



Youth for Peace: UNESCO Intercultural Leadership Programme

Terms and Conditions of the Call for Applications for Participants

By applying to participate in the *Youth for Peace: UNESCO Intercultural Leadership Programme* (hereafter referred to as the Programme), you acknowledge that you have been informed about the processing of your personal data by UNESCO and Kingold Group for the administration of the Programme as outlined in the Privacy Notice in Annex A.

Chapter 1

Article 1: Presentation

1.1 The Organizers

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. With its extensive thematic mandate in supporting intercultural dialogue, UNESCO is well equipped to support Young Leaders (referred to in this document as 'Participants') to champion intercultural dialogue as a tool for solving challenges at the grassroots. This Programme aligns with the Organization's strategic and programmatic priorities on intercultural dialogue, providing a means of connecting UNESCO resources to grassroots initiatives, whilst also positively feeding back into the development of policy and structural reform in favour of dialogic solutions.

Kingold Group is a diversified multinational conglomerate with a core focus on high-end real estate development, and an expanded business scope covering finance, technology, education, hospitality, culture and media, committed to building a communication platform, bringing world-class lifestyle into China and promoting Chinese culture to the world, with the aim of propelling international exchanges collaboration in a variety of spheres as well as promoting world peace and development. Indeed, Kingold Group deeply values peace and dialogue, recognizing them as essential to global harmony. This commitment has inspired the upcoming project, furthering its mission to foster unity and mutual understanding across cultures.

Both, UNESCO and Kingold Group are hereinafter referred to as the "Organizers".

1.2. Context: *Youth for Peace - UNESCO Intercultural Leadership Programme*

As the world faces rising challenges - from climate change and economic precarity to deepening social divides - intercultural dialogue has become a vital tool for finding shared solutions. UNESCO recognizes the power of emerging leaders in addressing these global issues through cooperation and mutual understanding. Through its Social and Human Sciences Sector, UNESCO is committed to strengthening the capacities of Young Leaders to use dialogue as a means to solve real-world problems and build more cohesive, resilient societies.

To advance this mission, UNESCO is launching the *Youth for Peace: UNESCO Intercultural Leadership Programme*, a global Programme designed to equip young changemakers with the skills, knowledge, and networks needed to foster intercultural understanding and address complex challenges. Through an intensive residential training programme, financial grants, and ongoing mentorship, selected Participants will develop and implement community-based initiatives that apply dialogue as a tool for conflict resolution, inclusion, and sustainable development.

As part of UNESCO's "Road to Peace: Dialogue and Action for Tolerance and Intercultural Understanding" initiative, this Programme will not only empower individual leaders but also create a lasting ecosystem of youth-led action. UNESCO will scale impact through the development of new toolkits and methodologies, ensuring that best practices reach a wider audience. By expanding the network of young peacebuilders and integrating their insights into policy discussions, UNESCO aims to institutionalize dialogue-driven approaches to global challenges, creating a ripple effect that extends beyond the Programme itself.

Article 2: General provisions

The *Youth for Peace: UNESCO Intercultural Leadership Programme*, which will run on an annual cycle over a five year total duration, will be governed by these terms and conditions, which contain the provisions that will regulate the individuals and organizations that can participate, the presentation of projects, the opening and closing of the Call for Applications, the evaluation criteria, and other aspects.

The Organizers reserve the right to, at their discretion, modify, replace, comment and/or rectify these terms and conditions, and will make their best efforts to publish the modifications made.

Article 3: Objectives

The Programme has the following objectives:

- **Enhancing youth capacities** by equipping young people with the skills, tools, and knowledge to use intercultural dialogue as a means to address real-world challenges

and build cohesive societies.

- **Fostering problem-solving through dialogue** by empowering youth to apply intercultural exchange as a strategy for conflict resolution, inclusion, and sustainable development.
- **Expanding youth-led impact** by providing mentorship, financial support, and access to networks that enable young leaders to develop and implement community-based initiatives.
- **Scaling best practices** by producing toolkits, methodologies, and resources that amplify the reach of intercultural dialogue beyond the Programme's participants.
- **Building a global movement** by connecting young changemakers with decision-makers, experts, and peers, ensuring that youth-driven solutions contribute to long-term systemic change.

Article 4: Deadlines

4.1. Stages

All the deadlines of the Programme are peremptory. Failure to comply with them by applicants and participants will imply their exclusion from the process as of the date of the missed deadline. The deadlines will all fall on working days in France.

The Organizers reserves the right to extend the deadlines and, in this case, shall give due notice. In the event of extensions, they will be disseminated so that participants are fully aware of the modifications.

