Call for Applications Young Researchers
Mediterranean Youth in Action, MYA

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS - DEADLINE: 21 April 2025

MYA Programme

The Mediterranean Youth in Action (MYA) Programme embodies a dynamic approach towards fostering positive change in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Grounded in the principle of experiencing through action, MYA empowers young individuals to become catalysts for transformation and advocates for societal progress. With a steadfast commitment to peer sharing and learning, MYA cultivates a vibrant community where young leaders collaborate, exchange ideas, and harness their collective potential.

Embracing a Euro-med vision, the MYA Programme bridges cultural divides and promotes dialogue, understanding, and cooperation across borders. Through initiatives aimed at empowering young people to shape public policy and promoting active citizenship, MYA positions youth as the true agents of change, envisioning a future where they play a pivotal role in shaping the societal landscape of the Mediterranean region.

About the call

The Mediterranean Youth in Action (MYA) Programme is delighted to launch the second call for young Euro-Mediterranean researchers. Voicing Youth Knowledge is an evidence-based research programme to empower young researchers to address Euro-Mediterranean issues from a policy and academic perspective, to come up with innovative solutions, and to disseminate their findings via direct engagement with policymakers and civil society.

At its core, this Programme embodies the Euro-Med vision of collaboration and mutual understanding, empowering youth to become the true architects of change.

Through your involvement, you will play a vital role in shaping public policies and fostering inclusive development across borders. If you are ready to be a catalyst for meaningful transformation through concrete policy recommendations, we warmly invite you to join us in this exciting journey!

Who can apply

Young researchers of age between 18 and 35, from the 43 countries of the UFM, who are proficient in English, and affiliated to a think tank, a specialized research centre, a university, or a civil society organisation that has a concrete research component or unit.

How to apply

Initiate your involvement by submitting your online application via the available online form only (hyperlink) before the 21st of April 2025 23.59 Central European Time, CET. Ensure alignment with the criteria,

demonstrating your commitment to driving positive change in the Euro-Mediterranean region, through an evidence-based and policy-oriented research proposal.

Only complete applications, meeting the criteria and submitted before the deadline will be considered.

Please note that it is not possible to save the application as a draft or to make any changes after submitting it. At the close of the call, the most recently submitted version of the application will be processed. The same applicant cannot submit more than one proposal under this call. Due to the high volume of expected applications, responses to individual requests will not be provided. Only pre-screened candidates will be contacted.

In case of technical problems or questions related to the call, please send questions to: myaprogramme@alfsecretariat.org

Programme phasing

By participating in this initiative, you will have the chance to not only address and research on key policy areas within the Euro-Mediterranean context but also benefit from peer sharing and learning and specific assistance from ALF Secretariat. You will further enhance your research, drafting, public speaking capacities, as well as event organisation competences, thus amplifying your skillset and the potential impact of your work.

Understanding the steps of the application process and knowing what this endeavour entails is crucial for a seamless and successful journey within the research component of the Mediterranean Youth in Action Programme. Here is a breakdown of the process:

· **Application submission**

You will kickstart your journey with MYA by applying by the specified deadline, ensuring you meet the eligibility criteria, and showcasing your dedication to contributing to the Euro-Mediterranean vision. This includes the submission of a title, a short abstract of up to **500 words,** presenting your evidence-based and policy-oriented research proposal, demonstrating originality and incorporating diverse disciplinary and methodological approaches.

· **Online Skills Enhancing Workshop (for 75 shortlisted young researchers)**

If pre-selected, you will participate in an online workshop. This workshop will enhance your understanding of the policy framework governing Euro-Mediterranean relations and your knowledge on the subject areas of focus of this call. It will further strengthen your policy analysis and research skills, as well as your ability to formulate concrete policy recommendations, thus preparing you for the challenges ahead. All young researchers successfully participating in the online workshop will receive a certificate of completion from the ALF Secretariat.

