



CIVICUS YOUTH ACTION TEAM TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation (www.civicus.org) is an international alliance of civil society organisations and individuals dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society. Established in 1993, the CIVICUS network currently includes over 10,000 members from more than 175 countries and territories. CIVICUS works in partnership with this wide range of organisations and citizens to implement global, participatory actions aimed at strengthening civil society.

Throughout its existence, CIVICUS has had a long-standing commitment to promoting the role of youth participation in the decisions which affect their lives – not only through engaging with youth organisations but also through promoting young people’s participation in global civil society. In particular, by hosting the CIVICUS Youth Assembly since 2007, CIVICUS has been able to bring together some of the world’s most dynamic young activists to network and collaborate, while at the same time strengthening their involvement in the core work of the CIVICUS alliance to strengthen civil society. Since 2018, CIVICUS has increased its efforts to better resource young grassroots activists leading positive transformation for their communities through the [Goalkeepers Youth Action Accelerator](#) and [Youth Action Lab](#).

In 2010, the CIVICUS Board of Directors decided to start exploring options for a new CIVICUS youth initiative, which would further strengthen meaningful youth participation in civil society. At the CIVICUS Youth Assembly in September 2012, momentum to explore the development of a new youth initiative gathered within the CIVICUS alliance. Suggestions included a strong call for the creation of a representative Youth Advisory Group (YAG) to help guide CIVICUS’ work on youth participation. In 2013 a YAG was established to provide strategic, informed advice on how youth participation issues can be better mainstreamed in CIVICUS’ programmes, and on how CIVICUS can develop new activities aimed specifically at strengthening youth participation in civil society. In 2013 the YAG proposed modalities for the establishment of the CIVICUS Youth Action Team in 2016. That same year CIVICUS committed permanent and dedicated resources to foster better engagement relations with young members.

THE CIVICUS YOUTH ACTION TEAM

[CIVICUS Youth](#) is a community of practice hosted and coordinated by CIVICUS Secretariat, that brings together young individual members under 30 years old and organisations working in children and youth issues within CIVICUS global membership with the aim to connect young activists and foster partnerships and enhance collective youth voices across civil society. The Youth Action Team is an action body of CIVICUS on youth and youth-related issues that are part of the CIVICUS Youth membership. The purpose of the Youth Action Team is to mainstream youth and youth issues into CIVICUS' programmes and activities and to champion youth engagement and enabling civic space for young activists. Institutionally, the Youth Action Team will interface with the CIVICUS Board on specific strategic questions and be able to communicate with the Board via the Secretariat on any suggested youth programming or proposals that should be considered CIVICUS priorities.

Objectives

1. To provide strategic, informed advice on youth mainstreaming within the existing CIVICUS' structure, programmes and activities;
2. To provide CIVICUS advice on policies, programmes and activities, including the provision of early warnings on the state of youth and youth civic space to CIVICUS Monitor, and strategic and substantial guidance to improve CIVICUS work and effectiveness;
3. To support CIVICUS in its outreach, by building new partnerships, resource mobilization for scaling up initiatives on youth and strengthening collaborations among young members¹ of the CIVICUS alliance;
4. To provide support and provide leadership in the conceptualization, organization, resource mobilization, including fundraising and follow-up to the CIVICUS Youth Assembly and representation of CIVICUS youth within CIVICUS programs, activities and processes;
5. To support the development and implementation of activities aimed at specifically youth participation and young civil society, both within the CIVICUS and our members and partners;
6. To champion and foster social innovations and cohesion related to youth and youth civic space and engagement in partnership with Innovation for Change;
7. To perform other tasks as deemed necessary.

Composition

- The YAT will consist of between **8 and 10 members** and one member of the CIVICUS secretariat to assist in coordination and harmonization with CIVICUS objectives, resources and processes and act as a support to the YAT.
- The YAT is made up of volunteers positions committed to an **eighteen months term** that could be extended for another term. Once the eighteen months are

over, the team will conduct a self and group reflection on whether members will like to continue for another 18 months term.

