

Call for projects: CEE Special Fund 2023 (Central and Eastern European countries)

More than 20 years after the last armed conflict, no one would have thought it possible that the word 'war' would shake our continent once again. Since its inception on the 5th of July 1963, the Franco-German Youth Office (FGYO) has worked to promote understanding and peace in Europe. In 1971, the FGYO extended its originally Franco-German programmes to include additional European countries. Since then, within the framework of trilateral programmes, the FGYO has strengthened dialogue on an equal footing, supported the sharing exchange of knowledge and experience, and imparted intercultural skills to young people in a Europe of diversity.

As a centre of excellence for both governments, the FGYO assists young Europeans in their commitment to democracy, freedom and peace. The knowledge that young people acquire through trilateral exchanges is not only crucial to a successful education and career path. This knowledge also strengthens participants in their personal development and contributes towards a prosperous civil society.

In addition, mobility programmes make diversity tangible and impart a sense of European values and fundamental rights to young people. The focus throughout is on political education and peace education. In this way, project participants learn to support democratic processes and come to understand themselves as stakeholders in European civil society/societies. All of these skills strengthen the cohesion of the people of Europe. They contribute towards safeguarding prosperity and peace – an aim that, in the current context of the war in Ukraine, is more important than ever before.

With the Central and Eastern Europe Special Fund (CEE Special Fund), which is made available in equal measure by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the FGYO has been active in the region for more than 30 years. The trilateral projects with Member States of the European Union (EU) as well as with countries of the Eastern Partnership and the Council of Europe are characterised by their **pilot character** and a **strong European orientation**.

1 Overall framework

1.1 Objectives

In accordance with Article 3.5.6 of its Directives, the FGYO supports trilateral youth exchange programmes and training courses involving France, Germany and a third country. These meetings must be **innovative** and relate to a **current socio-political situation**. The exchanges must also put forward **new teaching approaches and methods**, encourage **participants to become actively involved** and **include new target groups** in order to produce **concrete results or a product**.

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1.2 Types of projects

Priority should be given to international youth exchanges or training courses for experts in the form of **face-to-face meetings**, while taking the current infection situation into account at all times. Projects can also be proposed in the following formats:

- **Hybrid formats:** The phase of face-to-face meetings with the group is prepared, continued or evaluated online.
- **Digital formats:** Participants in one or more trilateral working groups use digital tools to work together on a project and produce either specific results for each group or a joint output. The implementation in digital format must be justified and carried out using appropriate methods.
- **Mixed formats:** A meeting with participants from the same country can be held parallel to the digital meeting. Face-to-face meetings with participants from the same country, however, are possible only if they are held in conjunction with an online meeting with all participants from all participating countries. Ideally they should be followed by a phase of trilateral, face-to-face meetings.

If you are planning digital or hybrid modules, or a digital or hybrid project, the FGYO can assist you with this by providing information about [mechanisms](#), [tools](#) and [teaching materials](#), along with an [explanatory video](#). To refer to these, please follow [this link](#). If a grant application is submitted for a face-to-face project, please indicate whether the project could, if necessary, be carried out in a digital format as well.

1.3 Main themes

For all projects, an outlook on the challenges of the war in Ukraine and its consequences, which are particularly pronounced in the region, will be greatly appreciated. This also applies to related issues such as migration movements or the growing threat to democracy and freedom. The FGYO will also consider projects that deal with issues of European solidarity, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts.

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The projects must address at least one of the following main themes:

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

Today, democracy, human rights and freedom of expression are under increasing threat. This is true of Member States of the European institutions (EU and Council of Europe) and of their neighbours as well.

The FGYO is therefore keen to support projects that promote civic education and intercultural learning; this helps strengthen responsible governance, democratisation and the protection of human rights. Gender equality, LGBTQI+ and minority rights, the best interests of children and the rights of persons who have fled their homes play a special role in this context. The aim is to promote projects engaged in preventive work and to prevent discrimination of any form.