4.2. Project implementation

As part of the *Youth for Peace: UNESCO Intercultural Leadership Programme*, selected participants pursuant to Article 6 below will receive a 10,000 USD grant for implementing community-based projects that apply the principles of intercultural dialogue to address pressing social issues.

Upon completion of the online training in September 2025, each participant will be asked to finalise the proposal for their project, subsequent to which the proposals will be reviewed, and if approved, a grant will be distributed to develop and execute their own project pursuant to these terms and conditions. These projects must be fully implementable within six months of receiving formal approval. Projects must be implemented in compliance with International Law and all applicable national laws and regulations.

Details regarding the payment schedule and reporting requirements will be communicated to the participants by UNESCO in advance of the starting date for implementation.

Article 5: Themes

Recognizing the interdependence of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the projects implemented by the participants, and supported by the grants distributed as part of this Programme, will contribute to advancing those SDGs that align with UNESCO's mandate and areas of strategic focus, particularly SDGs 4, 5, 10, 11, and 16.

In its first year of operation, the theme for the Programme will be **Learning to Collaborate for a Shared Future: Using dialogue to foster social cohesion in a world on the move**. The Participants should propose youth-led innovative projects that address this challenge, leveraging intercultural exchange to build understanding, solidarity, and meaningful connections within communities.

Article 6: Participants and application criteria

Participants are individuals who:

- Are aged between 25 and 45 as of 1 September 2025;
- Have an established record of leadership within their respective fields;
- Demonstrate interest in the annual theme of the Programme;
- Demonstrate potential for impact and reach;
- Confirm their availability to participate in all components of the Programme.

The community-led projects must comply with the following criteria:

- Fall within the scope of the theme of the first cycle of the Programme: **Learning to Collaborate for a Shared Future: Using dialogue to foster social cohesion in a world on the move**;
- Be implemented within six (6) months;
- Be of local or national scope.

Each community-project should be delivered under the leadership of the Participant engaged within the context of the Programme. English will be the working language of the entire Programme. All project proposals must be presented in English and all exchanges with the Organizer and mentors will be in this language, unless otherwise agreed. Employees of UNESCO shall not be able to apply.

Article 7: Capacity-building programme

The capacity-building programme has several components. The Organizers reserves the right to modify the dates and deadlines of each component, duly notifying participants. Participants are expected to engage in all elements of this capacity-building programme:

7.1. Information Session [August 2025] – An online information session will be held in August 2025, outlining key details of the Programme’s different milestones and its timeline, along with details to facilitate the Participants’ participation in the Residential Programme.

7.2. Online Training Programme [September 2025] – All 50 Participants will take part in an online training programme in September 2025. This virtual training will build foundational knowledge and strengthen practical skills in intercultural leadership, equipping Participants with strategies and collaborative tools to advance the Programme’s theme **“Learning to Collaborate for a Shared Future: Using dialogue to foster social cohesion in a world on the move.”** The training will also include a design-thinking component to support the development and refinement of Participants’ community project proposals.

7.3. Ongoing Online Training [October 2025 – May 2026] – An ongoing online training programme will be implemented across the period of the implementation of community-projects, helping to provide further opportunities to develop the Participants’ knowledge and skills related to intercultural leadership.

7.4. Online peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing sessions [October 2025 – May 2026] – Online peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing sessions will be organized across the period in which the community-projects are to be implemented, helping to provide the Participants with opportunities to address common challenges and share solutions.

7.5. One-to-one mentoring/coaching [October 2025 – May 2026] – Regular opportunities for one-to-one mentoring and coaching will be organized, helping to troubleshoot, provide guidance, and further develop skills to support the implementation of the community-projects, and more widely practice and refine intercultural leadership.

7.6. Global Youth Leaders Dialogue for Peace [April 2026] – Towards the end of the project implementation, all Participants are expected to take part in the **UNESCO Global Youth Leaders Dialogue for Peace to be hosted at facilities owned by the Kingold Group in Guangzhou, China**, a high-level Forum designed to amplify youth-led action for intercultural dialogue and peace. Participants will present their projects, engage in intergenerational dialogue with decision-makers and experts, and take part in tailored training sessions focused on post-project impact, such as advocacy, networking, and sustaining alumni-led activities.

7.7. Alumni Network [May 2026 - onwards] – Participants will be invited to join the Alumni Network of the Programme, which will offer exclusive opportunities for ongoing training, peer-to-peer exchange, networking, and ongoing opportunities.

