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# Youth Empowerment Support YES Project

## Call for Applications (CfA) #YES-LEAD RS-01

### **LEAD Serbia Fellowship Program (LEAD Serbia) (Linking, Engagement, Advocacy, Development)**

**Youth Empowerment Support (YES) Project in Serbia** invites young women and men (18–30 years old) from Serbia to apply for participation in the LEAD Serbia Fellowship Program. LEAD Serbia is a new and cutting-edge leadership and advocacy program designed to equip Serbian young people with skills, knowledge, and networks that will enable them to become leaders in advancing public interests at the community, regional, and national levels. The YES Project intends to select 20 young women and men to participate in the project's first annual 2024 LEAD Serbia Fellowship Program.

LEAD Serbia represents an innovative approach to supporting the next generation of youth leaders in Serbia as they become active and engaged citizens working on the issues they care about deeply. Grounded within the interplay of two ideas, human potential and social responsibility, the program has been strategically designed to stimulate and cultivate each participant's unique leadership experience through a "Community of Practice"—a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do (in this case engaging their peers on critical issues) and who learn how to do it better as they interact with each other regularly and consistently.

The LEAD Serbia Fellowship Program will include the following components:

- 1- LEAD Academy – participation in the LEAD Serbia Youth Leaders' Academy, a 7-day residential training and networking program to be held in Niš starting on July 27 and ending on August 3, 2024;
- 2- LEAD Internship Program for Future Leaders – three months of paid internship in a local civil society organization;
- 3- Youth Excel Hub – participation in LEAD Serbia personal capacity development and networking activities.



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## BACKGROUND

The overall goal of the Youth Empowerment Support (YES) Project is **to empower young people to address issues of public concern using newly acquired knowledge, skills, and networking opportunities, thus creating a sustainable environment for civic participation.** Through a tailored civic education program in high schools across the country, personalized mentorship support for individual youth e-activism; and sub-awards, capacity development assistance, and special initiatives for youth leaders and informal and formal youth civic groups, East West Management Institute (EWMI) and its local partner National Coalition for Decentralization (NCD) will: (1) Engage and empower youth in their communities to become critical thinkers while addressing issues of public concern; (2) Strengthen activism among youth CSOs and youth informal groups; (3) Increase the leadership capacity of talented young people, including those from marginalized populations, to affect positive social change; and (4) Increase public awareness of the valuable contributions that youth make in the community.

One of the objectives of the YES project is **to increase and sustain youth leadership**, so in the next two years, EWMI, NCD, and their resource partner, Common Ground Consulting (CGC), will provide leadership and advocacy skills for up to 40 competitively selected youth and provide them with internship support to try their hand in affecting change at the community, regional, and country levels. As the architect of the LEAD™ model, CGC is a U.S.-based small business providing market-proven consulting services to governments, foundations, private sector, and community-based organizations, school districts, entrepreneurial start-ups, and universities for more than 30 years. From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, CGC has improved the lives of youth and vulnerable groups; led transformational change processes; achieved rooted diversity, equity, and inclusion; and helped build healthy organizations and learning networks in more than 40 countries. Common Ground has been working with youth and CSOs from across Serbia since 2007.

The Project will develop an online one-stop platform with resources for youth leadership skills development and civic engagement to enable sustained education and learning beyond project-supported activities. It will also support LEAD Serbia participants through individual fellowships, mentoring support, and inclusion in a wide variety of targeted youth-focused activities.



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## PROJECT TIMELINE

**June-July 2024** — Selection of LEAD Serbia program participants. Project partners will select 20 young men and women ages 18-30 to participate in the first LEAD Serbia Academy and sign individual LEAD Serbia fellowship agreements with each of them

**July-August 2024** — LEAD Serbia Academy. The selected participants will be invited to attend the LEAD Academy, scheduled to take place in Niš, from July 28 – August 3, 2024. This 7-day program will equip the participants with skills enabling them to work within their communities and link them regionally, thereby building a powerful network of future community, business, and political leaders. By focusing on six key concepts and 14 key competencies, the LEAD Academy will use state-of-the-art training methodologies to maximize personal leadership potential while making positive, community-based social change possible.

