



Frequently Asked Questions on Youth Action Lab (YAL)

1. What is CIVICUS?

CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world. We were established in 1993 and since 2002 have been proudly headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa, with additional hubs across the globe. We are a membership alliance with more than 10,000 members in more than 175 countries. Visit www.civicus.org/join to know more and join the alliance.

2. What is CIVICUS youth?

CIVICUS Youth connects young activists and spurs youth capacity, innovation and inclusion in civil society. CIVICUS Youth is a committed and dynamic community of members under 30. It comprises over 3,000 CIVICUS members in 149 countries. CIVICUS Youth's priority is to strengthen young people's power to continue growing as positive agents of change. Learn more at www.civicus.org/youth

3. Why is CIVICUS working on resourcing young activists?

It is CIVICUS's priority to help increase the resiliency of civil society in a context of systemic repressions and discriminations against it, and to promote changes in the behaviour and culture of the funding community and traditional civil society. Read more [here](#).

4. What is the Youth Action Lab?

The Youth Action Lab is a pilot project initiated by CIVICUS to test different ways to support grassroots youth activists in the Global South by providing access to resources, building alliances and developing strategies with activists and movements.

5. What am I expected to do as a participant of the Youth Action Lab?

Participants are expected to commit one year to remote and online training, meetings and mentorship, in-person workshops if COVID-19 restrictions permit, events and engage in learning and general knowledge sharing with all Lab participants. There are interim reflection discussions which occur online with other participants, and an ongoing creative project which we require of participants. A minimum of 8 to 10 hours per month is required to dedicate to the programme on the course of a year. In this moment, you should feel comfortable to participate in the program without overcommitments or exposing yourself to emotional distress or vulnerabilities that may prevent you from remaining engaged during the period of the programme. There is a community dimension to the Lab, as our aim is to put high emphasis on confidentiality and trust-building among the participants. The programme will foster opportunities for the participants to get to know each other and a safe space for honest sharing, mutual respect and trust.

6. How is the Youth Action Lab different from other programmes?

The creation of the Youth Action Lab was done through a co-design process with CIVICUS staff and nine young activists from the Global South who may have similar experiences like you. It is geared towards not only supporting the individual but also the community/collective that the participant belongs to. We believe in co-creating and sharing knowledge to ensure that the benefits of the programme matches the needs of the participants. Don't worry, you too will also have the opportunity to add to the content of the Youth Action Lab and also assist in creating the way forward for the next cohort in the final phase of the Lab. As a participatory resourcing mechanism, the selection of the Lab 2021 participants is made by the participants of the Lab 2020.

7. What happens when the Youth Action Lab ends

By becoming a participant, you become part of the CIVICUS alliance. In line with our mission to empower community emerging organizers or changemakers for a more resilient, sustainable and diverse civil society, the Youth Action Lab alumni will benefit a wide range of support that CIVICUS voting members have access to. See CIVICUS members in action: <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/get-involved/members-in-action>

FAQs about the Application Process

1. Why should I apply for the Youth Action Lab?

If you are a grassroots youth activist who is living in the Global South and who would like to amplify your activism, improve your skills and strengthen your network with other like-minded activists but may not fit into traditional funding and fellowship programs, this may be the right opportunity for you. The Youth Action Lab adopts a rights-based approach, equipping people to understand and claim their rights while increasing the accountability of those who should respect, protect and fulfill the rights of others. The Lab is a space for young activists who are working to ensure safe communities and protected environments for themselves and future generations. They are strategic systems thinkers who are strongly connected to their communities and their positive development.

2. Who is eligible to apply?

- Young people between the age of 18 and 32.
- Able to commit to a one-year program.
- Based in either Latin America, The Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Pacific.
- An activist with at least two years of experience working at the grassroots level mobilising for change around key economic, environmental, social, cultural, and civil rights issues. This includes activism, journalism, social entrepreneurship, and community work.
- A member of a broader coalition, network, or movement working to advocate for change in the local or national context who can represent that movement within the Lab.
- An activist who is disruptive, who challenges traditional ways of working to test methodologies that are creative, inclusive, innovative, and relevant.