Chapter 2. Selection and participation

Article 8: Selection process

The selection process of participants will consist of four stages:

- **Application submission**

Interested candidates must submit their applications, including all required supporting documents, via the designated online application platform managed by UNESCO. The application period will be open from May 19 to June 22, 2025, and late submissions will not be considered.

- **Pre-screening**

UNESCO will pre-screen applications to ensure that the minimum requirements and commitments for participation set forth in these terms and conditions are met.

- **Technical review**

The pre-screened applications will be sent to an international technical jury - to be selected by UNESCO for their expertise in relation to the annual theme of the Programme, with due regard being paid also for geographic and gender balance - who will review, score, and rank the applications in line with the criteria established in article 10 of the terms and conditions.

- **Validation**

A shortlist of the top 50 ranked candidates, following the technical review, will be sent to the Programme's Steering Committee (consisting of the Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences at UNESCO, the Chairperson of the Kingold Group, and the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Cultural Diplomacy, Ms. Hedva Ser) for review and validation.

Upon validation by the above Steering Committee, the pre-selected Participants will receive formal communication from UNESCO informing them of their pre-selection, following which they will be required to confirm (through a consent form) in writing their acceptance of the terms and conditions of the Programme, as well as their availability to participate in all of its stages. Their confirmation must be sent to UNESCO within 5 days of having received the communication. Confirmations received after this deadline are not valid. Following this, final notification of selection to the Programme will be sent to selected Participants following confirmation by the relevant authorities in China that they will be permitted to enter China in order to participate in the in-person events planned within the Programme.

Article 9: Alternates

In addition to the top 50 ranked candidates, 12 alternate candidates will also be pre-selected and put on a waiting list. These will be the 12 candidates ranked next highest following the top 50 ranked candidates. If one of the top 50 ranked candidates fails to communicate their acceptance within the time frame specified within article 8 of the terms and conditions, or if they reject the invitation to participate, one of the 12 alternate candidates will be invited to participate (in order of the priority established following the scoring within the technical review).

Article 10: Selection criteria

The technical review (stage 3 of the process detailed in Article 9) of candidates for the programme by the technical jury will be guided by five key criteria:

- 1) **Leadership, past experience, and professional influence:** The applicant's ability to lead and influence, as demonstrated through past leadership roles and professional achievements. This includes both formal leadership positions and informal influence in their community or sector, as well as the skills they bring to support the success of their initiatives.
- 2) **Commitment, motivation, and alignment with the Programme goals:** The applicant's motivation to participate in the Programme and their alignment with its objectives. This also includes their ability to fully engage in the Programme's activities and apply its learnings in their work.
- 3) **Experience in dialogue and peacebuilding:** Demonstration of the applicant's understanding of actions that foster dialogue, resolve conflicts, and contribute to peacebuilding efforts.
- 4) **Potential for impact and scalability:** The potential of the applicant's profile and proposed community project to create meaningful and sustainable impact. This includes feasibility, the ability to scale initiatives beyond the immediate community, and long-term sustainability strategies.
- 5) **Creativity, relevance, innovation, and feasibility in initial community-project ideas:** The originality, practicality, and relevance of the applicant's proposed community project. Evaluation will consider the clarity of their idea, its innovative approach to solving a key issue, and its feasibility for implementation within the intended context.

The weighting of the criteria in the evaluation process will be as follows:

EVALUATION CRITERIA	WEIGHT
Leadership, past experience, and professional influence	30%
Commitment, motivation, and alignment with the Programme goals	25%
Experience in dialogue and peacebuilding	10%
Potential for impact and scalability	20%
Creativity, relevance, innovation, and feasibility in initial community-project idea	15%

Candidates who have been arrested, charged, or convicted of a criminal offense in any country will be considered ineligible for participation in the programme.

Article 11: Resource allocation for community-projects

11.1. Disbursements

Each of the selected Participants in the Programme will receive funding to implement their community project totalling 10,000 USD, that will be delivered in a series of instalments. These payments will be subject to the fulfilment of requirements, namely: participation in training, proof of payment for authorized expenses, provision of all requested narrative and financial reports, and the delivery of a final report, among others. These requirements will be communicated in detail to the selected Participants.

11.2. Eligible items

All expenses to be covered by the grant for the community projects implemented under this Programme must be directly associated with the activities carried out and must be derived directly from the implementation of the specific youth-led project. Participants who are selected to be part of the Programme will be given specific indications as to which items are eligible for funding, and which are only eligible if they do not exceed a specific pre-established percentage of the total funding.

