



GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

(LOT 1: NEW SCHOOLS AND NEW PARTNERSHIPS)

RYCO Superschools Western Balkans Exchange Scheme



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About the Regional Youth Cooperation Office

Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) is an intergovernmental regional organization, founded by the Western Balkans 6 governments (WB6): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, aiming to promote the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between the youth in the region through youth exchange programs. RYCO's programs focus on creating opportunities for young people to engage in activities that build mutual understanding and reconciliation in the civic, social, educational, cultural, and sports domains. RYCO initiates and participates in policymaking and advocates for reform. It supports the development of a political and social environment that empowers and facilitates youth exchange.

RYCO has empowered over 31 000 young people to date, investing more than 7 million euros in youth exchange programs at both the regional and local level. Five Open Calls for project proposals have been organized, benefiting 281 civil society organizations and 115 secondary schools. Through the Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs (RISE) during the period 2019-2023, RYCO has provided support to 534 young entrepreneurs.

As part of its flagship project during the Superschools cycle 2021-2024 over the course of two open calls, RYCO supported 77 bilateral partnerships of secondary schools from the region and facilitated the exchange of around 1 838 high school students through 154 organised exchanges. Throughout the program, 308 high school teachers from the region strengthened their capacities in RYCO thematic areas, non-formal education and project management. Finally, an additional 3 688 young people were indirectly involved through local outreach activities organized by the schools.

For more information about RYCO please visit <https://www.rycowb.org>.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with Security Council Resolution 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence



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About the Superschools exchange scheme

“RYCO Superschools” is RYCO’s flagship program and it is a regional secondary school exchange scheme that aims to support the peacebuilding and reconciliation processes in the Western Balkans through school to school projects. RYCO Superschools is part of the multi-donor project called “Western Balkans School Exchange Scheme” jointly financed by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO).

The key goal of the RYCO Superschools program is to support peacebuilding and reconciliation processes, intercultural learning and dialogue among schools, students and their communities. These efforts aim to make the Western Balkans societies more resilient to the region's political challenges by empowering their youth to participate in intercultural dialogue and regional cooperation. The program of the Superschools grant scheme has been specifically designed to pave the way for creating strong and sustainable bonds between secondary schools within the region as they are crucial to strengthening the reconciliation processes in the region. The aim is to facilitate engagement of secondary schools in the pervasive processes of regional cooperation by serving as a platform for networking opportunities with other secondary schools from around the region with a strong programmatic focus on RYCO related thematic areas. In addition the program is designed to build the capacities of the schools and teachers as well in the area of peacebuilding and project cycle management.

The new RYCO Superschools edition, 2024-2026, will bring together 2 600 young people through **two open calls** (3rd and 4th Superschools open calls) and support **90 Superschools bilateral partnerships**. The exchanges will be carried out by **360 teachers** that will have their capacities to design and implement quality youth exchanges improved through the Superschools program capacity building activities.

The Superschools exchange scheme has two different **LOTs**, each tailored to accommodate needs of two types of partnerships, namely:

a) NEWLY FOUNDED PARTNERSHIPS / Establishment of partnerships (LOT 1)

- NEW SCHOOLS forming NEW PARTNERSHIPS which were not funded within the Superschools exchange scheme before (including those partnerships that were selected but did not manage to implement the projects)
- NEW PARTNERSHIPS composed of two schools that as a partnership were not funded within the Superschools exchange scheme before (including those partnerships that were selected but did not manage to implement the projects)



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RYCO strongly encourages schools and partnerships that have never been selected nor funded under the Superschools exchange scheme to apply.

b) LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS / Support the sustainability of partnerships (LOT 2):

RYCO wishes to recognize the importance of sustaining and nurturing the partnerships created within the previous calls, which demonstrated commitment and quality of their joint work in light of addressing RYCO thematic areas. This is why under LOT 2, partnerships with a proven track record of effective addressing of RYCO thematic areas and achieving wider local community engagement are eligible to apply for the support.

- Eligible to apply are all partnerships that were selected and that have implemented project(s) within the 1st and/or 2nd Superschools open call.

Through dedicated support, RYCO aims to further empower these partnerships to achieve their goals and maximize their impact in the local communities involved.