**August-October 2024** — LEAD Internship Program for Future Leaders. Upon successful completion of the LEAD Academy, NCD will help LEAD participants secure a paid, 3-month LEAD Internship with a local civil society organization (CSO), based on their interests, education, and motivation. LEAD interns will be placed in local youth organizations that are already committed to addressing critical community needs such as youth development, educational access, workforce development, climate issues, digital and media literacy, arts programming, and community health. NCD will identify appropriate CSOs using a set of carefully developed criteria and will require them to sign contracts agreeing to the unique requirements of the LEAD Internship. With the assistance of Common Ground Consulting, NCD will provide CSO partners with internship guidelines, training for intern supervisors, and ongoing support and assistance.

**November 2024-March 2025** — One day a month, LEAD interns will come together to engage in continuing leadership training and community service. By coming together, we will be able to nurture the community the youth will build during the Academy, while also supporting their continued leadership education. These monthly sessions will provide LEAD participants with additional skills training, opportunities to engage with community leaders and identify mentors, and work together to conduct community-based service projects they will design.

LEAD Serbia participants will also be included in a wide range of other YES project-supported or created activities.



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## PARTICIPANT PROFILE

The ideal participants of LEAD Program should demonstrate:

1. An existing commitment to civic engagement through participation in public activities in school/faculty at the community level, or in CSO-driven activities;
2. A good understanding of the need for citizen engagement in improving conditions at the community, regional, and national levels;
3. Support by teachers/professors, CSO leaders, or other well-respected leaders at the community level that confirms the applicant's progressive stance towards issues of gender equality and the inclusion of ethnic and social minorities;
4. The ability to think outside the box as demonstrated through previous personal engagements/actions/projects and/or the ideas expressed in the questions in the Application Form; and
5. The availability to commit to a demanding program like LEAD Serbia, including a 7-day LEAD Academy event, and a full-time 3-month paid internship.

A panel composed of NCD and EWMI representatives will select the strongest applicants to attend the LEAD Academy. EWMI will ensure that each LEAD cohort is gender balanced and includes meaningful numbers of ethnic and social minorities. The 7-day Academy will provide the participants with skills that will enable them to work within their communities and link them regionally, thereby building a powerful network of future leaders.



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## APPLICATION PROCESS

All applicants must fully complete the LEAD Serbia Fellowship application. NCD will accept applications only in English as the working language of the LEAD Academy is English. Applications must be e-mailed to the addresses below. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

In addition to the application form, applicants must submit the following documents:

1. **A CV** that includes the applicant's volunteer experience (not exceeding two pages to be e-mailed along with the application form);
2. **A three-minute, cell phone-recorded video** (we're super serious about the time!) telling us:
  - o Your name and where you are from (or live now)?
  - o The school, Faculty, or organization you come from and your position;
  - o A cause or issue that you care passionately about?
  - o Your "Superpower." For example, a particular strength, talent, or way of working, and
  - o Your motivation to apply for LEAD Serbia 2024

Your superpower is your particular genius: a specific, unique, and special gift you bring to your work. It is your "secret sauce." A superpower isn't just a skill, it can represent a perspective, a mindset, or a way of working that enhances everything you touch. It's unique, like a thumbprint. It's part of your brand.

Be Creative & Have Fun With It!

A motivational video that is no more than 3 minutes long, should be uploaded to YouTube, and submitted as a link. Alternatively, applicants can request a link to a Google Drive folder provided by the NCD staff upon receiving an e-mail with the application form and the CV from the applicant.

Note: videos must be in .wma, .wmv., .avi, .mpg, .wav, or any other video file type supported by Windows Media Player

Please submit your applications to [konkurs@nkd.rs](mailto:konkurs@nkd.rs). E-mails must have "**CFA # YES-LEAD RS-01**" and **the Full Name of the Applicant** in the subject line.



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## IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

**JULY 8, 2024 BY 11:59 PM** – CALL FOR APPLICATION closed.

**JULY 15, 2024** – Selection process results released/notifications to successful candidates.

**JULY 19, 2024** – Final list of the successful LEAD Serbia participants released.

**JULY 27, 2024 TO AUGUST 3, 2024** – LEAD Academy residential training and networking event in Tami Residence Hotel, Durmitorska 1, Niš.

**August – October 2024** – 3-month LEAD Internship with a local CSO partner.

For questions and clarifications, please, write to [grantmenadzer@nkd.rs](mailto:grantmenadzer@nkd.rs).