

# Strategy Focus Groups

Concept Paper





## Envisioning the Strategy Focus Groups

Including all National Committees as well as active members in the rollout and implementation of the EYP Strategy 2021-2025 is crucial for its success. Therefore, the EYP Governing Body is announcing the creation of several **Strategy Focus Groups**, working groups that for approximately one year will gather together NC board representatives and interested EYPers for discussions on how to translate the different pillars of the strategy into concrete actions. By providing both NCs and individual EYPers with the opportunity to exchange strategy-related ideas, knowledge, and best practices, the Focus Groups will contribute to a strategy that is truly members-driven and that reflects the diversity of the EYP network.

For NC boards, the Focus Groups will be a possibility to ensure that all board members, not solely those with international portfolios, are involved in conversations at the international governance level, while EYPers who are not currently members of their NC boards will be able to shape the strategy rollout with their ideas. The Focus Groups will also be a dedicated space for the international dissemination of innovative projects, which currently are often developed and implemented at the NC level, but then are not shared with the rest of the network. During the year, the NC representatives will be able to share their work on ongoing projects and gather feedback as well as insights from the rest of the participants on the matter. Hence, the aim of the Focus Groups is to not only come up with new project ideas but also together discuss and enhance the quality of the ongoing ones. The contribution of the active EYPers who are not currently members of the boards of their NCs is very much encouraged as it will lead to deeper cooperation in the Network.

Ultimately, **the goal behind the Focus Groups** is to ensure that the entire EYP network, consisting of international governance, NCs, and active members, takes ownership of the strategy and jointly works towards its implementation.

## A new perspective on strategy

Each Strategy Focus Group will be specifically discussing one pillar of the strategy and will be assigned one or two Governing Body members whose portfolios are particularly aligned with that pillar. In the first meeting of each Focus Group, the respective GB members will introduce the pillar and the current state of play. However, for the rest of the process, the GB members will act only as facilitators. The discussions themselves will be between the participants, be they NC board members and/or interested EYPers. Consequently, when joining a Focus Group, participants should be willing to commit to the entire term which will last until the end of the year and entail around three digital meetings, with additional discussions between the meetings taking place on Discord.

## The pillars and assigned GB members are:

- A network that works as a catalyst for active citizenship. — Lira Mikayelyan
- A network that fosters a peaceful European society. — Janis Fifka and Annelou Snippe



- A network that operates within a sustainable structure for strategic development. — Lira Mikayelyan and Annelou Snippe
- A network that supports its volunteers and their personal growth. — Güneş Uğuz
- A network that pushes for inclusion and accessibility. — Jarne van der Poel
- A network that offers a rich variety of methods, tools, and formats. — Milica Mijatović and Janis Fifka

It is perfectly acceptable for NCs to send a representative to a Focus Group even without having pre-existing projects or knowledge on the respective strategy pillar. As long as there is an interest within the NC to discuss different ways to potentially implement a pillar, participation is very much encouraged, as the goal of the Focus Groups is not only to present fully formed ideas, but also to collaboratively brainstorm and develop new ones.

## Involving individual EYPers

Individual active members of EYP who are not members of their NC boards are also expressly encouraged to participate in the Strategy Focus Groups. Including the perspectives of individual EYPers is itself part of the strategy and plays an important role in its implementation. The Focus Groups are thus envisioned as spaces where NCs, but also EYPers of all experience levels with a shared interest in a certain part of the EYP strategy can collaborate, making the EYP's governance structures more accessible to the entire network.

## From strategy to implementation

The Strategy Focus Groups will not only allow for discussions *about* the EYP Strategy, but will thereby also play a part in its implementation. As such, they are not only opportunities for the development and international dissemination of concrete ideas on how to implement the strategy, but will also directly contribute to several of its pillars.

Nonetheless, in order to ensure that the ideas discussed in the Focus Groups are not lost once the term ends, each Focus Group will summarise their conversations, resulting in a comprehensive report on the entire initiative and a database of ideas on how to implement the strategy's different pillars. These can then be communicated with the network for implementation at the NC or session level. As such, each Strategy Focus Group does not necessarily need to produce a set of fully formulated implementation plans, but can also simply gather possible ideas for how to realise the respective strategy pillar.

For any questions on the Strategy Focus Groups, feel free to reach out to Johann Davies, the GB Associate on Strategy Focus Groups, via [johannddavieseuropa@gmail.com](mailto:johannddavieseuropa@gmail.com) or Lira Mikayelyan, the GB member on Strategic Development, via [l.mikayelyan@eyp.org](mailto:l.mikayelyan@eyp.org)