- The YAT members must be aged between **18 – 30 years of age** at the time of selection into the Team.
- The composition of the YAT will reflect a balanced representation on Diversity and Inclusion. A range of factors will be taken into consideration such as gender, age, indigenous identity, SOGIESC, disability, geographical location (LAC, MENA, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Pacific, Europe, and North America), ethnicity, race, amongst others, to ensure the experience and expertise is reflective of the young people from excluded groups we aim to support and amplify.
- The YAT will reflect a diverse composition of skills, languages, experiences and movements or networks.
- Once selected, all YAT members must be CIVICUS voting members. Applicants may become a member at any time before they begin their term.

Geographic representation:

2 members from Sub-Saharan Africa

2 members from Americas (South, Central and North America and the Caribbean)

2 members from Europe

2 members from Asia

1 member from Middle East and North Africa

1 member from the Pacific

These criteria for selection of the YAT will include consideration of

- diversity and representation (gender, geographic, thematic & cultural balance)
- skills (language, fundraising, organisational, campaigning, etc.)
- Must be aged between **18 – 30 years of age** at the time of selection into the Team.
- Being a **member(s) of youth-led** or youth-serving organizations, groups, collectives, networks or movements that is advancing social, environmental, political and/or economic justice.
- Affiliated with youth national and/or regional **civil society networks**.
- For communication purposes, candidates must have basic oral and written skills in **English** as the YAT meetings are currently conducted in this language. Selected candidates will be given support to take part in meetings and be able to express themselves.
- have access to, and be reasonably proficient in worldwide communication technologies (google drive, skype and zoom)
- be available and accessible for conference calls with the Team and CIVICUS representatives and be able to avail themselves for Team activities.
- have enough time to dedicate to the Youth Action Team and its activities, at least 8 to 10 hours per month

- demonstrate a commitment to CIVICUS principles and values and respect the Alliance [code of conduct](#)

The mandate and expected duration of the Youth Action Team is eighteen months from early 2021. On the completion of the first term, a member may be eligible for a second term.

Responsibilities of the YAT

The roles of the YAT include:

- I. YAT members set the direction and agenda for the YAT
- II. Sets the direction of CIVICUS Youth Engagement strategy
- III. Leading projects of youth engagement and development with CIVICUS support, executing pilot programs
- IV. YAT members will provide strategic, informed advice on how youth participation issues can be better mainstreamed in CIVICUS' programmes, and on how CIVICUS can develop new activities aimed specifically at strengthening youth participation in civil society.
- V. Provides feedback to CIVICUS strategic planning documents during the Annual General Membership assembly, strategic priorities period, mid-term reviews, etc.
- VI. Members of the YAT will support CIVICUS in ambassadorial roles, by building new partnerships, securing new resources for scaling up initiatives on youth participation and strengthening relationships and collaborations with young members.
- VII. YAT will be held accountable by CIVICUS youth members through quarterly updates shared to CIVICUS youth members detailing activities, milestones, challenges and opportunities.
- VIII. YAT members will avail themselves for mandatory Monthly online meetings and activities of the YAT approximately 8-10 hours per month.
- IX. Commits to 1-2 physical engagement such as the Youth Assembly and an annual planning meeting (if budget and COVID-19 regulations permit)
- X. Vehicle of information and experience sharing (including good practices, innovations, data collection, monitoring of youth activism related trends) for and with CIVICUS Youth members
- XI. (OPTIONAL) host peer-exchanges among YAT members for skills sharing purposes and team building

Responsibilities of the CIVICUS Secretariat

The YAT will be supported by the CIVICUS secretariat in its work.

- I. The CIVICUS Secretariat will designate a staff focal point, will provide information and background documents to the Team, and will support the team to shape the agenda for each meeting and monitor progress between meetings.

- II. The secretariat will advise on operational issues, be available as a resource, and seek the Team's feedback on specific issues in meetings and by email between meetings.
- III. The secretariat will take responsibility for ensuring that the YAT is sufficiently informed and briefed on CIVICUS programmes to be able to play their Action and ambassadorial roles properly.
- IV. The YAT will not receive any remuneration from CIVICUS for their function as Team members. However, upon prior arrangement and agreement, CIVICUS shall provide funding for expenses incurred by members to participate in programs organized by CIVICUS.
- V. CIVICUS will promote synergies and linkages between the Youth Action Team and CIVICUS global programmes and initiatives.