To summarize, the schools previously funded under the RYCO Superschools exchange scheme may reapply with either:

- a different partner school within LOT 1
- or**
- with the same partner LOT 2

Your school is eligible to apply within LOT 1 if:	Your school is eligible to apply within LOT 2 if:
You and your partner are applying for the first time for the Superschools open call	You had a successful implementation of an exchange project in 1st and/or 2nd Superschools open call project with your partner and you wish to continue your collaboration
You had implemented a Superschools project during 1st and/or 2nd Superschools open call and now you wish to apply with a different partner	
Application through the superschools.net platform	Apply via email by submitting the application form at superschools@rycowb.org

IMPORTANT NOTE: Applications for LOT 2 **can't** be done through the superschools.net platform. In case you are eligible and interested to apply for LOT 2, please contact the Local Program Officer from your Contracting Party (contact info available <https://superschools.net/contact/>) or write to superschools@rycowb.org for more information on the exact application procedure and application documents.



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1. What is a Superschools project?

A **Superschools project** entails the organization of:

- **“before exchanges” period:** including preparations of the activities and participants,
- **Exchange number 1,**
- **“In-between” period:** including the period in between two exchanges and maintaining in contacts with the partner,
- **Exchange number 2,**
- **“after exchanges” period:** including the round up of the learning experience and the organisation of **two local outreach activities.**

All those activities are implemented by the partnership and form part of **one project- the Superschools project.**

Superschools youth exchange is a short term learning mobility of young people alongside staff members from participating secondary schools. Its primary aim is to offer opportunities for regional cooperation and foster intercultural competencies, laying ground for reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts in the region.

Within one RYCO Superschools project 2 intercultural youth exchanges, with each partner school hosting one exchange, should be organised. Each exchange lasts **5 program days**, with additional **2 days allocated for traveling** (maximum duration being 7 days). These exchanges offer a platform for at least **12-14 students from each school** involved (**24-28 students** in total *per* partnership) coming from different backgrounds, including ethnic, cultural, religious etc, to meet, work together and engage in shared projects and topics over a short period. The two exchanges implemented by one partnership should make a joint program with aligned learning outcomes.

Completing the youth exchanges, each partnership is tasked with organizing at least **two outreach activities** within the local community. The aim of the outreach activities is to disseminate the results of the conducted exchange and initiate reflection and discussion among students reaching a larger group of young people. The desired number of participants for each outreach activity is **at least 20 young people per activity, 40 per partnership.** The follow up activities can have various and different forms such as presentations, workshops, youth fairs, etc.

Within the application phase **the partnerships are applying with an idea** for a project which will later on with the support and mentorship from RYCO, be developed into a program agenda of exchanges and action plan for the outreach activities. **This means that the idea submitted, if chosen for funding, will be subject to adjustments to align with the RYCO Superschools exchange scheme program and budget requirements.**



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Please also make sure that **all project activities** (including the educational trips) that you plan to realize need to be implemented within the local communities of each partner school.

2. Who can participate?

The Superschools, as defined by the RYCO Strategy, targets:

- **secondary schools** across the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, or Serbia),
- encompassing **various types** of education profiles, such as grammar schools, vocational schools, art schools, mixed schools, schools for students with disabilities etc,
- **both public and private.**

To summarize, in order to apply the school must:

- **Be a secondary school.** Please note that schools which are registered both as elementary and secondary schools are eligible to apply but can only involve high school students as participants of the project,
- **established and operating within the Western Balkan Contracting Parties** (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia),
- Be registered as a secondary school **for at least one year.**

Superschools partnerships

Two secondary schools coming from two different RYCO Contracting Parties form a Superschools partnership. The Superschools partnerships are one of the pillars of the Superschools program as they work together to ensure successful design and implementation of the Superschools projects. The partnerships are main carriers of the activities of the RYCO Superschools projects and a strong partnership is a precondition in ensuring quality mobility and successful implementation of the projects. Equal participation of both partner schools is expected which is reflected through balanced roles and responsibilities.

Besides being from different Contracting Parties, within the Superschools, we are looking for the partnerships which are diverse in other aspects (*small vs large communities, rural vs urban settlements, multicultural vs monoethnic local communities, communities with different ethnic and religious composition, partnerships between the schools with disabilities and schools for students with typical development, schools with different educational profiles etc.*) In addition, we seek partnerships that have demonstrated collaborative approach to designing the program of the exchange with high level of student involvement, have shown understanding that the



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project implementation entitles a joint venture of both schools and are willing to achieve a balanced division of tasks and responsibilities, as well as mutual support among partners.

