



GENERATION UNLIMITED Youth Challenge Q&A



1 BACKGROUND

1.1 What is Generation Unlimited (GenU)?

- GenU is a multi-sector partnership established to support every young person aged 10-24 in bridging the transition from education and training to employment and entrepreneurship.
- It brings together public and private partners – and young people themselves – to identify and capitalize on opportunities for shared-value partnerships and investments in strategies, models, initiatives, products and programs supporting outcomes for young people.
- The focus is on young people, especially those in the greatest danger of being or those already left behind – such as girls, young people from marginalized communities, young people with disabilities, young migrants or refugees, and young people affected by crises, conflict and natural disasters.
- GenU has seven strategic priorities that address the greatest challenges facing young people as they navigate the important transition from education and training to employment and entrepreneurship.
 1. Promote formal school experiences that build skills young people need for productive lives and the future of work
 2. Provide young people outside formal schooling with opportunities for training, skill development, and additional education
 3. Improve connections between young people and existing work opportunities
 4. Increase the number of quality work opportunities available to young people
 5. Foster entrepreneurship as a mindset and a livelihood
 6. Promote equitable access to quality education, training, employment, entrepreneurship, and civic participation
 7. Equip young people as problem-solvers and engaged members of civil society, helping to create a better world
- GenU has defined several Global Breakthrough Ideas that can harness the power of major new trends to create transformational change for young people:
 - Digital connectivity
 - Educational certification that is recognized across borders
 - Broad-based entrepreneurship programs
 - Strengthening on-ramp for green economy jobs
 - Job matching platforms connecting job-seekers and work opportunities
 - Remote learning and work opportunities
 - Micro-certification around key skills for young people
 - Defining and developing models to impart 21st century skills like critical thinking, teamwork, and verbal communication
 - Mental health interventions in schools / training programs to reduce drop-out rates, particularly for those impacted by trauma
 - Expanding remedial learning opportunities
 - Identifying applications for and supporting development of instant translation tools
- You can find out more about GenU [here](#).

1.2 How did the Youth Challenge start?

- The GenU Youth Challenge is a global social innovation initiative that engages marginalized youth as creators of solutions to the challenges that they face in their lives in the areas of education, skills, employment and empowerment.
- The GenU Secretariat, hosted by UNICEF, launched the first GenU Youth Challenge in September 2018 in 16 countries with a call for applications from young people from marginalized and disadvantaged backgrounds.
- In 2018 the Youth Challenge was hosted through UNICEF's Country Office and National Committee network, working together with local NGOs and government partners in each country. Here is how it worked:
 - **September 2018:** In each country, there was a call for applications for the GenU Youth Challenge. By working with partners, this call for applications was typically targeted to reach young people who would not usually apply for e.g. innovation contests or start up challenges. Young people were asked to apply with a problem that they wanted to solve (rather than an existing solution).
 - **November / December 2018:** Applicants were then selected (as teams) to join 3-4 day innovation workshops/bootcamps to investigate the problem they want to solve and design solutions.
 - **January / February 2019:** The 5 most promising solutions in each country then received a \$1,000 grant, expert advice and mentoring to continue working on their projects
 - **March 2019:** An international panel of judges selected the top five global solutions through a virtual global judging process.
 - **April 2019:** 5 global winners were announced at the Global Board meeting of GenU
 - **June 2019 – June 2020:** Winners are receiving US\$20,000 each and mentorship (locally and globally) to take their ideas to the next level.
- You can read more about the 2018/19 process and winners [here](#).

2 YOUTH CHALLENGE 2019/2020

In 2019/20, as part of the GenU partnership, UNICEF, UNDP, the World Organization of the Scout Movement, Plan International and other partners (globally and locally) are convening the networks, assets and resources to co-create and co-host the second Generation Unlimited Youth Challenge in at least 30 countries. We will work, together with our local and global partners, to convene our networks and build on our experience of working with young people, including the most disadvantaged.

2.1 What are the objectives of the GenU Youth Challenge?

- Engage youth from more disadvantaged/marginalized backgrounds as problem solvers (rather than just as beneficiaries)
- Generate youth-led solutions and enterprises at the local level that can contribute to Generation Unlimited strategic priorities globally
- Showcase (on a global stage) inspirational young ‘solvers’, creating role models from disadvantaged communities
- Build active citizenship, employability and entrepreneurship skills, experience and networks for disadvantaged young people
- Engage Youth Challenge participants (current and former) within Generation Unlimited at country level, including as mentors for future Youth Challenges, in co-creating Global Breakthroughs¹ and in GenU governance structures
- Support and strengthen youth-led innovation activities and capacity across all partner organizations involved in delivering the Youth Challenge and connect them to new opportunities
- Leverage the GenU partners network for policy insight, financial and technical resources to meaningfully support young people