· **Extended policy-oriented research proposal (for 75 shortlisted young researchers)**

Following the online workshop, and soon after its conclusion, the shortlisted young researchers will be required to draft an extended evidence-based and policy-oriented research proposal of 1,000 words. This proposal should elaborate on the theme, methodology, and argumentation of your evidence-

based and policy-oriented research proposal, demonstrating your ability to address Euro-Mediterranean issues. The proposal should also include a short abstract of 200-300 words (this word count is not included in the 1,000 words of the proposal). Based on the quality of the extended proposals, 25 researchers will be selected to participate in a Face-to-Face Knowledge Workout Workshop. In the time leading up to it, they will have to commence their research and start drafting their policy paper.

· **Online Mentoring Meetings: Checking In on Research Progress (for 25 selected researchers)**

In the time leading to the Face-to-Face Knowledge Workout Workshop, the young researchers will be invited to online mentoring meetings where they will be called to present their research progress, raise questions and/or concerns, and receive support on methods, sources, and approaches.

· **Face-to-face Knowledge Workshop (for 25 selected researchers)**

The workshop (1.5 days) will offer a platform for the selected young researchers to present their research progress up to that point to an audience of peers and selected stakeholders, receiving valuable feedback to refine their work. The workshop will further include a skills enhancement component, focusing on dissemination of research outputs with selected audiences and the general public. Moreover, this gathering presents a unique opportunity to foster a sense of community and collaboration on the Euro-Mediterranean scale, enhancing connectivity and synergy among young researchers from diverse backgrounds

· **Elaboration of policy briefs (for up to 15 final selected researchers)**

From the 25 participants in the Knowledge Workout Workshop, up to 15 young researchers will be selected to receive financial support for drafting a 3,500-word policy paper, a blog post (500 words), and other communication products in English. The final selection is contingent upon the successful undergoing of a peer review process and upon the quality of the research overall.

· **Publication and dissemination**

Upon successful completion and validation, the policy papers will be translated into French and Arabic for broad dissemination. The selected works will be published on the ALF Website. The ALF Secretariat will actively disseminate the policy papers at the Euro-Mediterranean scale.

· **Face-to-face evaluation and results sharing meeting (MYA dedicated event)**

The 25 beneficiaries in the Knowledge Workshop will be invited to participate in a MYA dedicated event that will bring together youth, decision-makers, and stakeholders from the Euro-Mediterranean region at the end of the cycle of this call. It will provide a platform for sharing insights, fostering collaboration, and for addressing key issues related to youth empowerment and intercultural dialogue. A session on evaluating the impact of the research component of MYA, for purposes of quality control and improvement, will also be part of the MYA dedicated event.

Benefits of participation

· **Online Skills Enhancing Workshop with certification (for 75 young researchers)**
Acquire advanced skills through an online skills enhancing workshop led by experts. Upon completion, receive a certification from the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) Secretariat.

· **Face-to-face Knowledge Workout Workshop (for 25 selected researchers)**
Immerse yourself in an engaging face-to-face workshop, gaining valuable insights and feedback that will refine your research approach and methodology.

· **Financial support for policy brief publication (for selected researchers)**
Excel to be among the 15 selected researchers who will be tasked with crafting a 3,500-word policy paper, a blog post (500 words), and other impactful communication products; the successful researchers will receive a financial contribution of 1.000 euro.

· **Increase the visibility of your evidence-based research**
Make your evidence-based research accessible to various stakeholders and practitioners. Leveraging the ALF communication tools and network will enhance the dissemination of your research.

· **Financial support for civil society outreach dialogues (for selected researchers)**
Receive financial support to organize a Civil Society Outreach Dialogue, in direct cooperation with the ALF Civil Society Network of your country. During these 2-hour sessions, you will be accompanied by local stakeholders and civil society representatives, and the general public, making your research visible in your local community and showcasing its connection to evidence on the ground and to the realities of the Euro-Mediterranean region.

· **Financial support for academic dialogues (for selected researchers)**
Receive financial support to organise an Academic Dialogue (1.5 hours) within and with the support of your affiliated institution. These dialogues may take various forms, from specialised seminars for the academic/research community to interactive events for engagement with specialised audiences and with the general public. This initiative aims to empower young researchers, to enhance their presentation and public speaking skills, and to strengthen the visibility of their research among peers and relevant expert audiences.