RYCO views Superschools program as a continuous platform for cooperation between the schools and for this reason it aims to facilitate maintaining of a strong partnership, however it is important to emphasize that the responsibility for forming and maintaining the partnerships is on the schools. RYCO can't take responsibility for issues that might arise especially in cases of cancellation of participation by one of the partners. Having said that, it is important for the schools to establish a relationship that is based on the values of trust, transparency and open communication. Please also be informed that if selected it is the responsibility of the school to obtain the necessary permission for travel and participation in the program from the relevant government authority.

Superschools teachers

The teachers are vital to the success and impact of the Superschools program and RYCO mission in general. The Superschools program recognizes the essential role of teachers, as they are enablers and crucial for a more comprehensive outreach towards the young people.

Within the Superschools program, usually 2 teachers per school, 4 from each partnership, are engaged as the coordinators of the activities and act as contact points with RYCO. All teachers should be proficient in English language as English is the RYCO working language. They will be the ones accompanying the students during the exchanges, both while visiting and hosting partner schools and coordinating the overall activities of the project. The division of the responsibilities is entirely up to the teachers, however, RYCO expects that both teachers are equally informed and engaged.

Even though only 2 teachers will be acting as contact points on behalf of school in front of RYCO, it is important to emphasize that RYCO expects from the schools to view the Superschools project as a joint venture of the school and engagement of the school collective (both the school management and the teaching staff) is not just recommended, but highly valued.

3. What are Superschools' program pillars and values?

RYCO puts young people at the center of its work and through its programs it supports various educators throughout the region to facilitate creating a culture of regional intercultural exchanges and meaningful learning as the main tool for the process of reconciliation within the Western Balkans region. Through the Superschools program RYCO aims at creating an



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enabling environment for youth development, and building their capacities to become active drivers of progressive changes in the region.

For this reason Superschools program is designed to help young people develop the attitudes and skills necessary for productive intercultural communication and cooperation with their peers from different communities in the region. Participating in the exchanges helps them grasp the essence of the Superschools program that embraces concepts of peacebuilding, reconciliation, constructive dealing with the past and cooperation, therefore, allowing youth to understand the RYCO mission and vision of the Western Balkans region.

To achieve so, the following pillars and values within the Superschools program are set:

SUPERSCHOOLS PROGRAM PILLARS

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

Overall goal of the Superschools exchanges is for the young people to gain intercultural competencies as a basis for reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts in the region. The projects can focus on different topics such as everything from human rights, to the topics connected to schools educational profiles, sport, culture and art, environment, well-being of young people etc. In addition the projects can also cover the topics of RYCO thematic areas directly such as peacebuilding, reconciliation, dealing with the past and hate speech. Projects that opt for those topics have a higher programmatic value for RYCO.

The main components of activities within the Superschools exchanges that RYCO seeks to support are:

- Non-formal learning methods used in different types of activities. Those activities can be workshops, exercises, debates, role - plays, simulations, outdoor activities, guided museum tours, visits to memorials etc.
- Intercultural dialogue and learning.
- Youth participation and youth inclusion.
- A clear educational purpose and set learning outcomes.

Through exchanges the learning objectives that RYCO strives to achieve are:

1. Gaining intercultural competence (attitudes, skills and knowledge) that allow young people to understand and value different perceptions, interact constructively with young people from different cultural, ethical, religious, language etc backgrounds. Adopting certain values and cultural frameworks which are essential to work in the context of Western Balkans and RYCO thematic areas.
2. Personal development (self-awareness and self-confidence, critical thinking, communication skills etc.)
3. Community-oriented mindset (active participation, regional cooperation, European values etc.)



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When designing the activities you need to always keep in mind that the Superschools exchanges and youth exchanges in general, are **not excursions** and what distinguishes them from excursions, among other things, is the intercultural learning component and the learning outcomes.

LOCAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Local community, in Superschools terms, is a community (city, village, municipality etc.) where the school is located and where a group of people is organized around common values. All activities within the two exchanges are to be implemented in the local community of each partner school.

The young people participating at the exchanges should have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the cultural, historical and other relevant sights that the local community of the schools has. Visits of the local sites need to be linked with the program of the exchanges and have to be educational. The visits should always have clear learning objectives and not present a mere sightseeing opportunity.

In addition, in the Superschools program RYCO also seeks to actively engage the local community in the program of the exchanges. Incorporation of local perspectives and voices within the RYCO Superschools exchanges should always have a wider educational purpose. It should foster understanding and collaboration among communities involved, by encouraging discussions and activities that promote respect, empathy, understanding, appreciation towards different local realities and cultures.

