membership in political parties, voting in elections etc.). Young people's trust in state institutions is at an extremely low level in all Western Balkan economies. That is why civil society organisations in the region, particularly youth organizations, play an important role in mobilising young people to participate in political and civic activities.

According to the National survey “Young People and Politics” conducted by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy in 2019,⁵ young people of Albania are distanced from political parties. The vast majority of them (80%) are not engaged as political party activists either.

According to the Study on Youth compiled by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2018/2019⁶, the majority of young respondents have a clear understanding of their role in legitimising the rule of representative democracy, but apart from voting, they are not politically engaged either in terms of participating in protests and petitions or working for political parties.

According to the latest research and assessments of local policies related to young people and the needs of young people in 15 local self-governments in Montenegro, conducted by the Institute for Strategic Studies and Projections from Podgorica in 2022⁷, on average every second

⁵ Westminster Foundation for Democracy, National Survey: Young People and Politics in Albania, 2019, <https://www.wfd.org/what-we-do/resources/national-survey-young-people-and-politics-albania>

⁶ Study on Youth Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2019, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, <https://shorturl.at/dGQY3>

⁷ Institute for Strategic Studies and Projections, Research and assessments of local policies related to young people and the needs of young people in 15 local self-governments in Montenegro, 2022 https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-06/Istra%C5%BEivanje%20i%20procjena%20omladinskih%20politika%20i%20potreba%20mladih%20u%2015%20LSU_0_1.pdf

young citizen of Montenegro considers that young people are interested in being involved in decision-making in matters that directly concern them, while one quarter of young people state that they are predominantly ready to participate in decision-making processes.

Research conducted by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy in Macedonia⁸ shows that 71% of young people describe themselves as socially inactive citizens. Only 7% of young people declared themselves as members of political parties, and an additional 20% as supporters.

According to a survey carried out in 2023 by the National Youth Council of Serbia (KOMS)⁹, only 2.3% of young people were members of a political party. When it comes to unconventional mechanisms of youth participation in Serbia, KOMS research shows that over 46% of respondents participated in signing a petition or initiative in the previous two years (for example, this percentage at the EU level is 42%). Almost 43% of young people participated in a protest organised by an association, students, informal group or citizens, while 7.4% of young people participated in a protest organised by a political party.

Young people are an important resource for the future of the Western Balkans. On one side, young people can be the key factor for building partnerships and bridging gaps in the Western Balkans as young people do not carry the burden of the past and therefore can contribute to building trust, tolerance and mutual respect. Through regional cooperation young people are to be included in policies aimed to economic growth, intercultural exchange, building trustworthy institutions and democratic society and creating an environment that will entice youth to stay in this region. At the same time, young people are not spared from influence of nationalism, prejudices, hate speech and fake news which are all also reflected on their attitudes towards European future of their economies and the region.

III OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CALL

3.1. The overall objective of the Call

The overall objective of the Call is to improve and develop participatory youth policies in communities of the Western Balkans by providing support through awarding grants for youth initiatives that foster active citizenship and participation of young people in designing and monitoring reforms and policies impacting youth in the region.

⁸ Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2019, Youth in North Macedonia: Optimism, Apathy or Disappointment? <https://www.wfd.org/what-we-do/resources/youth-north-macedonia-optimism-apathy-or-disappointment>

⁹ Alternative report on the position and needs of youth in the Republic of Serbia, 2023, National Youth Council of Serbia

3.2. Expected results

The expected results of the projects supported within this Call are as follows:

- a) Strengthened capacities of youth (CSOs, youth organizations, women organizations) for practicing participative democracy, active participation in the life of their communities, and particularly in policy design/monitoring and decision-making processes;
- b) Voices of young people with fewer opportunities are better heard on local, national and regional level (marginalized groups, Roma, other minorities, migrants/refugees, LGBTIQ persons, persons with disabilities)
- c) Gender equality between girls and boys, young women and men is promoted
- d) Sustainable development and social resilience are promoted
- e) Young people are engaged in promoting tolerance, inter-cultural dialogue in the polarized societies;
- f) Promotion of the EU values and standards of democracy, tolerance and regional cooperation;

IV SUPPORT STRUCTURE

The Youth Fund for Local Youth Initiatives includes the following kinds of support:

- a) Financial support
- b) Mentorship program in between concept note and full application phases
- c) Capacity building for grantees on project cycle implementation

4.1. Financial support

Total budget of the Youth Fund for Local Youth Initiatives is 250.000 EUR.

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: **15.000 EUR**
- maximum amount: **30.000 EUR**

Co-financing is not required.