11.3. Non-eligible items

Expenses associated with activities that are not directly related to the implementation of the community project may not be recognized, and the following may be explicitly excluded: purchase of real estate, infrastructure, vehicles, land, materials not associated with the

project, payments of credits and fines. Expenses that are not directly related to the implementation of the project will not be financed. Projects and activities linked to them must abide by international law which supersedes over local law, and the Organizers reserve the right to modify, cancel or eliminate projects that infringe on these terms.

UNESCO reserves the right to refuse payment of the relevant grant or any part of it.

Chapter 3. Participant commitments

Article 12: Acceptance

Applying to participate in the Programme requires the acceptance of the terms and conditions set forth in this document, as well as of any possible modifications by the Organizers. Therefore, those who submit their application must review and accept the terms and conditions and submit their written acceptance to the Organizers together with their application, pursuant to the form in annex.

Article 13: Final provisions

The Organizers reserve the right, at their sole discretion, to suspend, disqualify or cancel the participation of people or organizations in case of non-compliance in any way with these terms and conditions, particularly in the event of submitting false or incomplete data, or any actions that are contrary to the spirit and purposes of the Programme.

Selected participants shall not be considered as an agent or member of the staff or personnel of UNESCO. The selected participant shall not be entitled to any privileges, immunities, compensations of reimbursement, except as otherwise provided herein, nor are they authorized to commit UNESCO or Kingold Group to any expenditure or other obligations, including those set forth herein.

The selected participants are personally responsible for the purchase of any insurance, which may be necessary in respect of any loss, injury, or damage, illness, or accident occurring during the period of implementation of the selected projects. UNESCO shall not be responsible for any medical or health related refund or liability.

Unless authorized in writing by UNESCO, the selected participant shall not use the name, acronym or official logo of UNESCO, or any abbreviation of the name of UNESCO, for advertising or any other purposes.

UNESCO shall not be liable for the death or for injury or damage to any person or property arising out of the activities undertaken in relation to this Programme. The selected participants shall indemnify, hold and save harmless and defend, at their own expense, UNESCO and its officials, agents, and employees, from and against all suits, claims, demands, and liability of any nature or kind, including their costs and expenses, arising out of acts or omissions of the participant. This provision shall extend, inter alia, to claims and liability in the nature of workmen's compensation, products liability and liability arising out of the use of patented inventions or devices, copyrighted material or other intellectual property by the selected participant.

By accepting to participate in this Programme, and by accepting the financial grant related

to the implementation of the community project, all selected participants agree to submit any dispute, controversy or claim arising out of, or relating to this grant to mutual understanding. In the absence of amicable settlement, any such dispute, controversy or claim shall be submitted to arbitration in accordance with the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules then obtaining, including its provision on applicable law.

Nothing in or relating to these Terms and Conditions shall be deemed a waiver, express or implied, of any of the privileges and immunities of UNESCO.

Annex A:

Your privacy is important to us. We take every precaution to protect the information you provide in accordance with the UNESCO Principles on Personal Data Protection and Privacy (<https://www.unesco.org/en/privacy-policy>).

In connection to the administration of the Call for Applications for this Programme, UNESCO collects and processes information including personal data such as your full name, email address, and identity documentation.

UNESCO will store the data on its databases – unless you expressly request to delete the data – for a period of 5 years, for statistical purposes and to maintain communication with you to facilitate new opportunities and calls. Any other use will always be subject to further consent.

The information you provide will be shared between the Organizers, including members of the international technical jury and the Programme's Steering Committee, for the purposes of reviewing and evaluating applications. It will not be shared with any additional third parties without your explicit consent.

If you are pre-selected to participate in the Programme, you will be asked to sign a consent statement for the use, reproduction, and dissemination of your personal data, including your image and voice, for promotional, educational, and/or informational purposes related to the Programme.

This statement also requests your explicit consent to transmit to both the Kingold Group and the relevant authorities in China the data necessary to both receive clearance to enter China in order to participate in the in-person events planned within the Programme, and facilitate the organisation of these events organised at facilities owned by the Kingold Group in Guangzhou, China.

The use of the data will not imply any remuneration or benefit for the participant.

By submitting an application, you also acknowledge your responsibility to ensure the appropriate protection of any personal data you may process as part of your participation in the Programme, in accordance with the UNESCO's Principles on Personal Data Protection and Privacy.

Should you need to contact us for additional information or in order to access, correct or delete your data, please send an email to the following address: interculturaldialogue@unesco.org. For any other questions regarding the processing of your personal data, contact privacy@unesco.org.