

2. Active outreach

to have more young people with fewer opportunities in the EU youth programmes

It is not enough to just say 'we are open to all' but there should be some active effort to appeal to and reach out to (organisations working with) specific (underrepresented/disadvantaged) target groups. Going the extra mile – not just waiting for them to come. It is about promotion to specific organisations/networks that represent young people with particular needs.

But we also need to take the Inclusion & Diversity message to mainstream organisations/other potential beneficiaries, and encourage them to have an inclusive approach, to widen the participation of young people with fewer opportunities in their activities. The relationship between the programme and the beneficiaries, with all the institutions and agencies in between, should be positive and trustful.



A conscious outreach (I&D) process

ACTION 14

Collect evidence, inform yourself

- Map who you are reaching and who not.
- Look back at previous outreach efforts and learn from that.
- Check research for I&D information that can support your choice of target groups.

OUTCOMES

- > *Decision making is data and fact-based.*
- > *Overview of blind spots is created. Understanding of who exactly are the underrepresented YPFO.*
- > *An idea of what works and doesn't.*

ACTION 15

Select your target group(s) to focus on

- All means none. Decide on a limited number of target groups and a time-frame.
- Consult with stakeholders which target groups are important (funders, national authorities...).
- Decide on the numbers (specific targets) you want to reach.

OUTCOMES

- > *Target groups (one or two) chosen that you want to focus on.*
- > *Buy-in and support received from the stakeholders.*
- > *Measurable targets are set- you know where you are heading*

ACTION 16

Get to know your target group(s)

- Connect to representatives from that group. Work together with them as experts or resource persons. Have young people as advisors in meetings/strategy development. Talk with them not about them.
- Research the reality of your target group. Find out their needs and motivations and how the EU youth programmes could fit to that and the possible obstacles to take part
- Create a persona profile of the target group.

OUTCOMES

- > *Clear understanding of the enablers and blocking factors to get the target group on board.*
- > *Understanding of the needs and reality of the target group.*
- > *Communication and actions based on current research of needs and motivations.*

ACTION 17**Define your plan of action for reaching out (or for I&D)**

- Develop a plan of actions that will help the target group to get on board (and go international).
- Address the needs, use the motivation and help overcome the obstacles.
- Involve people that can help you with this (from the target group, role models, etc).
- Allocate resources for the implementation of the plan of action. It takes time and resources to do outreach correctly. This should be funded.
Eg. Change the mobility tool to track and measure how much outreach is done, and the time/resources spent on it.
Eg. Don't reinvent hot water. Expand the capacity of existing youth information networks to match ambition of promotion (eg. Eurodesk . 5 x more outreach, means 5 x more funding).

OUTCOMES

- > *An approach that is shared between many roles in the NA/organisation*
- > *An approach that fits the needs.*
- > *Wider diversity of participants can be included as resources/time are planned ahead (organisations have enough lead-in time for outreach and support for 'different' participants).*
- > *External expertise received - you don't have to do it alone.*
- > *More outreach is done to more groups more successfully.*
- > *Access to information and mobility of information is improved, to more places and people.*
- > *Resources needed for outreach are proven through evidence.*

Better/adapted communication

ACTION 18

Adapt your message to the target group

- Note that for NAs & SALTOs, the target group often is 'organisations', whereas for the beneficiaries the target is young people.
- Use content and arguments that the target group is sensitive to. Communicate from their perspective (what they need). Make sure they can positively identify themselves in the messaging.
- Adapt the language, visuals and examples to the target group. Don't talk in Key Actions. Show that it is for them, and how they can benefit.
- Make it appealing, easy to read (also for those with disabilities) and show/tell explicitly that the projects are also for YPFO.

OUTCOMES

- > *Organisations/young people are triggered or convinced that these programmes are also for them.*
- > *Positive impression received of the possibilities. Newcomers want to give it a try.*
- > *(European youth) project organisers feel empowered to develop their own ideas with the opportunity of grants.*
- > *Youth workers, managers, staff also feel targeted by the communication about European 'youth' projects.*

ACTION 19

Go where your target group is

- Different groups use different (communication) platforms and tools. Upskill so you can use the ones used by your target group.
- Also check if there are virtual or in-person places where the target group gathers (e.g. conferences, schools, skate parks etc).
- Prioritise two-way face-to-face communication to bring potential participants from 'awareness' stage to the stage of 'interest and commitment' in the European youth project.