4.2. Mentorship program

The applicants invited to submit a full application following pre-selection of their concept note will be offered the opportunity to use mentoring support for drafting full applications. Mentors experienced in project writing and financial management will provide them with guidelines and instructions through online one-day mentoring. The full applications submitted by the applicants participating in mentoring will not be better evaluated on the ground of their attending the mentoring support.

4.3. Capacity building for grantees on project cycle implementation

Upon the selection of full applications, the selected grantees will be provided with a two-day online training on project cycle implementation. Trainers experienced in project cycle implementation, financial reporting and EU visibility will learn them on narrative and financial reporting procedures and instructions, visibility requirements according to the new EU Guidelines for Communicating and Raising EU Visibility, etc.

V RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

5.1. Eligibility of applicants

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

1. be a legal person
2. be non-profit-making
3. be a non-governmental civil society organisation – citizens association, foundation etc. (please note that the Evaluation Committee will take into consideration the different legal forms of registration in the respective economies – citizens association, foundation etc.)
4. be established in an IPA III Beneficiary under the Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance, except Montenegro (see section 5.4.) at least 2 years before the filing of the application to this Call
5. be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project
6. has an annual turnover of at least 15.000 EUR in the last financial year prior to filing the application within this Call

Please note that international organizations and pillar-assessed organizations are not eligible under this Call for proposals.

Associate partners may be involved in the project but may not receive funding from the grant. The Applicants will be the only beneficiary of the grant awarded.

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

5.2. Eligible projects

Projects that can be supported under this Call are the following:

- Projects in support to empowerment of youth and social inclusion of marginalized groups of youth
- Projects promoting dialogue between young people and local/national institutions and/or local/national authorities on youth policy and other policies impacting youth

- Projects promoting youth participation in policy/decision making at local, national and regional level
- Advocacy and lobbying projects in favour of better status of youth in the society
- Projects in support to participation of youth in designing local and national social and economic development or cultural exchange
- Projects in support to promotion of human/minority rights on local /national/ regional level, intercultural dialogue and understanding
- Projects supporting cultural participation and intercultural dialogue among youth
- Projects supporting gender equality within the youth and counter attempts for re-traditionalization of gender roles
- Development of policy papers, monitoring reports, public opinion surveys, legislation revision, and budget analysis including manuals on best practices related to the priority themes;

5.3. Types of activities

The following types of activities may be financed under this Call:

- ✓ Organization of local and national events, debates, workshops, seminars to increase youth capacities, including those belonging to vulnerable groups, to monitor reforms and participate in public policy dialogue on local and national level
- ✓ Education members of youth organizations, schools and local communities about their rights
- ✓ Awareness raising campaign to motivate young people to engage in policy making processes relevant for the ongoing reforms on local and national level
- ✓ Conducting research and analytical work in the context of monitoring youth related policies in the context of EU integration processes;
- ✓ Development of policy papers, monitoring reports, proposals for legislation revision and budget analysis and modification proposals;
- ✓ Creation of innovative tools for youth participation – (music, video, exhibitions etc.)
- ✓ Activities promoting social cohesion, social resilience, intergenerational dialogue and solidarity, and addressing the demographic challenges in the Western Balkan
- ✓ Activities promoting of antidiscrimination culture, gender equality and countering social and political polarization and hate speech
- ✓ Activities promoting of sustainable development and youth related policies in the context of EU integration

- ✓ Dissemination of information on benefits of the EU integration of the Western Balkans for the youth
- ✓ Advocacy and lobbying activities, such as for respect of fundamental rights, antidiscrimination practices, policies responding to youth needs and priorities, social cohesion and social resilience

5.4. Location of activities foreseen by project proposals

The activities previewed in the project proposals must be implemented on one of the following WB economies: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, North Macedonia and Serbia.

Although Youth Fund will not be implemented in Montenegro (RYDE project is not implemented in Montenegro), the activities foreseen by the submitted project proposals may preview participation of young people and/or organizations from Montenegro as participants of particular activities (e.g. trainings, conferences etc.)

5.5. Duration of project and implementation

The duration of a project is 8 to 12 months. Exceptionally 15 months of the project duration may be approved if justified by the scope and duration of activities previewed.

The projects must be completed at the very latest by **30th September 2025. No extension period will be allowed.**

5.6. 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 shall not exceed 30% of total project budget
- ✓ 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). Production of printed material, gadgets, publications and similar outputs are generally not recommended.

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 projects. 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 project.

5.7. 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;
- Value-Added TAX (VAT) – VAT costs are borne by the applicant; therefore the applicant should budget the costs without VAT.