· **Networking opportunities**
Build valuable connections within your field and beyond. Engage with fellow researchers, stakeholders, and civil society representatives, creating a robust network for potential collaborations and future endeavours.· **Communications material (for selected researchers)**
Actively contribute to communications material production, as you will get the chance to create original content promoting your research, and to share your testimonies about your experience within the MYA Programme.

Additional benefits: Participation in Euro-Mediterranean Dialogues and MYA dedicated event

As a selected young researcher, your journey with the Mediterranean Youth in Action Programme offers an exclusive opportunity to actively engage in participatory and policy dialogues within the Euro-

Mediterranean region. This includes participation in events such as:

· **ALF Youth Dialogues (for selected researchers)**
The top-performing young researchers will have the opportunity to actively participate in dynamic events and dialogues organised at the Euro-Mediterranean scale, amplifying youth voices and perspectives, fostering dialogue, and connecting with stakeholders and peers across the region.

Research Topics

- Peacebuilding, conflict resolution/prevention, coexistence and inclusive dynamics
- Disinformation and misinformation in the Euro-Mediterranean region
- Living together promoting tolerance and understanding in the Euro-Mediterranean context
- Youth engagement in participatory dialogues and decision-making processes in the Euro-Med
- Ethics and governance of Artificial Intelligence technologies in the Euro-Mediterranean region
- Social innovation as a catalyst for social inclusion in culturally diverse Euro-Med societies
- Empowering women in the Euro-Med region as a way to challenge gender stereotypes and beyond
- Integrating social dimensions in climate change policies in the Euro-Mediterranean region
- International cultural relations and cultural diplomacy to bridge both shores of the Mediterranean
- Creative industries and arts.

Indicative timeline

12/03/2025 Launch of the call
24/03/2025 Information Session
21/04/2025 Deadline for applications
05/05/2025 Publication of the pre-screening results
May 2025 Online workshop
June 2025 Deadline to submit the extended research proposal
September 2025 Face-to-face knowledge workshop
October-November 2025 Deadline to receive the first full draft of the policy papers
December 2025 Deadline to receive the second full draft of the policy papers, after the incorporation of the peer review feedback
January 2026 Final editing, quality control, and publication of selected policy papers
February 2026 Face-to-Face ex-post evaluation and results sharing meeting

Selection Criteria

The selection process for the research component of the Mediterranean Youth in Action (MYA) Programme is designed to ensure fairness, diversity, and relevance. Special attention will be given to gender and geographical balances to ensure a diverse and inclusive representation.

The following criteria will be taken into account to select passionate and dedicated young researchers who will contribute meaningfully to the Euro-Mediterranean vision:

1. **Euro-Mediterranean scope of the research proposal (35%)**

Potential impact of the research proposal on Euro-Mediterranean public policies.

2. **Relevance of the research proposal (30%)**

Evaluation of the alignment between the proposed research and the proposed research topic, as well as between the proposed research and the current trends in Euro-Mediterranean relations.

3. **Added value and originality (20%)**

Originality and added value of the research approach taken by the applicant.

4. **Academic and professional background (15%)**

Applicant's academic and professional history.

The proposed research work should be original and unpublished. TheA LF retains co-ownership of the publishing rights and intellectual property for the final knowledge product.

Background

The ALF, (https://alf.website/en/), created in 2005 as an international intergovernmental organisation based in Alexandria. The ALF, inspired by Anna Lindh's legacy, is committed to fostering intercultural dialogue within its mission of nurturing inclusive societies where diversity is celebrated, and everyone's voice is valued. By promoting peace, justice, and strong partnerships, the Foundation strives to create a world where people from diverse backgrounds live in harmony through open and meaningful intercultural exchanges.

ALF brings together organisations, institutions, policy makers, and other change makers from all Euro-Med countries to open a dialogue and cooperate. People meet, learn, and collaborate, through the Foundation's different projects and initiatives in different fields to empower them to create a chain of positive change that touches more lives and communities. Its action grounds on the two main bodies of the Foundation: Its Civil National Networks with more than 4,500 members and the 42 Members States of its Board of Governors.

Framework and financial allocation

The Mediterranean Youth in Action Programme is developed in the framework of the EU grant NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2023/448-134 funded by the European Union. The indicative overall amount allocated to its research component is 108.500 euro. The ALF Secretariat reserves the right not to disburse all available funds.