Engagement of local communities means building partnerships with local stakeholders, such as local CSOs and grassroots, local authorities, and businesses and encouraging active involvement and participation of the local community members such as students (assuming role of peer educators), activists and prominent community members in various fields, parents in the program's events, workshops and other activities. Engagement can take the form of everything from promoting the local culture, cuisine, customs, practices, young artists, or events and activities.

For Superschools important actors are also local government/municipality representatives; local media; relevant youth organisations or youth councils; local cultural institutions/centers and/or sports clubs; local businesses, etc.

MEANINGFUL YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND CO-OWNERSHIP

With the new edition of the Superschools 2024-2026 a topic in special focus (a so-called horizontal priority) will be meaningful youth participation and co-ownership. The RYCO Superschools recognizes the importance of providing youth with a genuine and impactful role in shaping their non-formal educational experience which should be reflected in different stages of planning (e.g. selection of the partner and the topic of the exchange) and design of the application (through a consultative process involving young people and their representatives)



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and later on during implementation of the exchange (peer-learning etc.). RYCO will especially value applications that have demonstrated cooperation with representative student bodies such as student parliaments. In this way Superschools programme recognizes the importance of youth “programmatic” input and contribution, thereby creating a more inclusive and empowering educational environment. In this endeavor, significant attention will be given to the involvement of the most excluded and vulnerable youth groups, particularly supporting their social inclusion and participation in decision-making.

Through the Superschools, RYCO aims to:

- ❖ address the specific local needs of young people,
- ❖ enable meaningful youth participation and co-creation in different phases,
- ❖ support and prepare young people for the intercultural learning mobility experience they will take part in,
- ❖ facilitate gaining competences in particular attitudes and skills relevant for regional cooperation and peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts,
- ❖ facilitate and create opportunities for meaningful connections.

OPTIONAL: HOMESTAYS

With the Superschools 2024-2026 edition we want to have a greater focus on implementing the concept of homestays as they have proven ability for securing a more impactful exchange experience for the students. RYCO homestay or host family accommodation is an opportunity for students to stay with host families during the RYCO Superschools exchanges. This means that a student of a visiting school is placed with a hosting school’s student’s family. The main purpose of Superschools homestays is to create more space for intercultural learning and local experience and thus building stronger bonds between the young people and their families taking part in the Superschools. 92% of young people from the partnership that has implemented the homestays concept within the 2nd Superschools Open call believe that the homestays component is an added value to the Superschools exchanges in which they took part in.

RYCO strongly encourages schools to consider organizing homestays. During the selection process, applications that have envisaged homestays option will be valued higher due to their added value to the overall program. Both partners need to agree to implement homestays, it is not possible for only one partner to implement homestays. **Partnerships that opt to implement homestays will receive additional points within the selection phase.** Please note that those partnerships which opted for homestays in their applications would need to implement them and there will be no further option to change to hotel accommodation.

RYCO will provide financial and mentorship support to partnerships that chose to implement homestays. To cover the costs incurred during hosting RYCO has anticipated compensation for families participating in the program.

For more information please check our Guidelines for Homestays.



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SUPERSCHOOLS PROGRAM VALUES

DIVERSITY

Diversity stands as one of RYCO's core values, as outlined in the RYCO Strategic Plan 2022-2024. The most important type of the Superschools diversity is the diversity of the young people participating in the project, the participants of the exchanges should be coming from different backgrounds (ethnic, cultural, religious etc.). The diversity of the young people participating in the RYCO Superschools project **should reflect the diversity of the local community** they come from and the diversity of the pupils attending the school. Gender balance must also be ensured in the selection of your participants. The diversity is also reflected in the multicultural aspect of the partnership which is a precondition and the fundamental principle of the Superschools partnership diversity.

INCLUSION

An important priority of youth exchange is to give all young people equal opportunities to access exchange activities. The activities should be open to all young people within school regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, sexual orientation, etc. In line with RYCO values and principles stated in the RYCO Strategy 2022-2024 Superschools places a strong focus on inclusion of young people belonging to minority groups, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, young people with disabilities and inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities. Through Superschools special emphasis is put on reaching those who have limited access to mobility activities and have less opportunities to participate in exchanges and to experience first hand cooperation with peers from different parts of the region and low-performing students. Securing the participation of young people that come from different backgrounds is the first step and the second step is securing that all the activities (program, logistics etc) and budget is composed in a way to secure equal participation and accessibility to all.

