

Call for projects: SEE Special Fund 2022 (South-Eastern Europe)

Since its inception in 1963 following the signature of the Élysée Treaty, the Franco-German Youth Office (FGYO) has been supporting youth exchange programmes between France and Germany. These exchanges are the main thrust of our action. The meetings we support are aimed at promoting the idea of unity, mutual understanding and cooperation throughout Europe in a democracy at peace. To this end, the FGYO has also extended its programmes to trilateral meetings.

The FGYO's trilateral programmes take place between France, Germany and another country. Thanks to the intercultural dimension of these meetings, they give young people an opportunity to interact with their peers in a broader international context, to get to know each other and to map out their future on a personal and professional level and as a citizen. On one hand, their newly-acquired skills are the key to success in their subsequent training and career. And on the other hand, they have a positive effect on democracy, human rights and solidarity.

Their experiences of mobility and the underlying dialogue and cooperation prepare young people to live out diversity and the fundamental values in their life as members of society and of the European project. When the emphasis is placed on educating young people for citizenship and peace, they learn to support democratic processes, shoulder responsibilities and become actively involved. These skills are especially valuable in the current context – a period in which the European Union's values are being put to the test in certain regions – because they help guarantee prosperity and peace.

Within the framework of its commitment for Europe, the FGYO is particularly attentive to cooperation with the Western Balkans in a bid to support them in their plans to join the EU, and to contribute to the success of the peace process through its South-Eastern Europe Initiative. Since 2000, the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs and the German Federal Foreign Office have been supporting the initiative and funding the FGYO in equal parts through the SEE Special Fund. Within the framework of this call for projects, subsidies are awarded to projects that stand out for their **innovative nature** and their **strong European focus**. For over 20 years, the FGYO's South East Europe Initiative has demonstrated its ability to make a useful contribution to high-priority areas of key importance for youth and support the far-reaching changes encountered by civil societies in a European perspective.

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1 Overall framework

1.1 Objectives

Under Article 3.5.6 of its Directives, the FGYO, within the framework of this call for projects, supports trilateral youth exchange programmes and training courses between France, Germany and a third country. These meetings must be **innovative** and relate to a **current** sociopolitical situation. These exchanges must also put forward **new teaching approaches and methods**, encourage **young people to get actively involved**, include **new target groups** and produce **concrete results**.

1.2 Types of projects

Priority will be given to international youth exchanges, including **face-to-face meetings**, but factoring in the current health situation. Under the circumstances, it is also possible to propose a project in the following formats:

- **Hybrid format:** the phase of face-to-face meeting with the group is prepared, continued or evaluated online.
- **Digital meeting:** the participants in one or more trilateral working groups use digital tools to discuss their work on a project together and produce either specific results for each group or a joint output. The content of these online meetings must be justified from a teaching point of view.
- **Mixed format:** face-to-face meetings with people living in the same country are only possible if they are held in conjunction with an online meeting with the participants from all three countries. Ideally they should be followed by a phase of trilateral, face-to-face meetings. These meetings must be justified from a teaching point of view.

When a grant application is submitted for a face-to-face project, it is essential to indicate whether the project could be carried out in a different format! The FGYO provides information about the [tools](#) and the [teaching materials](#), along with an [explanatory video](#) on holding digital meetings and digital training sessions for young people. All of the necessary resources can be accessed through [this link](#).

1.3 Main themes

The projects must address at least one of the following themes. A balanced appreciation of the theme in view of the challenges raised by the current health crisis and its repercussions will be received with interest within the projects.

A Civic education to strengthen the role of young people and civil society

Young citizens' participation and involvement are an essential pillar of open, prosperous societies. This desire to take part in the life of the city is a major concern for young people from all over Europe, whether they are from European Union Member States or from the Western Balkans.

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The proposed meetings supported by the FGYO can therefore encourage young people to become involved at local, national or European level and form a network of active civil society stakeholders. These projects foster youth involvement in society, whether through associations, federations, twinning committees, youth councils, trade unions or political parties. This way, young people can learn to use important tools, make their voices heard and be seen as stakeholders in their own right, both now and in the future.

Moreover, young people in South-Eastern Europe need greater trust in democracy and the rule of law; the aim today, as it was in the past, is to strengthen the fundamental freedoms and the protection of minorities. Accordingly, the FGYO intends to support projects that help bolster democracy, good governance and human rights, the most important of which are freedom of expression and opinion, gender equality, LGBTIQ+ issues and the rights of minorities. The focus should therefore be on freedom of the press, along with basic training in how to use the new media with a critical, thoughtful approach to the information received. Special attention should be paid to educating people about nationalism and populism, stereotypes and prejudice, since these create a fertile breeding ground for racism, and discrimination against religious or non-religious groups or individuals, holding up consolidation of the rule of law in the Western Balkans region.