5.8. 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 Dialogue for Europe - RYDE” project 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 Communicating and Raising EU Visibility Guidance for External Actions) specified and published by the European Commission at:

https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/document/download/e6c7b8f5-e3e6-4458-ae7e-9cc313a338b8_en?filename=communicating-and-raising-eu-visibility-guidance-for-external-actions-july-2022_en_0.pdf

VI HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

Project proposals within this Call will be submitted in a two-step procedure.

6.1. Concept note phase

1st step - Concept Note proposal:

The applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex Ia). The applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the concept note and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

In the concept note, the applicants must only provide an estimated budget. A detailed budget is to be submitted only by the applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase. It is of utmost importance that this document contains ALL relevant information concerning the project. No additional annexes should be sent. Please note that incomplete concept notes may be rejected.

6.2. Supporting documents to be submitted with the Concept notes:

The applicants must submit by e-mail, attached to the Application the following supporting documents:

- 1) Scanned versions of the original **Court decision or Certificate of registration** with certified translation in English;
- 2) **Annex IV** - Declaration on responsibility of grant applicant signed by authorized person and stamped
- 3) **Certificate of authorized person** of the organization
- 4) **Annex V** – Declaration on partnership of associate partner (if any)

Applicants should take into consideration the time necessary to obtain official document from national competent authority and to translate and certify such document in English.

As the supporting documents are mandatory for the reviewal of the Concept notes, their absence will lead to the rejection (negative evaluation) of the Concept note.

6.3. How and when to send concept notes

The deadline for the submission of Concept notes is 8th May 2024 by 20.00 CET (Belgrade Time). Concept notes with the attached supporting documents should be submitted by email to: youthfund@centaronline.org

Any Application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

The subject of the e-mail should be: **Applicant's Name_Concept note_Youth Fund (example: Center for Democracy Foundation_Concept note_Youth Fund)**

Concept notes sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by post) or delivered by hand will be rejected. Hand-written concept notes will not be accepted.

Every applicant will receive an email shall receive an email response by the Administrator acknowledging the application receipt. The applicants should reply to the sender confirming the reception of the email.

The applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit their application, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection could lead to difficulties in submission. The Administrator cannot be held responsible for any delay due to afore-mentioned difficulties.

6.4. Further information about concept notes

Online Information session on this Call for proposal will be held on **12th April 2024** from 12:00 to 13:30 (Belgrade time).

Should you be interested in this session, please fill in the application form by **11th April 2024** to be found [here](#).

The Info session is available to maximum two participants per organization.

Questions requesting further information may be sent following the information session **no** later than **20th April 2024** on e-mail youthfund@centaronline.org.

The subject of the email should be: **Questions_Potential applicant's name_YouthFund e.g. Questions_Center for Democracy Foundation_YouthFund**

The Administrator has no obligation to provide responses to questions received after this date. CSOs will receive responses to their questions no later than **25th April 2024**.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Administrator cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of the overall application or any part of it. There will be no individual replies to the posed questions.

6.5. Full application phase

2nd step - Full application proposal:

The applicants invited to submit a full application following pre-selection of their concept note must do so using the full application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex Ib).

Please note that the budget submitted in a full application phase should not differ more than **10%** in relation to the amount presented in the Concept note.

The applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the grant application form and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order. Mentoring will be available for the applicants in the phase of the preparation of full applications.

6.6. How and when to send Full applications

The applicants whose Concept notes are accepted will receive notification letters with an invitation to submit full applications. All applicants with successful Concept notes will be invited to attend the previously explained mentorship program with instructions for drafting full applications.

The applicants whose Concept notes have not been evaluated positively will receive a notification letter with relevant information. Applicants must prepare and submit full applications in English using the following documents:

Annex Ib – Full Application Form

Annex II – Detailed Budget Form

Annex III – Logical Framework

Additionally, scanned version of original **financial account for the last financial year** prior to filling the Full application with certified translation in English shall be submitted as supporting document.

Applicants should take into consideration the time necessary to obtain official document from national competent authority and to translate and certify such document in English.

6.7. Where and how to send full application

Full application package of documents shall be sent **by email**. E-mail for submitting Full applications is the same as for the Concept note: youthfund@centaronline.org.

The subject of the e-mail should be: **Applicant's Name_Full application_Youth Fund (example: Center for Democracy Foundation_Full application_Youth Fund)**

Applications sent by any other means or delivered to other e-mail addresses or by hand will be rejected.