The FGYO is also keen to foster greater civic engagement among youth in society and to encourage young people to make their voices heard. Youth participation is an indispensable pillar of open societies. Young people should be able to get involved in associations, federations, twinning committees, youth councils, trade unions and political parties. They should be able to make their voices heard as stakeholders who are respected in their own right, both now and in the future.

FGYO-supported projects may also network with relevant stakeholders in civil society (at local, national or European level) or provide young people with the tools they need to be active members of the community.

B The future of the European concept and citizenship

As the latest armed conflicts in Europe demonstrate: Democracy, peace and the rule of law cannot be taken for granted. In some EU Member States, populism, nationalism and fake news are challenging the very concept of the European Union, even though the latter is regarded the world over as a unique model of successful regional integration. European values and rights must be systematically conveyed and the cohesion between the countries of the continent restored. How can Europe be explained in an educational approach? How does Europe work today? What role does the EU play in the world, and what can young people do to shape the future of Europe? Where is European cooperation working? What do young Europeans think about a continent in which war as a means of doing politics has returned? How can young people dedicate themselves to a united Europe, solidarity, democracy and peace? How can European values be put into practice?

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C Peace and remembrance education

Few regions have been as deeply marked by the 'century of extremes' as Central and Eastern Europe. Violence and genocide were particularly marked there during the Second World War. During the Cold War, dictatorial regimes systematically quashed human rights, freedom of expression and the right to mobility. We owe the implosion of the Eastern European dictatorships, and with them the end of divided Europe, in large part to the civil societies of Eastern Europe.

History is sometimes forgotten. But the mistakes of history must not be repeated. For this reason, the FGYO supports projects on peace education that focus on history and remembrance, hone the change of perspective, look to the future and open up new paths for cooperation.

D Vocational training and sustainable entrepreneurship

Solid training, fair and dignified work, professional mobility and access to continuing education contribute towards economic prosperity, social cohesion and the elimination of social and economic inequalities. They are the bedrock on which democratic societies work. This is why the FGYO favours meetings on the theme of vocational training, and between vocational training establishments, young people in training, young people in employment and jobseekers.

The aim here is to permit interaction about work practices, avenues for integrating people into work, or to self-employment in social and environmental undertakings. For many years, the programmes run by the FGYO and its partner organisations have been supporting interaction with the traditional trades and with jobs in the social sector. The FGYO expressly also supports project proposals by universities in the field of renewable energies, energy efficiency and sustainability, digitalisation, new technologies and healthcare.

E Environmental protection in the fight against climate change

The FGYO supports projects on environmental issues. These projects will spotlight the way in which young people approach and respond to climate-related issues. The focus will be on promoting renewable energies in Europe, highlighting the energy dependency of individual countries and showing solutions for strengthening energy autonomy in times of war.

What measures do young people see as necessary and as a priority at the European level? How can they themselves get involved, and how should they act in everyday life? Exchange about the relationship between stability, security, prosperity, the environment and health are also eligible for support.

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2 Criteria for selection and financial support

2.1 Project sponsors and organising team

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

Apart from the project sponsor from France or Germany, at least one organisation from another country must be involved on an equal footing in organising and carrying out the project. The involvement of young people in the application process, project development and project implementation is desirable.

For legal reasons, the application can only be submitted by a structure with a registered office based in Germany or France.

2.2 Target groups and participants

The target group consists of young people between the ages of three and 30. Meetings 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, as well as stakeholders in the youth sector. The FGYO particularly encourages young people with special needs to get involved.¹

Gender parity, and the number of participants between the participating countries, should be balanced (preferably one-third each). No more than 60 people, caregivers included, may participate in the exchange. For further information, including the number of subsidised leaders, please refer to the [FGYO Directives](#).

2.3 Project location and duration

Under the FGYO principle of reciprocity, a project consists of three phases of meetings. Each phase consists of between four and 21 nights in each partner country. The overall project, with all three phases, can last for a period of 1 to 3 years. Separate applications must be submitted 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 2023. A set start and finish date must be specified for the purpose of calculating the grant. The meetings may only be held in the participating organisations' countries.