B Rallying youth behind Europe

How can we rally young people in South-Eastern Europe behind Europe and strengthen cooperation between Germany, France and the Western Balkans? All over the world, the European Union is seen as a model of successful regional integration. It can be a source of inspiration and a yardstick. Understanding, investigating and explaining the "European Union" as a peace plan in the difficult geopolitical context of the 21st century is an educational mission for today. The projects are invited to map out prospects for South-Eastern Europe and the European Union, since it is only by acting together that Europeans will be able to reduce the differences in Europe and resolve the cross-border challenges.

C Vocational training, innovation and entrepreneurship

The possibility of doing training and entering the workforce with good conditions of employment and satisfactory career prospects on the job market are decisive factors for a society's economic growth and collective well-being. These features shield a society from a potential brain drain, the long-term consequences of which weigh heavily on a country's economic, political and societal situation.

Good-quality vocational training that meets the job market's needs, together with support for youth entrepreneurship, are key factors in supporting youth employment and young people's active participation in their country's job market. The FGYO draws on this special fund to help finance meetings for young people doing a university course or in vocational training, looking for a job or being eased into the workforce, on the theme of vocational training and entrepreneurship in various fields and in particular renewable energies, digital technology and healthcare.

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D Youth remembers

The Western Balkans are currently marked by starkly divergent opinions regarding their common history. Historical denialism jeopardises the peaceful and democratic future of South-Eastern Europe. The FGYO intends to support projects that investigate the different perceptions of the past, along with research findings and forms of commemoration, through open debates. Youth exchange programmes devoted to history and to preserving and passing on collective memory in an innovative way play a valuable role here. They help preserve important historical sites by undertaking volunteering projects; they visit sites that are steeped in memory but have sunk into oblivion or commemorative sites; or they continue non-formal historical work the resources of the digital age.

Lastly, the FGYO intends to support youth exchange programmes on the theme of cultural heritage, which investigates the identity and the history of a country or a region. The FGYO-supported exchanges can accordingly underscore the manner in which it is understood in the countries represented, how the population and in particular young people come to grips with it, and how it is preserved and showcased.

E Environmental protection, sustainable development and urban development

There is no Planet B. Apart from climate change, air pollution regularly makes the front page of newspapers in the Western Balkans and in European Union countries because it puts the population's health at risk. Environmental pollution jeopardises intergenerational justice and is often the result of short-term policies. It is linked to economic development, but also to a form of urban development that fails to give sufficient consideration to the development potential of smart cities.

The FGYO accordingly encourages meetings in cities and rural areas that deal with such issues as sustainable development and environmental and climate protection, more specifically to support the young generation's commitment. Because climate change and environmental and air pollution know no borders.

2 Criteria for selection and financial support

2.1 Project sponsors and organisation team

The applicants mentioned in the Directives in Article 4.2.1 and Appendix 8 may act as project sponsors. Project sponsors may be non-profit associations, local or regional authorities, organisations and associations in the sector of non-formal education for children and young adults, culture, science, the media and sport. The project may also be sponsored by schools, universities and vocational training establishments, or by twinning committees.

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Apart from the project sponsor from France or Germany, at least one organisation from each of the other two countries must be involved in organising and carrying out the project.

2.2 Target groups and participants

The target group consists of young people between the ages of three and 30. Meetings subsidised within the framework of the special fund are intended specifically for young people actively involved in civil society. This means children, pupils, and young people doing an apprenticeship, in higher education, looking for a job or in employment, in particular in the youth sector. The FGYO particularly encourages disadvantaged youth¹ to get involved.

Moreover, we are seeking diversity among the participants, including gender parity, and a balanced number of participants per country (one third of the participants for each country). The total number of people participating, including the leadership team, must not exceed 60. For any other information, including the number of subsidised leaders, please refer to the FGYO Directives.

2.3 Project location and duration

According to the principle of reciprocity, a project consists of three phases of meetings, one in each country. Each phase consists of between four and 21 nights and may be spread over a period of one to three years. Applications are to be submitted separately for each phase of the meeting and are valid only for the parts of the cycle taking place within the budget year from January to December 2022. A set start and finish date must be specified for the purpose of calculating the grant. The meetings may only be held in one of the participating organisations' countries.