2.2 What is different about this Youth Challenge?

An innovation challenge for young people is not a new concept. But, looking at the recent challenges taking place across the world, there is a clear lack of engagement of young people from marginalized and disadvantaged backgrounds, as problem solvers themselves. Throughout the outreach and mobilisation activities, our goal is to specifically involve marginalized young people – whether it is due to gender, sexual orientation, geography, ethnicity, religion, displacement, conflict or disability – and create an inclusive and accessible environment for all. By doing this we are seeking not only sustainable solutions, but also building future leaders from these groups of young people

2.3 What happens during a Youth Challenge?

The main activity for the GenU Youth Challenge takes place at country level. The global Youth Challenge team will provide some resource, toolkits, guidance and will run the global judging process. The table below (along with the timeline in the following section) indicates the activities that need to take place to deliver the Youth Challenge. There will be detailed guidance in the Youth Challenge toolkit, which will be made available to country hosts in late July/early August.

¹Generation Unlimited has defined ten Global Breakthrough Ideas that can harness the power of major new trends to create transformational change for young people, such as digital connectivity, job matching etc.

Phase	Timing	Activities	Lead
Pre-launch	Aug - Sept 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning phase at the country level 	Country level
Launch	Sept 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comms & media - Local Press release to announce launch - Launch – online and offline activities to publicise the Youth Challenge; targeting youth you are seeking to engage. 	Global launch with the majority of activities at country level
Outreach	From launch until application deadline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face 2 face and online activities to encourage applications to the Youth Challenge; - Implementing partners will mobilize youth / community / partners to outreach to youth through various means (info sessions, online, schools, youth centers etc.); - Comms & media - Outreach social media posts. 	Country level
Application deadline & review	TBC, a few weeks before bootcamp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local committees are formed to review and select participants for the Youth Challenge based on the globally set criteria; prioritising applications from disadvantaged youth. 	Country level
Announcing the Qualifying Teams	1 week after application deadline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Within maximum 1 week from the application deadline, the local implementing partners should contact and inform the selected teams who will be going through the Youth Challenge process. Recommended 10 teams of 3 to 5; with a maximum of 15 teams. 	Country level
Pre-bootcamp orientation	Prior to bootcamp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is a recommended step in the process to orient and train young people to prepare them for the bootcamp. This should ideally be conducted in person, but sometimes may need to be virtual, depending also on the geographical dispersion and ease of access of the teams. 	Country level
Bootcamp	Date tbc in each country between Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the bootcamp, the chosen teams will be taken through the process of 	Country level

	2019 and Feb 2020; with earlier dates recommended to give time for local incubation	<p>human-centered design to come up with solutions for the challenge areas. (The bootcamp format can be tailored depending on local and participants needs, e.g. 3-day bootcamp, 2 weekends bootcamp etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comms & media - Social media posts, pictures & videos from the workshops. 	
Selecting the 5 Finalist Teams	Following bootcamp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 out of the 10-15 teams will be chosen to receive 1,000 USD in seed funding and mentorship and coaching 	Country level
Mentorship Sessions	Following bootcamp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentorship to support teams to use their seed funding to develop and implement their ideas. - Partners and other stakeholders at the local level are expected to get involved in the mentorship phase. 	Country level
Selecting the 2 Finalist Teams per Country	TBC – expected June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through locally selected mechanisms, another local committee will select 2 projects that will enter the global judging process. 	Country level
Global judging process	July 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The finalist teams in each country will submit proposals to the global jury. - A group of diverse judges will be established by the global team to evaluate the projects based on globally set criteria. 	Global team
Due diligence	August 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due diligence around proposed global teams - Preparation for global comms announcements 	Global team
Announcing global winners	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comms & media - Global Press release to announce the global winners. 	Global team
Next steps	October 2020 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The winning projects will go through extensive mentoring and incubation to roll-out their solution. 	Global team, country level teams

2.4 Who can participate in the Youth Challenge (e.g. which young people?)

The Young Challenge is open to young people:

- Aged 14-24 (as of the day of launch, tbc September 2019)
 - At a global level there will be 4 prizes (of \$10,000) for teams whose members are 18 and under and 4 prizes (of \$20,000) for teams whose members are 19 and over. (N.B. the toolkit will contain detailed guidance on how to approach teams of mixed ages)
- Through the application process, priority will be given to young people from disadvantaged or marginalized backgrounds. This will vary by country and is within the control of the local hosts, but could include disadvantage due to gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, geography, religion, displacement or conflict
- The idea or project should be new. If the team has already received funding or is already a registered entity (company or NGO) they cannot apply to the Youth Challenge
- Applicants will need to be able to commit to attending the bootcamp(s) and other activities as per the dates and activities planned at a local level