¹ Official European Union terminology. You will find a definition of this group on pages 83-85 of the FGYO Directives.

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Physical or digital preparatory meetings for purposes of planning the meeting phases for which an application has been submitted are also eligible under this call for projects.

2.4 Third country

All of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe may apply for project support. These include the EU Member States (Bulgaria, Estonia, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Hungary) as well as some of the EU's Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine). In 2023, priority will be given to projects with Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary. If the security situation permits, projects with Ukraine or with refugees from Ukraine or other countries are also eligible for support.

Regional cooperations (subsidised beyond the three participating countries) are possible only in exceptional cases justified by the content, and require a regional geographical and/or historical reference. Youth meetings are possible with other regions or countries, such as South-Eastern Europe, provided they satisfy the requirements for regional cooperation.

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 and/or the digital communications.

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

- **Intercultural learning:** The project promotes awareness of the topic, of intercultural work and knowledge transfer in trilateral groups;
- **Participation:** The participants should be actively involved in designing and carrying out the project and its outcomes;
- **Critical use of the media:** The project raises awareness of fake news and helps them forge their own opinion by asking them to vary their-sources of information;
- **Environmental and climate protection:** Are topics of environmental protection taken into account in the content of the meeting or carried out within the framework of project implementation and organisation itself (e.g. reduction of CO₂ emissions in logistics; promotion of commitment to environmental and climate protection within the framework of the meeting)?
- **Sustainability:** Does the project support one or more of the UN Sustainable Development Goals ([UN Sustainable Development Goals – SDG](#))?

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- **Outcomes and impact:** The group should produce a concrete outcome² and reach people outside the circle of participants;
- **Raising awareness of languages:** Sufficient space should be given to the languages represented in the project. Language animation and group interpreting can help in this regard. English can be used as a communication language.
- **Communication and visibility** The project should include a communication strategy for the press and social media; this should also be communicated to the embassies' and consulates' cooperation and cultural action departments as well as municipal and regional institutions. The support of the FGYO is mentioned in it, and the FGYO logo is shown on communication materials. The projects selected will be presented by their organisations in the regional [Facebook group](#). The [FGYO communication kit](#) will also prove useful.

3 Financial support

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 for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) and the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The grant may amount to a **maximum of €20,000 per project phase**. The maximum allocation of the grant will be determined based on the duration of the project and the number of participants involved. It is advisable to **contribute** to the grant and to seek additional **third-party funding**.

In the case of online meetings and hybrid projects, the FGYO can assist with the cost of renting technical or IT equipment or digital tools for a limited duration. Connection costs, fees, limited planning materials and consumables such as office supplies may also be considered as eligible programme costs.

In the case of face-to-face and hybrid meetings between participants residing in the same country, 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, hard disks, etc., are not eligible for support.

Following approval of support, 60% of the grant will be transferred to the project sponsors one month before the project phase begins. The balance will be paid afterwards, 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.

² E.g. publications, blogs, videos, plays, radio broadcasts, exhibitions, presentations or debates, along with concrete follow-up projects or fresh initiatives.

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For projects that take place between 15th of November and 31st of December 2023, the deadline for presenting the itemised breakdown of expenditure is 15 January 2024.

4 Submission of applications and selection of the projects

For each project phase (preparatory meetings, phases 1, 2 and 3), an application must be submitted by the project leader from Germany or France using the **online application form**. The deadline for submissions is **1st of November 2022**. Information on additional online meetings may be included in the application. 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 must be sent **exclusively by e-mail to trilateral@dfjw.org**. The application form must be accompanied by a **preliminary draft of the programme**. This may be supplemented by additional information. Institutions that have never received a FGYO grant before are kindly requested to attach the statutes of their association. Incomplete application documents will not be included in the selection process.

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

The selection of the projects lies with a jury. 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.

5 Contact

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