2.3 Third country

The following countries are eligible: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Kosovo², Montenegro and Serbia.

The project's content and the regional, geographic or historic themes selected may justify exceptions for a regional cooperation. Projects with North Macedonia and Greece are therefore possible to support their process of rapprochement. Regional cooperation in the Western Balkans may also include Croatia and Slovenia.

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¹ Official European Commission terminology. You will find a definition of this group in the Directives set out on pages 83-85. Please remember to inform young people with a disability of the existing offers and include them in the projects.

² This designation is without prejudice to positions on the status and complies with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 adopted in 1999 and with the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the declaration of independence of Kosovo.

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2.5 Educational criteria and obligations

Applicants are to present the project's **educational concept** by answering the questions on the application form. They should also present a **provisional programme** for the face-to-face meeting or the digital communications.

The following aspects must be planned for and will be examined during the project selection process:

- **Intercultural learning:** the target groups are introduced to the question and work in mixed, trilateral groups;
- **Introduction to foreign languages:** the languages represented must be given adequate airtime during the meeting; it can be helpful to use the language to facilitate the meeting or to use a group leader as interpreter. English can be used as the language of communication;
- **Critical use of the media:** the project raises participants' awareness of fake news and helps them forge their own opinion by asking them to vary and check their sources of information;
- **Environmental protection:** to what extent does the project proposal factor in, or contribute to, environmental protection (such as CO₂ emissions)?
- **Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** in what way does this project support one or more of the 17 [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)?
- **Results and impact:** the project should produce a concrete result³ and reach people outside the circle of participants;
- **Participation:** the participants will have to be actively involved in designing and carrying out the project and its outcomes.
- **Communication and visibility:** The project should include a communication strategy for the press and social media, of which the embassies' co-operation and cultural action departments will also be informed. The FGYO's support is mentioned and its logo is displayed on all communication documents. The selected projects will be presented by their organisation in the [regional Facebook group](#). The [FGYO communication kit](#) will also prove useful.

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3 Grant

The FGYO subsidises the projects selected in accordance with Article 3.5.6 of its Directives, with the help of funding from the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) and the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The subsidy may amount to a **maximum of €20,000 per phase of meetings**. It is advisable to **contribute to the grant** and to seek additional **third-party funding**.

This call for projects may also include online projects (with preparatory phases involving participants living in the same country). If so, the connection costs, pro-

³ Publications, blogs, videos, plays, radio broadcasts, exhibitions, presentations, debates, along with concrete projects and fresh initiatives.

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Professional fees, teaching equipment and any other consumables (such as office supplies), or the cost of renting technical or IT equipment or digital tools for a limited duration, may be included in the programme costs.

In the case of face-to-face meetings, the travel and accommodation expenses may also be subsidised in accordance with the FGYO Directives.

Capital costs such as the purchase of cameras, video cameras, computers, printers and hard disks are not eligible for support.

60 % of the grant will be transferred one month before the project phase begins. The balance will be paid once a breakdown of how the funds were used has been received and checked. These documents are to be submitted as soon as possible and, at the latest, two months after the end of the project. For projects that took place between 15 November and 31 December 2022, the deadline for presenting the itemised breakdown of expenditure is the 15 January 2023.

4 Submission of applications and selection of the projects

The **German or French project leader is to fill in the dedicated online application form** in [French](#) or [German](#) and submit separate applications for each phase of the project (preparatory meeting, phases 1, 2 and 3) by **1 November 2021**. Further details of the online meetings can be provided at this stage. Project phases that will take place only in two years' time may not be submitted until the year before they will be carried out.

The application is to be sent **by the French or the German partner organisation by e-mail to trilateral@ofaj.org**. We are unfortunately not allowed to transfer subsidies to another country than France or Germany. A legitimate partnership and joint organisation of the exchange programme are nevertheless important prerequisites. The application form must be accompanied by a **provisional programme**. It may be accompanied by any additional information deemed necessary. Applicants who have never received a grant from the FGYO must submit the **status of their association**. Incomplete documents will not be included in the selection process.

All project leaders who submit their application through a central partner office of the **FGYO partner organisation** undertake to **inform** this organisation **of their participation in the call for projects beforehand** and to **abide by the current decentralised procedure**.

A jury selects the projects. Projects that are not selected may be put on a waiting list. Projects that are declined may nevertheless be subsidised by one of the competent offices of the FGYO and should submit a grant application in accordance with the FGYO Directives.

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