2.5 What kind of projects is GenU looking to foster through the Youth Challenge?

The Youth Challenge is seeking to solve challenges that align with GenU's mission and strategic priorities (as per [Section 1.1](#))

The detailed toolkit will provide guidance on how to set locally relevant design challenges that align to Gen U's mission. Some indicative examples include:

1. How can we reduce the number of adolescents (or girls or specific communities) dropping out of secondary education?
2. How can we support building accessible and inclusive learning platforms, so youth with and without disabilities can study together?
3. How can we support young people to be prepared for the transition to, and navigation of, the labor market?
4. How can we expand access to remote learning and work opportunities for young people who live in refugee camps or have limited local opportunities?
5. How can we connect role models, mentors peers with youth with and without disability?
6. How can we best support young people to be positive agents of change in their communities?

Each country can choose to either have a broad set of design challenges (e.g. aligning to all areas of Gen U) or to pick one or two more specific areas; aligning to particular challenges in that country and perhaps aligning to other local activity (e.g. specific campaigns or government initiatives). The selection of challenges should be informed by both evidence (e.g. situational analysis) and young people's views.

All projects that receive seed funding should have the potential to be sustainable (rather than one off campaigns or activities) and scalable beyond their local area / village / town.

2.6 Are there fixed parameters or can we tailor the Youth Challenge to our own context and country?

There is scope to tailor the Youth Challenge so that it builds on local programming, existing partnerships, networks and assets. However, the following areas are fixed:

1. All partners need to agree to uphold certain [principles and values](#) throughout implementation of a Youth Challenge:
 - A commitment to foster engagement of disadvantaged youth
 - A human rights-based approach
 - A strengths-based approach to adolescent development
 - A youth-led approach ('By youth for youth')
 - A fully inclusive process, welcoming diversity in all its forms
 - An emphasis on the high potential of youth!
2. The eligibility of young people to participate in the Youth Challenge (as per [Section 2.4](#))
3. The types of projects young people develop through the Youth Challenge (as per [Section 2.5](#))
4. The primary branding for the Youth Challenge should be [Generation Unlimited](#), but other (secondary) brands can be used aligned to the partners who are hosting and supporting a Youth Challenge within a specific country
5. The overall timelines (as per [Section 2.3](#), with a more detailed timeline to follow)
6. The [judging criteria](#) which are applied at application stage, selection of teams for seed funding and selection of teams for the global judging process.
7. Hosting of a bootcamp using [Human Centred Design processes](#). The toolkit will provide guidance and tools, which countries are free to tailor and adapt, as long as the principles of Human Centred Design are used.
8. The lead organisation needs to be accountable for seed funding disbursement and reporting and monitoring of the use of funds in line with agreed organisational and national procedures.

The detailed Toolkit will outline these criteria, along with information around suggested outreach methodologies, workshop facilitation tools and mentorship approaches. With the exception of the fixed criteria outlined above, country hosts are free to adapt the approach and toolkit.

For your information you can view the 2018/19 toolkit [here](#), but please note that there will be some quite significant changes based on feedback and learnings from the first Youth Challenge.

2.7 What is the budget needed to host a Youth Challenge?

Further information is included in the next section on financial support for host countries.

The budget may vary quite significantly depending on the costs in a country. Some guidance:

- Each country needs to have US\$5,000 USD to be supplied directly to 5 teams as initial seed funding (each US\$1,000 USD). This funding is to invest in delivery of the youth-led projects
- Other costs to consider include:
 - Outreach (social media posts, refreshments for info sessions, material printing)
 - Payment for facilitators and mentors
 - Hosting a bootcamp (venue, transport, food and drink)
 - Staff compensation for time on project
 - It will be up to the partners to decide together how to best utilize the allocated budget based on the existing infrastructure available in country

3 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER THE YOUTH CHALLENGE

3.1 How will Gen U support and enable the Youth Challenge?

- The Gen U Secretariat will provide overall coordination and technical support to the Youth Challenge including project and partner management, development of overall toolkits, brand guidance, global communications assets and delivery of the global judging process.
- Generation Unlimited will provide (through partner financial contributions) the seed funding for the selected youth-led projects. This includes the \$150,000 which will be distributed at country level (30 countries x 5 projects x \$1000). GenU will also contribute the \$120,000 seed funding for the global finalists (which are selected from the projects developed at country level).
- In addition to the seed funding, Generation Unlimited will provide a further 20 grants of \$10,000 to countries to host the Youth Challenge (for which the country hosts need to apply through the Expression of Interest Form). These funds are designed to support outreach, hosting of the bootcamp and the mentorship phase. It is expected that the partner organizations also contribute funds to support hosting of Youth Challenges.

