

# REGIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP MOBILITY PROGRAMME

[Centre for Education Policy](#) (Serbia) and the [Science and Innovation for Development Centre](#) (Albania) are launching a Call for Participation to the **Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Programme** (RYL-MP).

The Programme is open to youth representatives (21-30 years old) from academia and civil society organisations interested in developing capacities in the field of leadership, research, and intercultural competences, and in strengthening regional relations between Serbia and Albania.

Candidates shall apply with their individual research proposals focusing on one of the topics: (a) Digital Transformation in education OR (b) Youth Participation. Selected participants will benefit from the financial support of the by Open Society Foundation (hereinafter “OSF”) offices in Albania and Serbia to complete their research project in the other country. The research mobility must be carried out during the period February – May 2022 and must culminate in the publication of a research report/policy brief. The working language of all activities will be English.

**Deadline for applications: 06<sup>th</sup> of December, 2021**

**Centre for Education Policy (CEP)** is an independent multidisciplinary research centre which provides professional support to decision makers and practitioners in developing, implementing and evaluating policies in the field of education. To complement these, CEP continually strives to identify and bring to light areas in need to be addressed by both decision makers and scientific community, while strongly advocating in favour of informing education policy and practice with evidence provided through social science research.

**The Science and Innovation for Development Centre (SCiDEV)** is an independent organization that aims to support and incentivise sustainable, economic and social development and democratisation in Albania and the wider region. SCiDEV's primary target groups are: youth, young professionals, researchers, higher education institutions, government institutions, local CSOs and grassroots groups, and media. It primarily engages in research, capacity development, advocacy and knowledge brokering, Project Development, Fundraising, Networking, Science Communication, Engagement of Academic Diaspora.

to produce high-quality research with impact on activism and decision-making and to facilitate effective collaboration between youth in Albania and Serbia. They will also have an opportunity to spend up to one month in Albania or Serbia (Serbian participants will go to Albania and vice versa) and do part of their research there. During this time, participants will work with designated mentors that will support them through the process and with the selected topic. This is intended to not only expand the participants' research capabilities and subject matter knowledge, but also to improve their advocacy skills and engage in evidence-based activism. The programme will organize different dissemination activities as well as two joint events, one in Belgrade and one in Tirana to discuss and promote the findings of the final research report/policy brief to be prepared by the participants.

### **Call Objectives and Priority Areas of Research**

The overall objective of RYL-MP is to empower youth to build and strengthen competences, such are leadership, research, policy, advocacy for participation and activism in public life, policy development and regional cooperation. The programme seeks to support young people, students, youth activists and youth researchers with opportunities to improve their competencies and pursue areas of their interest while providing some valuable and relevant research for national policy development. The specific objectives of this call are to:

## **WHAT IS REGIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP MOBILITY PROGRAMME**

Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Programme (RYL-MP) was designed by Centre for Education Policies ([CEP](#)), Serbia, and Centre Science and Innovation for Development ([SCiDEV](#)), Albania, as an answer to the OSF initiative of creating platform for regional cooperation of strategic priorities.

The OSF Strategy aims to respond to multiple challenges, ranging from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic to climate change and the seemingly inevitable economic and social crises that are likely to ensue. To that end, one of the pillars of OSF's work in the region is Economic and Social Justice. Increased bilateral cooperation between Albania and Serbia, including the establishment of the Youth Leadership Mobility Platform, feeds precisely into this goal. OSF Albania also had envisaged similar actions in their action plan i.e. bilateral project with Serbia.

**Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Programme (RYL-MP)** specifically targets Master or PhD students, recently graduated students, youth researchers, young professionals and/or youth activists from Albania and Serbia with research interest and background in the above mentioned topics that have the capacity to work and present their research in English (both orally and in writing) and are keen in participation in regional cooperation as well as be engaged in decision-making processes through evidence-based activism and participation.

The selected participants will be offered tailored capacity development activities through e-learning and mentoring with the aim to further improve their skills and knowledge on how

- Enable young people (students/researchers, young professionals and activists) to produce and disseminate individual research projects focusing on the research question in another country (in Albania or Serbia, depending on applicant's country of residence) in the areas of Digital Transformation in Education and Youth Participation;
- Provide opportunities for youth from Serbia and Albania to establish bilateral cooperation and become acquainted with context in another country in relevant areas.

The Call encourages research proposals that explore issues related to:

*Digital Transformation in Education* – This topic allows for the exploration of various research questions including, but not limited to, improved accessibility and access to online learning, personalized learning experiences, virtual learning environments, security across digital devices and space, teaching digital citizenship, big data and many more.

*Youth participation* – this topic is of very high strategic importance in both countries. Research proposals that can have some practical policy application or can evolve into specific actions are welcome. Candidates may choose to explore what youth participation in Albania and Serbia entails and/or how it can be implemented for different age groups. It is possible to explore various strategies and mechanism for youth participation or representation of specific groups, bringing in an equity and gender perspective.