NO HARM APPROACH

A no harm approach ensures that the activities, discussions do not cause harm or generate nor stimulate divisions or conflicts. RYCO recognizes the need for sensitivity and respect when engaging with highly sensitive topics and emphasizes the importance of a safe and inclusive environment for all participants.

By adopting a no harm approach, RYCO aims to facilitate constructive dialogue, promote understanding, and foster reconciliation and peacebuilding among students. This approach is essential in addressing past conflicts, promoting peaceful coexistence, and building sustainable and long-lasting peace in the region. RYCO, therefore, encourages open and respectful discussion while primarily ensuring that dignity and well-being of all participants are upheld throughout the program.



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4. Young people

Young people are central to the RYCO mission. As envisaged by the Strategic Plan 2022-2024, “RYCO considers young people from the region as both its main target group and its stakeholders.”

Within the Superschools program RYCO aims to provide opportunities for young people aged **14 - 19 years old**, students of secondary schools from the region. Age difference between the students participating in the Superschools exchange program **should not be higher than two years** in order to ensure fruitful and meaningful interaction. In total **24-28 in total per partnership, 12-14 young people** from each school will have the chance to participate in the exchanges.

Same as to all programs in RYCO, Superschools as well pays special attention to the inclusion of young people belonging to usually excluded groups such as young people with disabilities, marginalized groups based on ethnicity, religious identity, sexual orientation, etc. or youth with fewer opportunities (youth from rural/remote areas, youth with unprivileged educational and/or social-economic backgrounds, etc.). Significant involvement of the most excluded and vulnerable youth groups, particularly supporting their social inclusion and participation in decision-making, will be considered an advantage. Gender balance must also be ensured in the selection of your participants.

Within the Superschools, RYCO also seeks to engage young people, which are less likely to be found in other RYCO schemes and projects and other similar programs. Here, we are referring to those young people coming from smaller cities, underdeveloped regions and/or remote areas, low-performing students, students that have never traveled outside of the local community and/or CP before and have had limited access to exchange experiences in general but also within the region.

5. What types of costs does RYCO cover?

Each partnership applying for LOT 1 will be financed with approximately **13,700.00 EUR** which will be managed jointly with RYCO. The funds will be allocated as described in the following table:

Types of costs	Description
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<p>Travel costs; Insurance; Accommodation; Visa; Administrative costs;</p>	<p>Travel costs for students and teachers which are related exclusively to traveling via minibus/bus during the exchanges from and to each location of the partnering schools. RYCO will cooperate closely with the schools' coordinators to organize each trip in due time and according to the exchange plan.</p> <p>Insurance cost: RYCO will cover all participants' (coordinators + students) travel and health insurance costs.</p> <p>Accommodation: Accommodation of participants will be covered and organized entirely by RYCO considering participants' necessities and preferences when necessary and possible. The participants are encouraged to organize homestays for the visiting students during the exchanges or host them at school dormitories.</p> <p>In the case of homestays, families who will be hosting exchange participants will be provided with financial support.</p> <p>Visa and administrative costs for traveling within the region are eligible costs, as long as they are necessary for the realization of the exchanges. Visa is an endorsement for pupils and teachers to enter, leave, or stay for a specified period in a place different from their own. Administrative costs which also include declarations to the notary public for parents' permission for the young people to participate in the exchanges will be covered as well. Finally other types of administrative costs might be considered following further assessment from RYCO.</p>
<p>Subsistence costs</p>	<p>When visiting the partner school, two coordinators accompanying the students will receive lump sums of 300 € EUR each.</p>
<p>Activity costs</p>	<p>Activity costs may be, for example, costs of museum tickets, cultural visits, and other costs of services related to the exchange activities. RYCO will advance the payment for such costs to the school teachers coordinating the exchanges, who will need to submit to RYCO an invoice and any other relevant documents after the payment.</p> <p>The potential need for external expertise may also be covered under activity costs.</p>

**The amounts mentioned above can be subject to changes.*



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6. What to expect if selected?

If selected the **SCHOOLS** can expect:

- **MENTORSHIPS AND SUPPORT** to develop the idea into a fully designed project. They will have the chance to work on their exchange ideas and further develop them and finalize the full Exchange Programme Agendas and the accompanying Budget Forms,
- possibility for **ADDITIONAL EXPOSURE AND VISIBILITY** toward regional and local stakeholders and media,
- **NETWORKING AND OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE BEST PRACTICES** with schools from the region,
- **FUNDS** to fully cover the costs of the project and **SUPPORT FOR MANAGING** the funds.