3.2 How will UNICEF, UNDP, the World Organization of the Scout Movement and Plan International collaborate on this as part of the GenU partnership?

The actual delivery of the Youth Challenge will be through partners' country offices. We expect joint applications (from 2 or more Gen U partner organisations) to host bootcamps at country level, with one organisation as the operational lead (to e.g. receive, distribute and report on funding).

There are different ways partners can contribute and each organisation's country offices will need to discuss how to allocate responsibilities. For example:

- **Youth Outreach** – Leveraging your direct channels and your work with youth, social media promotion, organizing info sessions and on-the-ground field work, mobilizing your community and onboarding partners
- **Application and Selection** – Reviewing and assessing the applications, informing and coordinating with qualifying teams
- **Hosting of local bootcamp(s) / workshops** – This could include providing facilitators, content and venue / logistics for 3-4 day bootcamp(s)/lab(s)
- **Selection of projects for initial seed funding** – Participation in judging panel to select the most promising projects for further mentorship and seed funding
- **Mentorship for selected projects** – Providing business and technical mentorship (and potentially psycho-social support) to the teams that progress into the seed funding stage
- **Managing seed funding** – Overseeing invoices, issuing checks, ensuring that the funds are being spent as per the plans
- **Evaluation and Reporting** – Monitoring and evaluating of the initiative
- **Communications** – Sharing and amplifying the participants' stories, providing positive role models of young people actively solving challenges in their communities.

3.3 What funding is available to support hosting of a Youth Challenge at country level?

There are three different modalities for applying to host a Youth Challenge:-

1. **Self-funding**

In this case the country host(s) are able to mobilise resources to host a Youth Challenge and would like the opportunity for teams to participate in the global judging process, networks and communications efforts.

2. **For seed funding only**

In this case the country host(s) are applying for \$5,000 seed funding. The host(s) are able to mobilise resources to host the Youth Challenge.

3. **For seed funding and hosting support**

In this case the country host(s) are applying for up to \$15,000 (of which \$5,000 is to be used for seed funding and \$10,000 can contribute towards the costs of hosting the Youth Challenge).

In all three modalities, country hosts need to be able to deliver against the criteria outlined in [Section 2.6](#) around the Youth Challenge.

The working assumption is that applications for self-funding will be approved; unless the host country is unable to deliver against other Youth Challenge parameters.

3.4 How does a Country apply to participate?

This Q&A document and an invitation to apply to host a Youth Challenge is being sent (via regional offices) to country organisations in each of the four partner's networks. At country level, discussion is encouraged to agree whether a joint application (from 2 or more organisations) is made to host a Youth Challenge.

The country-level organizations applying to host the Youth Challenges need to apply directly to the global Youth Challenge team using the [Expression of Interest Form](#). This should not be a lengthy process. The aim is to ensure country hosts have considered how they can practically host a Youth Challenge and how it will contribute to Generation Unlimited strategic objectives and the programming activities of the different host organisations.

We strongly recommend that at least one of the organisations has demonstrable experience in delivering programming with and for adolescents and youth (14-24) and that there is some experience in delivering human centred design and social entrepreneurship programming.

The deadline for expressions of interest is July 31st 2019.

The applications will be reviewed by a team composed of members of all organizations at a regional and HQ level (UNICEF, UNDP, Scouts, and Plan International), the GenU Secretariat, and the GenU Youth Challenge team. Applications will be reviewed against the following criteria:-

- Expectation that at least 2 partners apply to host the Youth Challenge
- Ability to bring other strategic partners on board (e.g. government, private sector, local youth led organisations)

- Focus on disadvantaged youth as problem solvers
- Existing expertise in this type of programming (social innovation, social entrepreneurship, human centred design)
- Ability to self-fund participation (in whole or part)

In making the final selection we will consider the need for diversity in terms of geography and context. We will also seek, where possible, to focus resources on countries where local resource mobilisation is more difficult.

We are aiming to review applications and notify countries by 16th August to allow for detailed in country planning.

3.5 How can I find out more?

For further information please contact your HQ Representative, who will be able to share more information, including the toolkit, and make the relevant introductions.

1. GenU Youth Challenge team: Katherine Crisp (Kcrisp@unicef.org), Hana Sahatqija (hsahatqia@unicef.org)
2. UNICEF ADAP team: Jumana Haj-Ahmad (jhajahmad@unicef.org), Fabio Friscia (during July) (ffriscia@unicef.org)
3. UNDP: Noella Richard (Noella.Richard@undp.org)
4. World Organization of the Scout Movement: Annie Weaver (Annie.Weaver@scout.org)
5. Plan International: Ida Thyregod (Ida.Thyregod@plan-international.org)