

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### EU YOUTH SOUNDING BOARD FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

#### Q1: How can I apply?

Please fill out this application form between **31 March and 26 April 2023, 23:59 CET**.

See the **call details** [on our homepage](#) section for detailed information.

#### Q2: What is the Youth Sounding Board (YSB)?

The YSB is an advisory body to DG INTPA, composed of 25 young people from all over the world.

It is a space for meaningful involvement of young people in the EU's external action and international cooperation. The YSB will allow young people to have an influence on EU external action and international partnerships and will thereby contribute to make EU action more participatory, relevant and effective for young people in EU partner countries.

The YSB will define its work plan and activities in dialogue with DG INTPA. Details of the scope of the YSB's activities will be discussed and further clarified together with YSB members once the YSB is established.

#### Q3: Can I apply both as an individual and as a member of an organisation?

No, one person can only apply once. You have to decide whether you want to apply as an individual candidate or a candidate nominated by an organisation. Double entries will result in disqualification of the application.

#### Q4: How do you define a youth and youth-led organisation?

Youth organisations are civil society organizations with an overt youth participation and empowerment purpose as actors of good governance and development with the aim to foster meaningful youth participation in the society (in the economic, social and cultural spheres) and in public-policy making and implementation at local, regional and global levels.

Youth-led organisations should be understood as organisations in which young people under 30 occupy the majority of the decision-making positions, or have youth-led structures that have a formal say in the decision-making bodies, or that the majority of the members who make decisions on the working plan are young people under 30.

### **Q5: What do you mean by youth participation and youth empowerment?**

Youth participation is a process by which young people are able to have a say and influence issues that affect them. This applies to all areas of a young person's life, from family, school, local communities, public services, and wider government policy.

Youth empowerment is about providing young people with specific opportunities, resources and skills so that they can participate fully in civic, economic and political life. Young people are empowered when their voices are heard and the inequalities that affect their lives are tackled.

The [Youth Action Plan in EU external action](#) aims at promoting the engagement of young people as strategic partners, supporting their empowerment, to build more resilient and inclusive societies and make progress towards global commitments such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement.

### **Q6: I live in the EU, can I apply?**

Yes, the YSB is open to all applicants that hold the citizenship of or reside in one of the eligible countries. Please see the list of eligible countries [on our homepage](#).

### **Q7: I don't live in the EU, can I apply?**

Yes, the YSB is open to all applicants that hold the citizenship of or reside in one of the eligible countries. Please see the list of eligible countries [on our homepage](#).

### **Q8: I am afraid I will not be able to join the YSB meetings in Brussels, can I apply?**

YSB members are expected to attend the meetings in Brussels during their mandate. Participation in meetings can be excused under justified circumstances. Nevertheless, regular and effective participation is necessary for the good functioning of the group. Insufficient availability to participate in the YSB meetings may lead to the suspension of the individual appointment.

### **Q9: I am not a member of a youth organisation, can I apply?**

Yes, you can apply regardless of your involvement in a youth organisation. The individual application category is open to all young people.

### **Q10: What are the selection criteria?**

All candidates must fulfil the following eligibility criteria:

- be between the age of 18-30 at the end of the application period (26 April 2023)
- be available to devote at least 25 days per year to the YSB;
- have a good command of English
- hold the citizenship of or be a resident in one of the eligible countries (please see the list [on our homepage](#)).

Besides, individual candidates will be selected based on:

- Experience in youth participation and youth empowerment;
- Outreach and youth engagement skills and experience, including work with youth organisations or youth-led initiatives and experience with youth that are in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations;
- Communication skills including language skills and experience with traditional and social media;
- Creativity and motivation, including ideas for the YSB functioning and activities.

If you apply as a nominee of an organisation, your organisation will be additionally assessed based on the following criteria:

- Experience in strengthening youth participation and contribution to policy processes (consultations, advocacy);
- Potential for outreach to youth (membership base, networks, possibility to reach vulnerable youth);
- Geographical coverage (the organisation should be active in the eligible countries with priority given to international youth organisations / networks active at regional and/or global levels). Please see the list of eligible countries [on our homepage](#).

#### **Q11: Will YSB members be paid?**

Engagement in the YSB is voluntary. However, costs related to travel and meetings will be covered and a monthly allowance for coverage of data costs will be provided.

#### **Q12: What will YSB members do?**

YSB members will provide advice to DG INTPA on youth participation and empowerment in EU external action policies. They will also be involved in the implementation and dissemination of the Youth Action Plan. For more details, please check the call for applications.

#### **Q13: How much work will YSB membership involve and where will the work be done?**

The approximate number of working days will be 25 per year and will depend on the work plan developed by YSB members and DG INTPA.

YSB members will be expected to attend at least three plenary meetings per year, as well as to use online tools and platforms between the meetings, and to work with similar structures and existing youth initiatives at international, regional and country level in the EU and beyond. The YSB meetings will take place online as well as in Brussels. In addition, YSB members may be invited to travel to participate in international conference.

#### **Q14: Our organisation is based in the EU, can we apply?**

Organisations do not apply directly, but nominate young people to apply with their support (see selection criteria for organisations).

Organisations active in eligible countries can nominate young people to be YSB members. Please see the list of eligible countries on our [homepage](#).

#### **Q15: Our organisation is not based in the EU, can we apply?**

Organisations do not apply directly, but nominate young people to apply with their support (see selection criteria for organisations).

Organisations active in eligible countries can nominate young people to be YSB members. Please see the list of eligible countries on our [homepage](#).