Meetings and Decision-making

The YAT will ordinarily meet once a month, on a date and time to be agreed by members of YAT taking into consideration the availability of the highest number of members. Meetings will take place by Skype. The CIVICUS Secretariat will be responsible for circulating advance notice of these meetings, along with an agenda and background documents. The secretariat will take and circulate short notes of each meeting. Meetings will ordinarily last for between 60 and 90 minutes.

Members of the YAT will be expected to attend all ordinary meetings. **In the event that a member does not participate for more than three meetings in a row, the expectation will be that the member should resign and offer his/her/their place to another applicant.** Depending on the nature and content of the work as it develops, the Chair may call extraordinary meetings of the Team.

Each member of the YAT shall have one equal vote externally appointed advisors/observers will have observer status with no voting power.

Depending on available funding, in carrying out their duties the full Team may meet face to face at least once annually. The meetings will include the following:

1. Orientation and Training Meeting to be held at the CIVICUS Youth Assembly
2. YAT Annual Work Plan Retreat to review and project the Team's activities and project interventions and budget and other requirements online or in Johannesburg if funding and COVID travel regulations permit.
3. The Team shall hold regular meetings via a telecommunication network.
4. The Team shall maintain regular communications with CIVICUS Youth through the existing communication channels (email and social media)
5. The Team shall update their action plan and working documents on a regular basis

SELECTION AND ELECTION PROCESS

Relevant information regarding the YAT selection policies and processes will be made available to all young people in respective regions. Application forms will be published on CIVICUS website. Applicants will publicly declare their candidacy and present themselves to CIVICUS through an online application form and motivation letter. Applications for membership of the YAT will be reviewed by the Secretariat and interested parties from the current YAT. Each Team member will be selected from a competitive process approved by the existing YAT and confirmed by the CIVICUS Secretariat. The Secretariat and existing YAT will select the shortlist candidates and youth voting members will vote for the final candidates. CIVICUS welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfill the specific profile, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

1. The process will start with an open call published on CIVICUS website.
2. Relevant information regarding the YAT selection policies and processes will be made available to all young people in respective regions in CIVICUS website.
3. Applicants and nominations will publicly declare their candidacy and present themselves to CIVICUS Secretariat and the current YAT through an online application form.
4. Nominations can also come from candidates themselves, via existing YAT members, CIVICUS youth members, CIVICUS Board Members or youth regional networks.
5. A shortlist of 30 candidates will be created by a Selection Committee composed of the CIVICUS Secretariat and interested parties from the current YAT.
6. The shortlist of 40 candidates will then be selected for an interview. The Selection Committee will conduct one-on-one interviews sessions giving scores to each candidate.
7. Based on the highest interview scores awarded by the Selection Committee, a small group of up to 20 candidates will be selected by the Secretariat and YAT with no more than two male and two female candidates per region.
8. The top 20 shortlisted candidates will be announced to all youth voting members for elections.
9. The new 10 YAT members will be announced and start working on their Strategic Plan 2021-2022 of action, to be launched and discussed at the 2021 Youth Assembly.

TERMINATION OF MEMBERS

If a Youth Action Member resigns or does not satisfactorily fulfil their responsibilities (including remaining in contact with both CIVICUS and YAT for a period of three months without a reasonable explanation), the Team may vote by simple majority to remove and replace the member. The YAT member may be replaced and his/her/their term completed by the candidate who will be elected through a process agreed by the YAT. CIVICUS may

launch a call for applicants to the Team to fill vacant positions due to member withdrawal and removals

CHANGES TO THESE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Changes to these guidelines can only be made by the CIVICUS Secretariat, in consultation with the YAT. Recommendations for change may be made directly to CIVICUS Secretariat from members of the YAT and members of CIVICUS Youth.