

Guidelines for the participants of the 13th UNESCO Youth Forum

The UNESCO Youth Forum

- In 1999, UNESCO became the first United Nations agency, at the time, to implement a youth engagement mechanism, the Youth Forum, in the context of the General Conference, as the Organization's highest decision-making body. UNESCO being an intergovernmental organization, its General Conference consists of the representatives of the Organization's Member States. It meets every two years. It determines the policies and the main lines of work of the Organization and adopts its programmes and budget.
- For 24 years now, the Youth Forum has been a space where young people can express their views, share their challenges and propose relevant solutions. Through the years, the Forum has undergone innovations with a view to making it more in line with the needs and challenges of the youth. The two most recent editions have also aimed at designing concrete solutions to strengthen youth engagement through youth-to-youth cooperation and partnerships between UNESCO and young people and youth organizations, highlighting the non-governmental nature of this space.

The Forum participants

- Have expertise in UNESCO's fields of competence as related to the theme of the Forum.
- Have demonstrated experience as active and engaged citizens in their communities.
- Should reflect the different ways in which youth engage today as active citizens: from engagement in National Youth Councils to youth-led social enterprises, youth-led research, advocacy and media. As an ultimate goal, youth perspectives should contribute to Sustainable Development Goals.
- On that basis, are expected to bring new ideas and innovative solutions to the challenges of our time.
- As such, are expected to bring their perspectives to the global debate for UNESCO to take them into account in developing its policies and programmes.
- Are expected to promote constructive, positive debate and exchange, focusing on substantive discussions and avoiding politization.
- Are expected to be respectful of each other's differences.
- Young participants in the Forum will be selected to present the recommendations of the Forum to the General Conference, thus having their voices heard by the 193 UNESCO Member States.

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Selection criteria of the participants

The selection process will be transparent and inclusive and based on the following criteria:

- Recognized expertise in UNESCO's fields of competence and relevant to the Forum's theme, and/or experience in designing or leading impactful initiatives on the ground within the scope of UNESCO's work in this area
- Age range: 18-35 years old
- Gender balance
- Regional balance
- Balance in terms of experience/expertise UNESCO's fields of competence
- Diversity of profiles, such as students, researchers/scientists/experts, practitioners, i.e. social entrepreneurs, NGO leaders, young staff in the United Nations and development organizations, representative of youth constituencies, artists, social influencers, athletes.

From the recommendations received from National Commissions, the Secretariat will select one youth participant per National Commission.

From recommendations received from UNESCO partners, the Secretariat will select up to one-third of youth representatives.