#### **Q16: What are the selection criteria for organisations?**

Youth organisations can nominate two individuals, preferably with a different profile in terms of age, gender and experience, to become members of the YSB. Each nominated candidate must apply individually. Candidates will be requested to upload a pdf-scan of the signed nomination letter (see template on our [website](#)) and provide further information about their organisation.

The selection will be based on two aspects:

(1) the profile of the organisations, taking into account:

- Experience in strengthening youth participation and contribution to policy processes (consultations, advocacy);
- Potential for outreach to youth (membership base, networks, possibility to reach vulnerable and marginalised youth);
- Geographical coverage (the organisation should be active in the eligible countries), with priority given to international youth organisations / networks active at regional and/or global levels.

(2) the profile of the nominated candidates, based on the same criteria as described under option A in the call.

Please note that selected candidates will be appointed in their individual capacity.

#### **Q17: What are the next steps after I apply?**

Applications can be submitted online by 23:59 CET on **26 April 2023** via [via EUSurvey](#).

Receipt of applications will be confirmed by email. As we expect a high number of applications, we advise you to apply well in advance of the deadline in order to prevent potential technical issues. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

The selection process will be conducted in two stages according to the indicative calendar:

- First stage: all candidates will be informed of the outcome of the first stage (shortlist) of the application by **30 May 2023**
- Second stage: shortlisted candidates will be invited for interviews between **1 - 20 June 2023**.

Final results: all shortlisted candidates will be informed of the final results by **30 June 2023**.

First (virtual) meeting of the YSB: **summer 2023**  
Meeting in Brussels: **October 2023 (tentative)**

**Q18: I don't have a university degree, can I apply?**

Yes, the YSB is open to young people regardless of their education. We also encourage young people with less experience to apply.

**Q19: I don't have an English language certificate, can I apply?**

Yes, you can self-assess your language skills using [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages CEFR](#) tool. The interviews will, however, be carried out in English and the candidates' language skills will be assessed at this stage.

**Q20: I have a hearing or/and speaking disability, can I still apply?**

Yes, we encourage the application of people with disabilities.

**Q21: Can young people with less experience apply too?**

Yes, all motivated young people are welcome to apply, including those with less experience.

The YSB aims to be diverse and inclusive. It should bring together a range of opinions and experiences from across age groups, areas of interest and expertise, gender, socio-economic background and countries/regions (with specific attention to the regions in which DG INTPA is active, like Sub-Sahara Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, Middle East, Asia and the Pacific and the EU, including diaspora communities). Candidates with special needs, disabilities, in situation of vulnerability or from minority groups are encouraged to apply.

**Q22: Which are the eligible countries?**

The list of eligible countries can be found on our [website](#).

**Q23: Why is the country of residence not eligible? / Why is the country of which I am a citizen not eligible?**

The EU Youth Sounding Board for International Partnerships will focus on the geographic areas of EU international cooperation and development relevant to the mandate of EU Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen.

**Q24: Can candidates that are younger than 18 or older than 30 years still apply?**

No, the call is only open to candidates that are between 18-30 years old at the end of the application period (26 April 2023).

**Q25: About the nomination letter: I am the director/president of an organisation and I am the person that can authorise and sign for the organisation. Can I nominate myself?**

Yes, you can nominate yourself. Alternatively, you can also indicate the issue in the letter and have the letter signed by another member of the organisation (board member, vice-president, treasurer etc.).

**Q26: Do nominating organisations need to be youth-led or can they be youth-focused organisations?**

There is no restriction regarding the organisational structure of nominating organisations. However, nominating organisations will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Experience in strengthening youth participation and contribution to policy processes (consultations, advocacy)
- Potential for outreach to youth (membership base, networks, possibility to reach vulnerable youth)
- Geographical coverage (the organisation should be active in the eligible countries), with priority given to international youth organisations / networks active at regional and/or global levels

**Q 27: Are there examples of the work undertaken of previous Youth Sounding Boards for International Partnerships?**

The [2021-2023 cohort of the YSB](#) was engaged in the process of co-creation of the Youth Action Plan. The YSB drafted a report '[Meaningful Inclusion of Youth: A Promising Future](#)', prepared in the context of consultations for the Youth Action Plan in EU external action. In the report, young people from around the world voice their opinions, share thoughts about the challenges they face and propose solutions.

YSB members have also worked on their own long-term projects (LTPs) on four topics: **diversity and inclusion, intergenerational dialogue, leadership and community-building and outreach to young people**. The outcomes of the LTPs are being incorporated into INTPA actions and programming on youth.

**Q 28: Can I fill out the application form in a language other than English?**

No, applications can only be submitted in English. Candidates need to have a good command of English. Please see also Q18 for further information.

**Q 29: Can I apply if I am an employee of a youth organisation?**

Yes, young people that meet the eligibility criteria can apply either as individuals or as candidates nominated by a youth organisation.

**Q30: How much time am I expected to invest?**

YSB members will hold at least three plenary meetings per year, and will discuss and

exchange in-between the meetings, using online tools and platforms. They will also liaise with similar structures and existing youth initiatives at international, regional and country level, both in the EU and in the partner countries. The approximate minimum number of working days will be 25 per year and will depend on the work plan developed by the board and DG INTPA, covering the above-mentioned objectives and related activities. The three meetings per year will be held during the workweek and/or weekend (half or full days). Other activities can be organised in a more flexible way.

**Q31: Will there be physical meetings in 2023?**

YSB meetings will be virtual, hybrid or physical, depending on the situation and taking into account sanitary restrictions.

The first meeting in Summer 2023 will be virtual. The following meeting should take place in Brussels in October 2023 (tentative).