If selected the **COORDINATING TEACHERS** can expect:

- chance **TO PARTICIPATE AND TAKE ACTIVE ROLE** in Superschools events organising within the open call (Meet the Superschools, Superschools education conference etc.) with all costs covered,
- access to tailor made **CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES** (online and in-person) including 4-day Capacity building training that will support teachers capacities to organise quality youth exchanges such as intercultural competences, skills on how to engage in RYCO thematic areas, competence for working with youth and designing youth project, non-formal education and its methods and skills in project management
- **MENTORSHIP AND SUPPORT** by Local Program Officers and Financial Administration Officers through all the phases of the scheme,
- **CERTIFICATE** to validate the engagement and skills gained.

7. What is expected from applicants?

If selected, the applicants are expected to:

- **ACTIVE PARTICIPATION:** actively participate in the activities organized within the Superschools exchange scheme.
- **SIGN THE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT:** The schools will sign Partnership Agreement with RYCO as a legal basis for their participation in the scheme.
- **SUPPORT THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION:** the selected schools will be required to use online evaluation forms (for both teachers and students) for their activities which will be provided by RYCO.
- **SAFETY AND PROTECTION:** If supported, the beneficiaries must align their activities with the RYCO Safety and Protection Guidelines and follow the procedure of reporting issues. More to be found in a separate document called RYCO Safety and Protection Guidelines.



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- **REPORTING:** The selected schools will be required to submit an exchange report, no later than 15 calendar days after the completion of each exchange by using RYCO templates annexed to the partnership agreement. Each partner will be responsible for completing and submitting the exchange report after the completion of the exchange they are hosting. The visiting partner school shall support the reporting as well.

8. How to apply?

A) Visit www.superschools.net and create an online profile of your school

Every school willing to apply shall visit the online platform www.superschools.net. While creating the online profile, each school shall upload a registration document issued by a relevant local authority proving the school's working existence. **Before creating a profile please check if your school already has a profile registered. In case the school already has a profile the existing one should be used.** In case a double profile is created RYCO will ask you to delete the duplicate one.

After completing the profile and registration, each applicant will receive a confirmation email. The confirmation email for the activation of the online profile can be expected within two working days. We strongly advise schools to create the online profiles as soon as the call is launched in order to avoid delays in the process to follow.

Once a school receives its confirmation email, it will be able to look for a partner through the "Find partner", where already registered schools are listed. Please know that the profile needs to be filled out in English language.

B) Find and match with your partner school

After a school receives the registration confirmation, they shall look for a partner through the "Find partner" option. This part of the platform provides information on the schools' locations, the type of the schools and their fields of interest which shall be used as the criteria for partner finding and matching. Once a school finds a potential partner suiting its criteria, the school may send a partnership request along with a short description of their school and why they wish to enter into a partnership. The school receiving the request may either accept or reject it. Before accepting a partnership request, the two schools are highly encouraged to have online meetings to communicate with each other (email addresses and telephone contacts will be visible to each other) to discuss their exchange ideas and ensure a productive partnership.

Each school will have the possibility to send a partnership request via the platform to **only one school from another Western Balkans Contracting Party**. A school reserves the right to withdraw a partnership. Once a partnership is confirmed, the two partners will be able to start filling out a joint application form.



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C) Fill out the joint application form

The application process will be completed online through the platform by filling out the joint application form, in which both schools will shortly explain their joint idea. Partner schools are encouraged to have an active and equal role in answering the questions. The application shall be submitted only after both partners agree on its final form. Then one of the partners submits the application online, and both schools get a confirmation email on the application submission. Please know that the application needs to be submitted in English language.

The deadline for submission of applications is **21 June 2024, 23.59**. Please be reminded **that one partnership may only submit one application under this call**.

In case of any technical difficulties, you can contact us at: superschools@rycowb.org

9. What does the selection process look like?

All applications that pass the eligibility criteria check will go through a quality assessment by RYCO. A shortlist will be produced and further evaluated by the Selection Committee.

The Selection Committee, consisting of RYCO Secretariat and donors' representatives, will assess all shortlisted applications to ensure strategic relevance and geographical distribution among the selected applications.

