



PROJECT CALL FOR THE YOUCA ACTION DAY 2026

YOUCA is looking for three partner organizations around the theme "beyond capitalism"(*)

Are you an organization in Belgium, Europe or beyond working with young people on the broad theme of "beyond capitalism"(*)? Then maybe your organization will become one of our three partner organizations with whom we'll reach 15,000 students, 8,000 employers and the Belgian press in 2026!

YOUCA is looking for **three strong partner organizations** with projects that create space for and by young people to strive for a more sustainable and just world. For our YOUCA Action Day campaign in September and October 2026, we are gathering 4 young people from one Belgian, one European and one non-European partner organization in Belgium to exchange as a group of 12 around the topic "beyond capitalism"(*). Each partner organization will also receive €90,000 to support their organization, strengthen an existing project or realize a new idea.

1 INTRODUCTION

Who is YOUCA?

[YOUCA - Youth for Change and Action](#) - is a youth movement dedicated to creating a just and sustainable future. We dream aloud of a **sustainable and just world** in which **young people** are in charge. Through connection, collaboration and experience, YOUCA aims to create spaces for and by young people worldwide where they can reach their full potential and take action. This is also what we look for in the partner organizations we support. Organizations that not only benefit young people, but where they themselves can be at the helm (within the organization or a specific project). We look for organizations with a strong message, that aim to empower young people and give them tools to contribute to a more sustainable and just society. After all, YOUCA believes in the power of young people worldwide.

Why the YOUCA Action Day?

Every year, YOUCA organizes the [YOUCA Action Day](#). On this day, more than 15,000 young people from Flanders and Brussels commit to spending a day

working for a company, organization, government or private individual. The salary (70 EUR) they earn on that school day goes to youth projects worldwide.

With the proceeds from our annual **YOUCA Action Day**, we strengthen organizations in which young people worldwide have the opportunity to develop into active citizens and fight together for a sustainable and just society. For one year, YOUCA highlights **one central theme**, works with young people around this theme, supports organizations worldwide that are already doing inspiring work around it, and creates encounters between young changemakers from around the world. We put committed young people in the spotlight **to inspire other young people to roll up their sleeves**. During the campaign, through stories from our partner organizations around the world, we highlight multiple perspectives of a single theme and hope to bring a rich and nuanced story of change.

The annual theme: "beyond capitalism"(*)

For our YOUCA Action Day campaign in 2026, we are looking for three strong partner organizations - one Belgian, one European (non-Belgian) and one international (outside of Europe) - working in one way or another around the broad theme of **"beyond capitalism"(*)**. This can mean a lot, think for example of the following questions:

- Does your organization stand up against the injustices brought about by the economic system and the global economy?
- Is your organization looking for solutions for a more just society *beyond capitalism*?
- Are you an organization taking action to stop exploitation - of people, planet, nature or animals?
- Do you seek an economic system that is fair?
- Or are you standing up against our devastating addiction to more and more resources?
- Are you looking for a way to live in a different way with less impact on people and planet?
- Or do you do something completely different to challenge the economic system and the injustices that grow out of it?

(*) "Beyond Capitalism" is a temporary working name. After selecting partners, we will refine this theme based on the organizations' work and expertise. We will then develop a strong slogan for the campaign that fits our identity and the identity of the selected organizations. YOUCA will be substantively supported in this campaign by a thematic expertise organization in Belgium.

The campaign and exchange

The YOUCA Action Day and the campaign come about together with the selected organizations. Several exchanges take place leading up to the YOUCA Action Day to shape and spread the campaign message, and the young people get to know each other.

- **JANUARY 2026**
YOUCA selects three strong partner organizations. Collaborations are launched, expectations checked and contracts signed.
- **FEBRUARY - AUGUST 2026**
The YOUCA Action Day is more than just one day. Prior to the day, we organize a campaign to raise awareness and mobilize young people. We are creating this story together with the selected organizations. Preparations for the campaign will take place during this period. Section 2.10 further describes what is expected of the partner organizations during this period.
- **SEPTEMBER 2026**
The highlight is an exchange in which 12 young people (4 young people per supported organization) with their facilitator will come together in Belgium in September '26 to exchange with each other and inspire as many young people as possible with their stories and challenge them to think about the annual theme "beyond capitalism." For part of the exchange, they will stay in pairs in host families and visit schools to talk about their organization and exchange with the Belgian students participating in the YOUCA Action Day. The campaign focuses on the voice of young people.
- **OCTOBER 2026**
We bring the annual theme and the story of young people worldwide further into schools, including educational materials and the project film, and spread the campaign widely through various communication channels. The high day of the campaign is the YOUCA Action Day: 200 schools, 15,000 students and 8,000 employers participate. We are ubiquitous in social media and in the press. No further input is expected from partner organizations here.
- **NOVEMBER 2026 - APRIL 2027**
YOUCA youth set up awareness campaigns or a project around "beyond capitalism" in the school year following YOUCA Action Day. There will be another evaluation moment with the partner organizations with opportunities to look at further cooperation with and between organizations; for example, delegating youth to our selection committee for the 2027 campaign.