Interested candidates should submit a research proposal through the attached template, where they briefly identify main ideas/problems they want to investigate and reasons why these are relevant. Candidates will need to outline a proposed methodology for research that, if selected, can be further developed in cooperation with a mentor. Additionally, their proposal should include some consideration about how research findings can be used in the future, e.g., for advocacy, raising awareness, policy making, etc. Finally, considering the mobility dimension of this programme, candidates should also reflect on potential comparative aspects between Albania and Serbia.

Submitted research proposal will be evaluated by a Selection Committee based on the relevance, the quality of proposed methodology, and the potential to inform activism and advocacy as outlined in the Annex 1 - Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Proposal Template.

The research will be accompanied by dissemination activities, providing the opportunity to share ideas and policy recommendations with relevant stakeholders. In this process, participants will have opportunity to cooperate with peers and exchange with decision-makers from Serbia and Albania, and thus receive extensive capacity building.

An online info session about the mobility programme will be organized on 26.11.2021. You can register by following [this link](#). The info session will be recorded and available until submission deadline.

## **Eligibility**

The programme is open to 10 candidates, 5 from Albania and 5 from Serbia, which meet the eligibility criteria listed below and have their research proposal evaluated as satisfactory by a Selection Committee<sup>1</sup>.

Following candidates are eligible for participation:

- Appropriate age (21-30 years old);
- Citizenship (Albanian OR Serbian), with a residence within the territory of the country of citizenship;
- Willingness to work on strengthening regional cooperation;

<sup>1</sup> Research evaluation criteria are found in the Annex 1 - Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Research Proposal Template.

- Background (one of the listed):
  - Master or PhD students
  - Recently graduated students
  - Youth researchers
  - Young professionals from civil society organisations,
  - Youth activists.

Candidates' affiliation to an organization active in the field of education research, youth participation, regional cooperation or digital transformation will be considered as asset.

## **Mobility Programme Content and Scope of Research Activities**

1. Launching event in Tirana, Albania, on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022, with covered travel and accommodation costs covered by the organizers.
2. Capacity building programme on research methodology, use of research results, and targeted writing skills (policy recommendations, policy briefs, advocacy materials, research informed policies and youth participation) offered through online workshops. Participation in the capacity building workshops/trainings is mandatory.
3. Dedicated *mentoring programme* to support selected applicants in finalizing their research design, offering assistance during the field research and providing feedback during report writing process.
4. *Mobility period*: Selected applicants will spend one month in the other country. They will receive a mobility grant in the amount of \$300, while another \$700 will cover accommodation, living and travel costs to host countries.
5. *Publication of the results*: The final version of the research reports/policy briefs submitted by each participant will go through a peer-review mechanism and will then be published by CEP and SCiDEV and promoted online. Participants are encouraged and will be supported, if needed, to submit the research for publication in journals.
6. *Closing event* in Belgrade, Serbia, in late May 2022. The event will be attended by the relevant national stakeholders and will also serve to disseminate the findings from research. Travel and accommodation costs will be covered by the organizers.

It is obligatory for the selected participants to participate in all activities. All selected participants will be required to sign a letter of commitment.

All selected participants will be required to sign a letter of commitment if their research proposal is accepted, as well as the contract according to the legislation in domestic country. Travel, accommodation and per diem for the launching event in Tirana and final event in Belgrade will be covered by organizers.

## **Timeline\* (tentative)**

1. Info session: November 26, at 10:00 am. [Registration link](#).
2. Closing date for submitting a research proposal: December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021
3. Notification to applicants of the Selection Committee's decision: on or before December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021
4. Participation at the 1st launch event in Tirana: January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022
5. Participation in online capacity building programme: TBC January – February 2022
6. Stay in Albania/Serbia: March & April 2022
7. First research report draft submission: May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022
8. Submission of the final version of research report: May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022
9. Participation in closing/promotional event in Belgrade: May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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

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*// Reminder*

*Online info session where candidates can learn more about the RYL-MP and ask questions will be organized on November 26<sup>th</sup> 2021*

*You can register by following [this link](#). Info session will be recorded and available until submission deadline.*

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## **HOW TO APPLY?**

The call is open from November 16<sup>th</sup> to December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

The application process has two steps:

1. Interested candidates should fill in the [Application Form](#); and
2. Interested candidates should download and complete the [Research Proposal Template](#) and send it via email to ([rylmp2021@gmail.com](mailto:rylmp2021@gmail.com)) together with Curriculum Vitae and Letter of Recommendation including contact of referee.

Only fully-completed applications (Step 1 and 2) will be processed.

Specific health related conditions for staying in Serbia and Albania are those valid at the time of planned stay and countries' entry conditions are published at following links of competent national institutions: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs RS-entry regime](#) and [Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Albania](#).

## **IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE**

Interested applicants can obtain more information through websites of [CEP](#) and [SCiDEV](#), through registering and participating at an online info session or by sending the written inquires on following e-mail address: [rylmp2021@gmail.com](mailto:rylmp2021@gmail.com)