OUTCOMES

- > *Outreach is more successful.*
- > *Response is more positive.*
- > *Staff are upskilled in new/different communication approaches.*

ACTION 20

Involve the target group

- They know their sector/group best, so they can help you adapt your communication (and other outreach actions) e.g. sounding board
- Set up a pool of 'ambassadors' that can do peer-to-peer communication/outreach. Empower young people to do outreach themselves.
- Promotion done by the target group, not for them. Involve the (cultural) ambassador in different roles to get more people from their target group on board.
- Tip: Provide motivation/recognition / incentives / recompense for the ambassadors to give 'free' support to others.
- Connect experienced beneficiaries together (Europeans, Alumni networks, etc.)

OUTCOMES

- > *A pool is built of knowledgeable resource persons from the target group*
- > *Advice and promotion given from experienced resource persons with communication that the target group connects to.*
- > *Confidence is increased in newcomers, encouraged by recognisable and relatable role-models: increase the "that could be me!" factor.*

ACTION 21

Testimonials and storytelling

- Go beyond factual information. Also tell a story, collect testimonials, have previous project participants share their experience, etc.
- Give a clearer more honest picture 'from experience' of what such an European youth project entails, both positive and negative.

OUTCOMES

- > *More 'lived' information, from experience, from peers is more convincing*
- > *A clearer picture is given. More trust is built. A feeling of 'I can do it too' is encouraged in the target audience.*

ACTION 22

Upskill for outreach and communication

- Nobody's perfect. Get trained about outreaching and communicating with specific target groups (whether this is organisations or young people).
- Or get external expertise in (e.g. specialised communication agencies)
- Provide guidelines for youth workers to promote programmes to others in an inclusive way.

OUTCOMES

- > *More confident and skilled staff.*
- > *More efficient and effective outreach to target groups.*



Interconnection with others

ACTION 23

Encourage networking for I&D

- Provide events and spaces for dialogue, offline and online.
- Create and promote more and better opportunities for networking on regional, national and international level.
- Encourage networking between orgs that work with same/different target groups.
- Connect to other agencies and institutions and other programmes around the holistic needs and life of young people. This includes regional and bilateral programmes.
- Encourage experienced beneficiaries to promote programme opportunities to others– give recognition and incentive to do that.
- Map the actors in the field to provide visible overview and accessible network to others. Widen the circles that know about opportunities and can spread information to others.

OUTCOMES

- > *Mutual support for I&D and European youth projects.*
- > *More people are better connected.*
- > *Organisations get to know each other.*
- > *Networks strengthened and social capital built.*
- > *Awareness of European Programme opportunities is increased in a wider audience.*

ACTION 24

Work with other sectors

- Connect to (non-youth) organisations or sectors that have contacts with the target group. Connect to existing networks on local/regional/national level, or build a new network if it doesn't exist yet.
- Join forces based on common interest (inclusion, better opportunities for specific target groups, employment, education,...).
- Work with them to promote programme opportunities. Information to be spread more widely in decentralised way.
- They can also help you with Milestone 2A and 2B.

OUTCOMES

- > *Access to the target group is widened.*
- > *Combined efforts for I&D, more efficiency and effect.*
- > *Spill-over effect between (international) youth sector and other sectors.*
- > *Promotion and recognition of non-formal education / E+ / ESC.*

ACTION 25

Work with other sectors

- Stimulate mainstream organisations to include more diverse participants. Make mainstream projects accessible for all (who use wheelchairs, are unemployed etc). Provide training and support for orgs to do this.
- Provide specialised support to create more hosting organisations who are skilled and willing to focus on specialised target groups.

OUTCOMES

- > *Upskilled organisations.*
- > *More opportunities for more diverse young people to participate.*

