



# EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy

## Call for applications and program description

**Call opening: 30 April 2021**

**Call closing: 30 June 2021**

### 1. Background and overview

The EUTOPIA Alliance is pleased to announce the launch of the *EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy*.

The [EUTOPIA Alliance](#) is a network of six universities that was awarded an Erasmus+ ‘European Universities’ pilot project in 2019 and officially launched in December 2019, gathering the [Vrije Universiteit Brussel](#), [CY Cergy Paris University](#), the [University of Gothenburg](#), the [University of Ljubljana](#), [Pompeu Fabra University](#) and the [University of Warwick](#)

The core mission of the *EUTOPIA Alliance* is to promote a connected and inclusive academic community, addressing global and local challenges, advancing excellence and inclusion, geared towards impact and fostering European economic development and innovation through a deep engagement of the Alliance with its local and regional ecosystems. The promotion of scientific excellence, research collaboration and mobility of academics among the partner universities is a core objective of EUTOPIA.

The ambition of the EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy (YLA) is to support research exchanges between high-potential, early to mid-career researchers, coming from all EUTOPIA partner universities and to support their career development. Members of the EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy will constitute a community of promising independent research leaders at the scale of EUTOPIA, sharing and promoting European values and the EUTOPIA vision of an interconnected academic environment.

### 2. Objectives of the program

The main objectives of the Young Leaders Academy are:

1. To promote **research excellence in all academic fields**– Through dedicated training programs, the Young Leaders Academy will offer its Fellows the opportunity to reinforce their scientific leadership and project management skills and enhance their research network. It will also offer them a platform to valorise their research projects and results within the EUTOPIA Alliance and beyond;

2. To develop **scientific exchange and research collaborations** among YLA Fellows and with the larger EUTOPIA research community. By organizing dedicated scientific events, as well as networking and training sessions, the Young Leaders Academy facilitates the emergence of an integrated cohort of promising researchers actively contributing to the dynamic of the Alliance and catalysing collaborative research projects between EUTOPIA partners;
3. To advance an **interdisciplinary and challenge-driven research** agenda allowing YLA Fellows to address the major scientific and societal issues of our time, in accordance with EUTOPIA's central mission to promote a connected and inclusive academic community, addressing global and local challenges and geared towards impact. The Young Leaders Academy is open to all disciplines and promotes, *inter alia*, research addressing six key research areas and societal issues: (a) Welfare and Inclusion, (b) Materials Engineering, (c) Data & Intelligence, (d) Health, e) Sustainability, (f) Culture & Heritage.
4. To bridge the gap between science and society by encouraging fellows to endorse Open Science principles and to engage external stakeholders, citizens, as well as local and regional ecosystems.
5. To contribute to the broader objectives of the EUTOPIA Alliance, to promote a student-shaped, research and challenge-driven integrated academic community, as emphasized in the EUTOPIA 2050 project

The YLA will draw on similar initiatives developed in different contexts<sup>1</sup>. In comparison with other programs, the EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy offers two distinctive features: the twofold objective of offering leadership training and promoting scientific exchange and collaboration; the promotion of the program at the scale of the EUTOPIA Alliance, rather than in a single university.

#### **EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy Fellows will be given the opportunity:**

- To develop their research leadership skills through a dedicated training program;
- To take part in interdisciplinary scholarly exchange and research networking activities, among Fellows and with the broader EUTOPIA research community;
- To initiate research collaborations within the EUTOPIA Alliance
- To contribute to the development of a challenge-based and student-shaped curriculum, through the development of research-led learning units open to undergraduate and graduate students;
- To act as EUTOPIA ambassadors, contributing to the Alliance's activities and fostering the emergence of an integrated research community at the EUTOPIA scale. Common research agenda

### 3. Program activities

#### a. Overview

The EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy will offer the following activities:

- Networking activities and scholarly exchanges
- Skill development and training activities;
- Visits aimed at acquainting the Fellows with the research environment of the universities of the EUTOPIA Alliance

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<sup>1</sup> Examples of similar initiatives can be found at [Cambridge University](#), [Aarhus University](#), the [Global Young Academy](#) or the [Tuks Young Research Leadership Program](#).

The detailed program of activities will be defined by the YLA steering committee, composed of academic leads and program managers from each University of the Alliance, with the active participation of YLA Fellows.

#### b. Skill development and training activities

The skill development and training activities will focus on tools and methods that are directly and individually applicable by YLA Fellows in their role as research leaders. The program will take into Fellows' needs and suggestions and include:

- Skills in scientific and scholarly leadership
- Team and research project management
- Personal research network development
- Interdisciplinary approaches in research
- Grant applications
- Scientific communication
- Innovation and impact, including IP management
- Open Science and Fair data

#### c. Scientific exchange and networking activities

Scientific exchange and networking activities will include:

- **Dedicated YLA annual meetings**  
These meetings will offer a forum for exchanges amongst fellows and with the broader EUTOPIA scholarly community and will promote interdisciplinary approaches to key challenges of our time through open research presentations and themed sessions. With the core participation of YLA Fellows, these meetings may also be open to other researchers from the EUTOPIA scientific community, in connection with the EUTOPIA week and other EUTOPIA activities.
- **YLA monthly e-seminar**  
Throughout the academic year, the monthly online seminar will be dedicated to presentations of their research by the YLA Fellows for the YLA Fellows. The program of the seminar will be advertised across the Alliance and attendance to the sessions will be open to other researchers from the Alliance to foster exposure and integration of the Fellows.