In point 2 you will find the conditions for candidacy. Only if you can tick these positively does it make sense to apply. Then we will choose a brief candidate file without too many fixed guidelines, as long as the questions in point 4 are answered. You may add attachments such as photos, testimonials... but keep all the essential information in the candidate file. Let your creativity run wild. Convince us with your answers that you are the perfect partner for YOUCA Action Day 2026.

The candidate dossier may be submitted in English. We encourage you to elaborate and write the dossier with young people. We look forward to your proposals!

2 CONDITIONS OF CANDIDACY

1. YOUCA supports organizations supported by young people (15-25 years old) where young people are active participants. Youth participation has a central place in the activities you do with them. For example, they help decide on the planning, implementation and evaluation of activities. Or you have, for example, a youth committee or council that advises you. Or you do this in another way.
2. YOUCA supports organizations that work directly with young people who are systematically underrepresented or oppressed in the local context and have a specific focus on:
 - inclusive work: gender balance, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities ...
 - social, environmental and economic sustainability
3. YOUCA supports organizations that work unambiguously around the annual theme "beyond capitalism" or a partial aspect of it, for example:
 - Economic inequality or poverty
 - Exploitation of people, planet, nature or animals
 - Alternatives to the consumer society
 - A struggle against the global addiction to resources
 - Alternatives to the economic system
 - Degrowth
 - Questioning money flows that devastate the planet and human rights
 - ...
4. YOUCA supports organizations that are locally based, but encourages networking on a regional, national and international level.
5. The organization must exist for at least one year and have good knowledge of the field and society in which they work.
6. The mission and activities of the organization must be in line with YOUCA's vision and mission.

Youth exchange (local and global), sensitization and education are also objectives of the candidate. The organization can also identify with and contribute to the values of YOUCA: sustainability, justice, connection, participation and courage.

Read more: <https://www.youca.be/en/about-us?lang=en>

- 7.** The organization must be registered as a legal entity in its country of operation.
- 8.** The organization must have extensive experience in project implementation and monitoring, as well as good administrative capacity. This means:
 - The same order of budgets previously managed and have a maximum annual turnover of 2 million
 - Good financial routines and corruption prevention measures
 - Have strong quality control of activities embedded in their operations
 - Always be available for a financial audit
 - Meet reporting requirements: one-time financial and narrative report on formats provided by YOUCA, this also asks for visuals and input from the youth of the project. A general annual report from the organization is expected annually.
- 9.** The organization may cover (or pre-fund if paid for with YOUCA financial support) certain costs of the campaign and its preparations itself. The cost of practical and pedagogical preparation and the cost of the local film crew. A maximum of 5% of YOUCA's budget may be spent on this logistical and practical organization of the exchange and preparation.
- 10.** The organization is a source of expertise and actively provides input in the preparation of the campaign and during the exchange. This means:
 - Sharing knowledge about your organization and the geographical area and the annual theme within your organization and context (political, economic, social ...)
 - Contribute to good implementation of the campaign, more concretely:
 - Input for one lesson (worked out by YOUCA and a Belgian expertise partner) for Belgian school students on how the year theme is reflected in your reality
 - Provide input to editorial boards prescribed documents about the organization (website, school brochure,...)
 - Preparing the exchange of 4 young people in Belgium in September 2026.
 - Selection of young people and contact with their parents
 - Visa procedure and practical preparation for the trip
 - Pedagogical preparation of the young people (including intercultural skills, public speaking, and mental support) for the trip
 - Creating interactive presentation for Belgian school students
 - Digital exchange with YOUCA youth

- If relevant, organizing a parents' evening
 - ii. Organizing a film shoot with a film crew in your organization and context for the campaign film i.c.w. YOUCA and our Belgian filmmakers.
- 11.** The organization has transparent, public and regular financial reporting; and the organization has a demonstrable democratic structure.
- 12.** For non-European organizations: Demonstrated experience and know-how in obtaining funds from the European Union, ideally Belgium.
- 13.** The organization contributes to YOUCA's future campaign by being involved in the choice of the annual theme and the selection of organizations for YOUCA Action Day 2027, ideally young people.

3 PRACTICAL INFORMATION

- YOUCA is organizing an online info session with Q&A (in English, you may provide your own interpreter) with interested organizations on Wednesday, August 20 at 10:00 CET and 17:00 CET. You can learn more about the call and ask questions here.
 - Give a call to anke@youca.be if we can expect you!
 - If no one in your organization can speak English, please contact anke@youca.be in Dutch, French, German or Spanish.
- Send your candidate file, along with the latest annual report as an attachment, via email to partnerships@youca.be no later than **19/10/2025 at 11:59 pm**.

