

YOUTH ACTION LAB

THE CHALLENGE

Communities around the world have been increasingly mobilising to challenge historic and systemic forms of oppression – putting themselves on the frontlines of protests, working in their communities, and taking these conversations online. People are demanding institutions to be more responsive to their rights, challenging the status quo, and responding to the increase in hate and violence.

Young people are at the centre of these movements – working to ensure safe communities and a protected environment for themselves and for future generations. However, contrary to traditional ways of working, young activists in the 21st century are organising themselves in ways that are decentralised, informal, and radical. Increasingly, young activists do not align themselves with the traditional structures of civil society. From the pro-democracy protests, to climate strikers, to the #MeToo movement online, we are witnessing an era of mass mobilisation against long standing injustices.

WHAT IS THE YOUTH ACTION LAB?

The **Youth Action Lab** is a one year co-creation lab for grassroots youth activists based in the global south which works to support their movements to become more resilient and sustainable in their pursuit of a more sustainable and equitable world. The Lab is an innovative, safe, active, inclusive, collective, representative and connected space, online and physical for grassroots activists, which thoughtfully considers diverse contexts and ecosystems to better resource them to flourish with their communities. Participants in the Lab work to build political solidarity and networks, strengthen capacities in engaging with policy processes, and access resources to support their movement. The Lab will act as a hub for testing new ways of working within civil society and mobilizing learnings from across sectors in support of youth-led movements.



THE APPROACH

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, entered in a three-year partnership with the **Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)** to try to answer how can we mobilize our networks, knowledge and experience to better resource movements and strengthen the action of new generation change-makers in the Global South.

With the aim of not only identifying a new resourcing mechanism, but also defining new working modalities between civil society and social movements, this lab was developed through a participatory process. In July 2019, **CIVICUS Youth** recruited a regionally diverse team of youth advocates and activists to co-design and implement a one-year pilot program focused on supporting 10 youth activists from around the world. During a week-long co-creation meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2019, the team designed a test pilot, which is now the Youth Action Lab. The proposed prototype was also tested amongst a variety of stakeholder groups through qualitative interviews and focus groups.

GOALS

1 ACCESS RESOURCES

The Lab will provide participants with an unrestricted award of up to \$5000 USD, access to in-kind support and other non-financial resources, as well as capacity strengthening in order to support more sustainable and resilient movements.

2 DEVELOP STRATEGY

The Lab will provide opportunities for capacity strengthening through peer-to-peer learning, coaching, and skill-building workshops with the aim of supporting youth activists to be more strategic and targeted in their campaigning.

3 BUILD ALLIANCES

The Lab, through regular peer learning sessions online, will create spaces for movements and collectives of young people to connect, share experiences, and heal together, in order to build stronger alliances and more connected movements.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- 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, 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 broader coalition, network, or movement working to advocate for change in the local or national context who can represent that movement within the Lab.



WANT TO LEARN MORE? Read more about work CIVICUS has done on **shifting the power to grassroots movements**, **empowering children to take civic action**, on **sustainability of protest movements**, and on **resourcing youth-led movements**.

>>> WHAT'S NEXT?

11 JANUARY 2021 — Applications Launch
1 FEBRUARY 2021 — Applications Close
MARCH 2021 — Participants Announced

MID-LATE APRIL, 2021 — Virtual Orientation Week

Applications for the Lab will be made available on CIVICUS website.

QUESTIONS? Contact us at youth@civicus.org for more information and follow CIVICUS youth united on social media for announcements! #CIVICUSyouth



civicus.org



info@civicus.org



/CIVICUS



@CIVICUSalliance