In addition to these activities, Fellows will be offered the possibility to undertake **individual research visits to other universities of the EUTOPIA Alliance**, related to their individual research project, funded through a dedicated mobility budget. The EUTOPIA Young Leader Academy may also support groups of Fellows in the organization of scientific workshop.

## 4. YLA Fellows conditions of appointment

- The EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy will enroll a first cohort of 18 Fellows, starting in September 2021. A second call for applications is scheduled to open in early 2023, with the possibility of enrolling a new cohort.
- Duration of appointment:
  - YLA Fellows are appointed for a period of 2 years.
- Conditions of appointment:

- Fellows are offered dedicated leadership training and high-level networking opportunities;
- Fellows are offered a dedicated mobility budget of 5k€ for the duration of their appointment. This mobility budget may be supplemented by additional contributions from their home university. Fellows are also funded for their participation in YLA activities. They may request additional financial support for the organization of scientific activities and workshops;
- Depending on their Home university, Fellows may be eligible to additional benefits;
- In the development of their research funding application and innovation projects, Fellows can receive support from the EUTOPIA Grants, Legal, and Innovation Office (GLENN)<sup>2</sup>.
- Commitments: Fellows commit to:
  - Attending YLA training sessions, networking and scientific events
  - Contributing to the development of collaborative research projects, joint proposals, common publications, scientific event organization etc. with other YLA Fellows and/or other researchers from the EUTOPIA Alliance
  - Contributing to the development of one EUTOPIA research-led learning unit
  - Extensively representing the EUTOPIA Alliance, aims and achievements in internal and external EUTOPIA community-building events and acting as EUTOPIA ambassadors
  - Acting as a user group for other EUTOPIA initiatives such as the design of GLENN offices,
  - Sharing their newly acquired leadership skills and experience of YLA with EUTOPIA community and the next YLA cohort

## 5. Application and selection process

### a. Eligible applicants

- Applicants should be formally appointed with one of the Universities of the EUTOPIA Alliance and hold a tenured or tenure-track position or major research fellowship;
- Application to the Young Leaders Academy is open to early to mid-career researchers, preferably between 2 to 12 years after PhD completion<sup>3</sup>;
- Career breaks will be considered for the extension of the eligibility window in the case of parental leave, long- term illness and national service after PhD award;
- Applicants are expected to demonstrate leadership potential as attested by their academic track record (incl. research management, coordination and supervision) and ambitious academic career development plan.

### b. Application procedure

- Candidates shall submit a full application, composed of:
  - The YLA application form, which can be downloaded on the program's main page (link below) and which includes:
    - A summary of past research achievements and on-going research agenda;

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<sup>2</sup> The EUTOPIA Grants, Legal, and Innovation Office (GLENN) is developed under the EUTOPIA-TRAIN project.

<sup>3</sup> This corresponds to ERC Starting and Consolidator levels

- A discussion of the motivation for joining the Young Leader Academy, including training expectations, planned research collaborations, expected contribution to the Young Leaders Academy and the EUTOPIA Alliance (workshop organization, possible contribution to learning units, role of EUTOPIA Ambassador, etc.)
    - A detailed academic CV
    - Support letters from the Head of Department and Head of Research group of the applicant.
- Applications must be sent by email before **30 June 2021** to the Local Program Manager of the applicant's Home university (see the list of program managers below)

### c. Selection procedure

- Each EUTOPIA University shall select 3 candidates for appointment as Fellow of the EUTOPIA Young Leader Academy, under the present call.
- The selection procedure will be implemented in a decentralized manner, using common evaluation criteria emphasizing the relevance of the YLA appointment for (i) the Fellow, (ii) the Young Leaders Academy, (iii) the EUTOPIA Alliance. The composition of the selection committee will be decided internally by each university.
- The selection will aim for gender parity and a diversity of research domains, seniority and backgrounds.

## 6. Contact and information

Local managers of the EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy, in charge of the application and selection procedure and practical questions about the program, are:

- *Vrije Universiteit Brussel*: Cristina Macovei, R&D European liaison office, [Cristina.Macovei@vub.be](mailto:Cristina.Macovei@vub.be)
- *CY Cergy Paris University*: Kate Robinson, International Scientific Development Office, [katy.robinson@cyu.fr](mailto:katy.robinson@cyu.fr)
- *University of Ljubljana*: Polona Juvancic, Research and Development Centre, [polona.juvancic@uni-lj.si](mailto:polona.juvancic@uni-lj.si)
- *Pompeu Fabra University*: María Gil, European Projects Manager & Research Advisor, [maria.gil@upf.edu](mailto:maria.gil@upf.edu)
- *University of Gothenburg*: Henrik Lindskog, Research Support Grants and Innovation Office, [henrik.lindskog@gu.se](mailto:henrik.lindskog@gu.se)
- *University of Warwick*: John Burden, Institute of Advanced Studies, [j.p.burden@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:j.p.burden@warwick.ac.uk)

**Additional information, including updates and application material can be found online on the Young Leaders Academy Program webpage:**

<https://eutopia-university.eu/young-leaders-academy/>