

Call for Applications

YOUTH REFERENCE COMMITTEE

A partnership between the Office of the African Union Youth Envoy & the Austrian National Youth Council

THEME

Strengthening Youth Participation in Ending Inequalities

Background

Inequalities persist globally, with young people disproportionately affected. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated these inequalities, with young people facing increased unemployment, poverty, and limited access to education and healthcare. Strengthening global youth participation and collaboration on reducing inequalities is crucial to ensure that young people are included in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Against this backdrop and backed by the African Union Agenda 2063 goals, the Office of the Youth Envoy seeks to champion the African Union Youth Charter by creating a platform for national and international youth participation on various development-related topics. By engaging with youth-led organisations and networks, facilitating dialogue and collaboration, promoting the inclusion of youth perspectives and solutions, and advocating for increased resources and support, we can work towards a more equitable and just world for all.

The need for collaboration between the AU Agenda 2063 and UN Agenda 2030 is crucial to achieving global sustainable development goals. Both agendas call for partnerships between all sectors of society to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development. As Such, The Office of the Youth Envoy has partnered with the Austrian National Youth Council to establish a Youth Reference Committee to strengthen youth participation in Reducing Inequalities. This initiative has been co-designed as a public-private-youth initiative co- led by the Office of the Youth Envoy through the Austrian National Youth Council to establish a network of national and international youth champions. Specifically, in its roll-out, this initiative seeks to establish a Youth Reference Committee of twenty-five (25) African and fifteen (15) European youth representatives.

These youth representatives will engage in international online and offline workshops, exchanges and consultations and attend lobbying appointments to improve the prospects of young people on the continent and beyond. In addition, the committee will contribute towards developing a youth position paper and a global toolkit for meaningful youth engagement to strengthen youth participation and reduce inequalities.

The Committee will contribute to various themes to achieve the ambitions of both agendas through a cascading approach. It will propose activities and initiatives better geared to match the reality of African Youth on the continent and the diaspora. The Committee will also function as an interactive mechanism and channel of communication between the Office of the African Union Youth Envoy and the Austrian National Youth Council.

Key thematic areas:

- Youth Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Youth Civic Engagement and Advocacy
- Climate Change, Climate Resilience & Climate Justice
- Youth in Peace, Security, Politics and Democratic Governance
- Youth and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AFCFTA)
- Youth Development, Capacity Building & Bridging the Digital Skills Gender Gap for an Equal Labour Force
- Mental health and well-being of youth at risk (War, Political Instability, Forced Migration, Harmful Practices)

Responsibilities and duties of the reference committee:

- Demonstrate commitment to meaningful youth engagement in various development thematics, nationally and internationally.
- Liaise with the AU Office of the Youth Envoy and partners to define the collaboration around selected thematics and policy areas.
- Start conversations and work together with young people and relevant parties in your region and country.
- Be willing to conduct research, create products (such as podcasts), and draft youth-centred development policy advice on key thematics.
- Participate in dialogue on project topics between politicians and African and European youth.
- Participate in lobbying appointments and Co-drafting a youth position paper.
- Participate in Co-designing a toolkit on youth engagement from an international perspective.

Selection and eligibility criteria:

- Proficiency in any AU language
- Have a valid passport with at least six months
- Be an African residing in any African country
- Eighteen to Thirty-Five years of age at the time of application
- Actively engaged with your local community of young people, online and offline
- Must be willing to amplify the project in your local community of young people
- Flexible and open-minded to work with diverse groups of people
- Socially involved and interested in development issues and policy dialogue on ending inequalities
- Young people with experience in youth engagement and affiliated with youth-led organisations, networks or movements are encouraged to apply

Important dates to remember:

2023
April

Deadline for applications.
22nd April,
Midnight, EAT

2023
May

Kick-off, Youth Reference Committee.
2-Day Workshop (Virtual)

2023
Sep

10-Day Study Visit in Vienna, Austria

2024

Participation in AU & UNGA Summit Side Events

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