The selection procedure

- The YOUCA project committee will make **an initial selection in November** based on eligibility, strength of the candidate file (below) and potential for collaboration.
 - The project committee consists of YOUCA youth (15-25 years old) and youth from project countries we have worked with in previous years.
 - If clarification is needed, a Q&A will be scheduled with the organization involved.
- All organizations receive **feedback** and the news of whether they have been selected for the next round of selection: voting, no later than **15/12/2025**.
- The selected candidate organizations will prepare in advance a one-pager and a short video about their project proposal. On Tuesday, 23/01/2026, we will organize an online and physical voting. The one-pager and the video will be delivered to voters. These are YOUCA youth (15-25 years old) and students from YOUCA schools (3th to 7th secondary, all fields of study). Young people from project countries we have worked with in previous years can also vote online.
 - The selected candidate organizations will be invited on 23/01/2026 (online) to a Q&A session with youth voting.
 - The Q&A will be followed by consultations between the young people themselves and with experts. Young people formulate questions for the partner to answer in Q&A sessions.
 - Afterwards, the partners for the YOUCA Action Day 2026 will be chosen by the young people. The candidate organizations will be informed of the decision as soon as possible after the voting.

The financial support

Each of the three organizations will receive €90,000 in financial support after the YOUCA Action Day. This may be used to support their organization, strengthen an existing project or realize a new idea. A first installment of €70,000 will be

disbursed in January 2027. After receiving and approving a report in March 2028, the balance of €20,000 will be awarded.

If you have any questions, please contact Anke Steenwegen:
anke@youca.be or +32 472 27 68 90

We would also like to hear your feedback on this project call: can you get started with this as an organization and what wishes do you still have?

4 CANDIDATE FILE

Below are the five items that must be included in the candidate file. The total should be no more than 10 pages (11pt;Calibri) but less is also acceptable. Feel free to be creative in attachments, photos, videos, etc., but keep all essential information limited to the candidate file. You do not have to answer question by question, but all topics should be covered in your dossier. Dossiers will be submitted in English.

1. Prerequisites (max 1 page).

On p. 4-5 we have presented all the requirements for candidacy. Can you tick off these prerequisites? Fine!

Comments or information to show with these conditions? Write them down.

2. Information about the organization (max 2 pages).

Provide the necessary information about the organization. In doing so, answer the following questions:

- What are the mission, vision and values of the organization?
- How is the organization for and by young people?
 - Describe the target group you work with.
- What are the organization's main activities?
- Does the organization have similar experiences?
- In what ways do you ensure your organization is inclusive (e.g., gender, diversity, etc.)?
- How does your organization address social, environmental and economic sustainability
- For organizations outside Europe:
 - Does the organization have experience receiving money from organizations in the European Union? If yes, describe how this cooperation went and what challenges you had.
- Under what data is the organization registered as a legal entity?
- What was the organization's turnover in 2024?
 - Provide a general budget on where the revenue came from and what the expenses were spent on.

3. Capacity of the organization.

Describe the capacity and experience of the organizations to help implement the September campaign and exchange. In doing so, answer at least the following questions:

- Describe the experience and expertise of the organizations involved around the annual theme and the local context.

- Describe your capacity to prepare and accompany young people during an exchange in Belgium. For example:
 - For organizations outside the European Union: Do you have experience with visa application?
 - Do you have experience around intercultural exchange?
 - Does your organization have expertise/experience in accompanying young people abroad?
- Give us more info on your organization's experience in participatory work with young people, guiding exchanges and educational work with young people.
 - What impact has your organization already had on the rights and lives of young people?
- What would you like to use YOUCA's money for?
 - Would you like to set up a new project or strengthen, multiply or increase an already existing good practice?
 - What impact will this have on young people and how will this work participatively with young people?
 - If possible, give a proposal of cost breakdown between staff resources, operating resources, investment and administrative costs.

4. Challenge

Describe concretely how the annual theme "beyond capitalism" is embedded in the work of your organization and in what way you have a strong expertise. In doing so, answer at least the following questions:

- How does the annual theme "beyond capitalism" enter into the projects you (want to) realize?
- Outline the context (country, region, target group) in which you work and why the year theme is relevant within this context.
- In what way is your story linked to a global context?
- In what ways is it relevant to young people?
- Paint a picture of what change your organization wants to bring about around this theme.

5. Collaboration with YOUCA

Describe how you see collaboration and exchange with YOUCA.

- Why would your organization like to participate in the youth exchange in September?
- How will you contribute to the story around the annual theme? What story would you like to share with Belgian students?
- What do you expect from the exchange and collaboration with YOUCA in Belgium?
- What good practices around the year theme do you have and would like to share with the other two organizations, and what would you like to learn from the other organizations?

6. Attachments

Add the latest annual report as an attachment to your application.

Further attachments may be added, but are not required. They are not necessarily read, but can be consulted by the committee in case of ambiguities.