The Selection Committee's assessment produces a preliminary list (top-scored applications for all Western Balkans 6 contracting parties) based on the quality and strategic assessment results. The Preliminary List is established and endorsed by the RYCO Governing Board.

After the selection process, RYCO will notify all applicants of the final results in writing and the following steps to be undertaken. Once the applicants are selected, the final list of approved proposals will be published on www.superschools.net and [RYCO's website](#).

Timeline

The deadline for submission of applications is **21 June 2024, 23.59**. Applications sent after the deadline will be automatically rejected.

Please find below the general framework of the Superschools exchanges scheme. Whereas this is the general framework, when deemed necessary, adjustments can be made upon the schools' requests and validation from RYCO.



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<u>Activity</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Time</u>
Launching of the Superschools Open Call for Project Proposals	7 th of May 2024	17.00
Superschools info sessions	14 th - 30 th May	
Deadline for requesting any clarifications from RYCO	7 th of June 2024	23.59
Deadline for submission of the applications	21 st of June 2024	23.59
Preliminary List published on the RYCO website	beginning of August 2024	
Final List published on the RYCO website	beginning of August 2024	
Meet the Superschools event and signing of the agreements	1-10 September 2024	
Mentorship phase	10 September - 15 November 2024	
Teachers' training	last week of September 2024	
Implementation of the exchanges and local outreach activities	15 November 2024 - 15 April 2025	
Superschools education conference	end of April - beginning of May 2025	N/A



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Superschools in a nutshell

LOT 1	ESTABLISHMENT OF PARTNERSHIPS FOR NEWLY ESTABLISHED PARTNERSHIPS	MORE TO BE FOUND ON:
Target group	<p>a) new schools forming new partnerships which were not funded within the Superschools exchange scheme before (including those partnerships that were selected but did not manage to implement the projects)</p> <p>b) new partnerships composed of two schools that as a partnership were not funded within the Superschools exchange scheme before (including those partnerships that were selected but did not manage to implement the projects)</p> <p><i>Priority will be given to group a)</i></p>	<i>About the Superschools exchange scheme</i>



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<p>Eligible to apply</p>	<p>secondary school (private or public) <i>which are</i> established and operating within the Western Balkans Contracting Parties (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) <i>and</i> are registered as a secondary school for at least one year.</p>	<p><i>2. Who can participate</i></p>
<p>About the partnerships</p>	<p>The partnership consists of two secondary schools from different Western Balkans Contracting Parties</p>	<p><i>2. Who can participate</i></p>
<p>Other important criteria</p>	<p>One partnership may only submit one application under this call. The Application needs to be submitted within the application deadline. The application needs to be submitted fully in the English language.</p>	<p><i>8. How to apply?</i></p>
<p>Application procedure</p>	<p>Only through superschools.net</p>	<p><i>8. How to apply?</i></p>



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Program pillars	<p style="text-align: center;">Intercultural Learning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Local community engagement</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Horizontal priority:</u> Meaningful youth participation and Co-ownership</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Optional:</i> Homestays (partnerships that opt to implement homestays will receive additional points within the selection phase)</p>	<i>3. What are Superschools program pillars and values?</i>
Program values	<p style="text-align: center;">Diversity</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Inclusion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No harm approach</p>	<i>3. What are Superschools program pillars and values?</i>
Number	<p style="text-align: center;">12-14 young people from each school</p> <p style="text-align: center;">24-28 in total per partnership</p>	<i>4. Young people</i>
Age	<p style="text-align: center;">14 - 19 years old, students of secondary schools from the region.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">age difference between the students should not be higher than two years</p>	<i>4. Young people</i>



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<i>Special attention to be put on inclusion</i>	Of young people belonging to usually excluded groups With limited access to mobility and travel experiences	<i>4. Young people</i>
<i>Type of activities</i>	2 exchanges and 2 outreach activities <i>in the local communities of the schools</i>	<i>1. What is a Superschools project?</i>
<i>About the exchange</i>	5 program days + 2 days allocated for traveling (maximum duration 7 days)	<i>1. What is a Superschools project?</i>
<i>About local outreach activity</i>	up to 20 young people per activity, 40 per partnership	<i>1. What is a Superschools project?</i>
<i>Financial envelop</i>	up to 13 700 EUR per partnership	<i>5. What types of costs does RYCO cover?</i>
<i>Application deadline</i>	21 June 2024, 23.59	<i>8. How to apply?</i>



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