Throughout the recruitment, candidates will have opportunities to let us know what conditions can best enable participation within the scope of the program. We are committed to welcoming a diverse and representative group of participants, and we welcome applications regardless of your gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, immigration status, ability, religion, caste, or other

characteristics. We encourage applicants from traditionally under-represented communities including but not limited to women, members of the LGBTI+ community, persons with disabilities, indigenous communities, ethnic and/or linguistic minorities, or other groups.

3. What is the selection criteria used for Youth Action Lab participants?

Selection will be done balancing a variety of factors including commitment to activism, access to resources, and the diversity of the cohort.

4. What countries are eligible to apply?

All nationals and residents of countries of the following regions Latin America, The Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Pacific are eligible to apply.

5. If I am from the Global South but currently NOT residing there, I am eligible to apply?

No. The Youth Action Lab currently focuses on local grassroots youth activists who are doing work in their immediate local community and must be committed to be in that space for at least 1 year during the programme.

6. My English proficiency is not high. Can I apply?

We encourage individuals from various backgrounds to apply, and intend to address as many barriers to participation as possible. We will provide translations for all meetings, both in person or online.

7. I don't have a bachelor's degree; can I still apply?

Yes, formal education is not required.

8. Can I still apply if I do not have two years of experience in community activism?

Our average participant should have 2 years of experience in activism. The Lab is dedicated to providing young activists with opportunities to obtain additional resources to support the ongoing work of their movements or networks, not to initiate new work or projects. If you choose not to apply for this round of applications, we do hope you will consider doing so in the near future.

9. How many participants will be selected?

For the pilot of the Youth Action Lab, 10 participants will be selected.

10. I am a civil society organization or individual who does not want to apply, but know of a young person in my community who would be a good fit for the Youth Action Lab, am I able to nominate them?

Yes, organizations and individuals are able to nominate young people to participate in the Youth Action Lab. In the application form, under the "application type" page, nominators are asked to select the option "I am nominating someone else."

Technical Queries

1. How to apply?

Apply online via the official application link at <https://civicus.org/index.php/what-we-do/strengthen/youth-action-lab> or contact CIVICUS Youth at youth@civicus.org for an application form.

2. What If I am not able to complete an application online?

Contact CIVICUS Youth at youth@civicus.org to reach out to a Youth Co-Design Team member in your region.

3. When is the deadline for application?

The application deadline is 1st February, 2021.

4. What is involved in applying for the Youth Action Lab?

Complete the application form and provide the supporting information on or before the stated deadline. Ensure to have evidence of your activism such as photos, videos, links, websites, articles, testimonials and any other relevant information that you believe will add to the quality of your application.

5. Is there a fee to apply?

There is no fee to apply for this programme. It is fully-funded.

6. Who do I contact for queries or further information?

For further information contact CIVICUS Youth at youth@civicus.org.

7. What is the duration of the programme?

The Youth Action Lab will be for 1 year until February 2022. Participants are asked to commit for the whole period of the programme.

8. Am I expected to travel during the course of the programme?

Youth Action Lab will take place mostly remotely and through online support. There will be one orientation week at the beginning of the programme and one at the end. In person meetings will depend on COVID-19 restrictions.

9. Will the organisers help me obtain visa and Passport?

We know how difficult visa applications can be, so we will do our best to assist you by providing the necessary documentation for your visa application, but the responsibility to initiate the process to get your passport and visa is yours.

10. Can I submit more than one application?

No. Only one application is allowed. More than one application will result in automatic disqualification from the selection process.

11. When would I know if I am accepted for Youth Action Lab?

Acceptance into the programme will be communicated via email no later than March 2021 only to successful applicants.