

## **Context**

According to the World Economic Forum, four in 10 people are aged under 25. This is estimated to be almost 42% of the global population. While in most areas of the world populations are decreasing or flatlining, in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa they're increasing. Nearly half of the world's young live in Sub-Saharan Africa. Youth make up a large population that are excluded and not integrated within decision making spaces and spaces to influence agendas at both national and international levels. This is a large population of silenced and excluded potential that provide leadership in the drive toward achieving sustainable transformative growth globally. Historical barriers that continue to plague youth globally, are rooted within ageist colonial systemic and societal norms, which prevent genuine youth participation and engagement. These barriers allow for the ongoing sidelining and silencing of youth leadership and youth led interventions in the face of global issues. Outside of these barriers facing youth, the deeply entrenched socio-economic inequalities present a further challenge for youth and young people particularly in the Global South. Challenges such as the lack of access to quality transformative decolonial education, flawed failing economic systems, gendered violence, toxic social norms and the lack of transgressive political leadership all contribute to dangerous realities for young persons.

## **Rationale & Purpose**

The Global Campaign for Education as a global social movement is currently attempting to authentically grapple with these historical and contemporary barriers to genuine youth and student engagement. Across the membership of the movement there is a renewed understanding and acknowledgement of the power of youth and students in the addressing and alleviating the global issues plaguing us today. Across the globe we have seen examples of the resilience and powerful resistance led by youth and students. Examples include the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement #FreeHongKong marking one of the most historic student and youth-led democratic protests in the history of Hong Kong (UN 2016). The School Strikes for Climate 2019, led by students and schoolchildren, is estimated to be the greatest climate protest in world history. #FeesMustFall movement led by students in South Africa ignited global debate when they

demanded equal access to free, decolonised education and action against the inequality of the country. The Arab Spring protests, Occupy Wall Street, the anti-corruption rallies in India, protests for economic justice in Chile, Spain, Greece and Israel and in Nicaragua and Brazil students continuously walk the streets for quality education, democracy and freedom (UN 2016). COVID 19 has created further barriers and challenges to youth and student's organising globally particularly in the Global South. The pandemic has exacerbated existing struggles of youth and students in a myriad of ways namely:

- Limited Technology access and access to online learning (urban rural divide, gender divide and digital divide)
- Halting in youth and student organising across the world as a result of the pandemic
- Lack of connection and being in community opportunities to gather to share, exchange
- Lack of resource allocation for youth and student organising
- Mental health and psychosocial support to youth and students through the access to schooling system
- Lack of capacity to run online classes for teachers and public schooling curriculum
- Lack of schools and infrastructure to study online particularly marginalised students and youth e.g. disabled, poor, indigenous, girls and young womxn, LGBTQI+, refugees and migrants
- Heightened exposure to gender-based violence and domestic violence due to movement restrictions placed on citizens by states
- Health and access to healthcare to prevent and care during the global pandemic
- Lack of aggregated data on the situation in context in order to ensure resourcing and capacity is directed by the contextual needs

Despite these impacts GCE acknowledges the resilience and resistance of young people all over the world and are still among the leading forces fighting for just societies and for equal access to quality education for all. We believe that engaging youth and students will not only strengthen the movement for education today but also for the future to come.

## **Purpose**

The Global Campaign for Education as a movement has already taken the first necessary steps towards a more structured and direct way of working with youth and students to ensure more

deliberate and authentic opportunities for youth and students to lead the agenda and solutions for COVID-19 recovery responses within their contexts and the movement more broadly. In partnership with Action Aid International, GCE is excited to invite calls for proposals to access funds for ***Youth & Student Led COVID19 Recovery Responses***.

This small grant programme will support activities related to youth & student engagement in education policy processes, including engagement with national policy debates; participation in or influence on development of education sector plans; and monitoring of implementation of these plans.

This grant **CANNOT** support service delivery in the education sector, such as direct contribution to improving school infrastructure and running of school feeding programmes.