6.8. When to send full applications

The provisional Timeline for all of the related activities is provided bellow.

The applicants preparing full applications will be duly informed of the final date for submission of applications. Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

The applicants are 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.

VII EVALUATION

7.1. Concept note evaluation

The concept notes that have passed the administrative check are to be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed project. This is performed by the Team of Evaluators.

The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 45 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation criteria are divided into two Sections and subheadings.

Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

EVALUATION GRID for Concept notes		
Section		Maximum Scores*
1. Relevance of the Project	Sub-score	25
1.1 Is the proposed Project eligible? How innovative and relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for proposals?	5	
1.2 Are the overall and the specific objectives in line with the Call demands?	5	
1.2. Are the proposed activities eligible? How relevant are the activities to the special objectives and results?	5	
1.3. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are the target groups and final beneficiaries? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5	
1.4. Is the proposed budget feasible? How relevant is the budget to proposed activities?	5	
2. Design of the Project	Sub-score	20
2.1 How coherent is the overall design of the project? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the project?	5x2**	
2.2 To what extent does the Project design address the specific situation of the target economy?	5	
2.3 Are the activities feasible and consistent in relation to the expected results (including timeframe)? Are results realistic, measurable, achievable and clearly defined?	5	
TOTAL SCORE		45

**this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

7.2. Evaluation of full applications

The full applications that have been submitted timely and in line with the Guidance, are further evaluated on their quality. Full applications will receive an overall score of 100 using the evaluation grid below. The evaluation criteria are divided into five Sections and subheadings.

Scoring:

The evaluation grid is divided into Sections and Subheadings. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation grid for full applications		
Section		Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity		15
1.1 Do the applicants have sufficient in-house experience of project management? Do the applicants have sufficient in-house expertise? (knowledge and experience of the issues to be addressed)		5 x2**
1.2 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance; does the turnover/annual budget indicate a capacity to deal with a grant of the size requested under the call?		5
2. Relevance		25
<i>Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation</i>		
3. Design of the Project		20
3.1 How coherent is the design of the project? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the project? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged results? Are gender issues adequately addressed?		5
3.2 Does the Logical Framework include credible targets and sources of verification?		5
3.3 To what extent does the Project design address the specific situation of the target economy and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?		5
3.4. Does the design take into account external factors (risks and assumptions) and include plans to adapt to such risks materialising, or assumptions not being fulfilled?		5
4. Implementation and sustainability		25
4.1 Is the Activity plan for implementing the Project clear and realistic?		5
4.2. Is the Project likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?		5
4.3 Is the project likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing?		5
4.4 Are the expected results of the proposed Project sustainable? - Financially (e.g. financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs)		5

- Institutionally (<i>will structures allow the results of the project to be sustainable? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the project?</i>) - At policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the project – e.g. improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods</i>) - Environmentally (if applicable) (<i>will the project have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i>)	
4.5 Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices, constructive partnerships with public central and local authorities, relevant bodies and economic stakeholders; and/or the other additional elements)? How relevant are the added-value elements?	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the Project	15
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the results satisfactory?	5x2**
Maximum total score	100

** : this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

VIII SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

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 above. The selection criteria presented above 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.

Selected applicants will receive notification letter within 15 days of deadline for submission Full applications. Other applicants will receive a notification letter that their full application was rejected. The selected applicants may be required to revise their proposals and the respective budgets in accordance with the suggestions of the evaluation team.

Signing of the grant agreements and disbursement of funds allocated by the grants is previewed in the period June-July 2024 (see provisional timeline below).

The start of the project implementation is planned from **1st July 2024**.

IX 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 organizations at the time of the Grant agreement signing.

On-field monitoring will be done by partners from the RYDE project partner organizations 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 the awarded organizations at the time of the Grant agreement signing.

X INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Description of the activity	Date
Publishing of the Call for proposals	8 th April 2024
Informational session (online)	12 th April 2024
Deadline for submitting questions	20 th April 2024
Deadline for responses by Administrator	25 th April 2024
Deadline for submission of Concept notes	8th May 2024
Evaluation of Concept notes	May 2024
Notification of applicants; Invitations to attend mentoring and submit full applications	Until 22 nd May 2024
Mentorship program (for applicants who opt for it)	From 25 th May to 5 th June 2024
Deadline for submission of Full applications	15th June 2024
Evaluation of Full applications	15-30 th June 2024
Notification of awarded grantees	1 st July, 2024
Contract signature	July 2024
Start of grant implementation	July 2024
Two-day training for grantees	At the beginning of July 2024