***Activities that will be funded under the small grant scheme include:***

- ***Youth/Student Action led research which focuses on the impacts of and responses to COVID 19 led by youth & students in your context (local, national and or regional)***
- ***Youth/Student led COVID-19 recovery response activities related to education and intersecting struggles such as lack of access, violence and exclusion. These activities may include:***
  - ***Advocacy & lobbying activities related to youth/student voices in national, regional and global COVID 19 recovery response plans***
  - ***Youth/Student led activism that forward and promote policy influencing***
  - ***Cross regional youth/student engagement which strengthens voice and leadership of youth and students in leading on COVID 19 recovery responses in their contexts***
- **All activities applied for under this grant need to be implemented between 1 September 2021 to February 2022 with final reports on activities undertaken submitted by March 1 2022.**

***GCE believes in the power of youth and student knowledge creation as a valid tool for reform and decolonising knowledge and education. This is why Youth/Student Citizen Journalism is an element which has been built into the grant scheme in order to ensure that youth and students are documenting project activities, learnings and youth/student led responses to contextual realities. Training and capacity support will be made available***

***to all grantee partners to ensure documentation, knowledge creation and learning is centered within the impact of the grant scheme.***

### **Eligibility for support**

In order to be eligible for grant funding to support Youth Networks/Groups as part of this programme, applicants must first meet the following criteria:

1. Be a member and/ or be linked to the coalitions of the countries mentioned of a national coalition as list below:

<b>Africa</b>	<b>Asia-Pacific</b>	<b>Latin America</b>	<b>Middle East, Europe and North America</b>
Angola	Nigeria	Afghanistan	Argentina
Burundi	Niger	Australia	Bolivia
Benin	Senegal	Bangladesh	Brazil
Burkina Faso	Somaliland	Cambodia	Chile
Cape Verde	Swaziland	India	Columbia
Cameroon	Sierra	Indonesia	Costa Rica
Cote d'Ivoire	Leone	Japan	Dominican Republic
DRC	Somalia	Mongolia	Ecuador
Ethiopia	Tanzania	Nepal	El Salvador
Gambia	Togo	Pakistan	Guatemala
Ghana	Uganda	Papua New Guinea	Haiti
Guinea	Zambia	Philippines	Honduras
Bissau	Zimbabwe	Solomon Islands	Mexico
Kenya		Sri Lanka	Nicaragua
Lesotho		South Korea	Paraguay
Madagascar		Timor Leste	Peru
			Albania
			Armenia
			Belgium
			Canada
			Denmark
			France
			Germany
			Georgia
			Ireland
			Italy
			Norway
			Romania
			Spain
			Sweden
			Switzerland
			Netherlands

Malawi	Vanuatu		UK
Mali	Vietnam		United States
Mauritania			Egypt
Mauritius			Iraq
Mozambique			Jordan
			Lebanon
			Morocco
			Palestine
			Somalia
			Sudan
			Moldova
			Yemen

2. Be structured as a network or a group with a diverse and representative base, national reach and documented protocols for accountability to members
3. it may be a formally established and legally registered network, or a consortium of youth organisations, networks, such as regional networks or student organisations
4. Have a focus on engagement in national education sector planning and policy.

### **Required characteristics of supported Youth Networks/Groups**

This programme aims to ensure effective participation of youth in policy processes, which entails the engagement of a diverse, representative and knowledgeable membership. Therefore, youth networks/groups that will receive financial support will be required to demonstrate the following characteristics. It is not necessary to meet all of these in full before receiving support, but the networks must show commitment to developing these characteristics further.

- Commitment to education: they support the right to education and have a commitment to education for all. Additionally, they should be monitoring and engaging where possible, in developments related to Sustainable Development Goal 4.

- Diverse membership: they have multiple organisational members that include/represent key stakeholders and marginalised groups; encourage new members, including with targeted expansion plans where relevant; represent a diverse base, with a variety of focus areas and approaches within education advocacy, especially teacher organisations, parents associations, child rights groups, youth movements, women's groups and organisations working with disadvantaged groups; and have a membership base from diverse geographic locations spread across the country, including hard-to-reach areas.
- Representation and accountability: they have a representative governing mechanism with clear lines of accountability and communication/feedback mechanisms; have clear and well-understood procedures, and office bearers that meet regularly; and have democratic, transparent decision-making processes.
- Active member & citizen engagement: they can demonstrate active and inclusive member engagement in developing plans, implementing activities and monitoring progress; have plans, protocols and strategies for effective engagement of constituencies and members; draw on member expertise; and actively build the capacity for engagement of their members and citizens more broadly.

## **Application Process**

The grant scheme aims to support up to 20 Youth & Student organisations/networks/consortiums across the GCE movement

Call for proposals

Application review

Selection outcomes communicated

Introduction and planning calls scheduled

***The application window is open from 1 July 2021 to 26 July 2021 1pm SAST. GCE will endeavour to process all applications and provide selection outcomes of application within a two-week period of the closing date.***