

Call for Practices

European Youth Work Conference 2026

- **Creating safe youth spaces where young people can connect, participate and contribute to their communities**

Dublin, Ireland | 9–11 November 2026

About the Conference

The European Youth Work International Conference 2026, organised under Ireland's EU Presidency as an associated event, aims to contribute to European dialogue and peer learning on how to create safe, accessible and youth-centred spaces where young people feel empowered to participate, connect and thrive.

Across Europe, youth work plays a critical role in shaping communities where young people are heard, included, and supported. This conference will explore how local, national and European youth work practices can help design and sustain environments that encourage young people not only to stay, but to actively contribute to their communities.

The event will bring together youth workers, policymakers, researchers, and young people to exchange experiences, showcase innovative practices, and influence future European youth work and policy developments.

Background

The conference takes place at a key moment for European youth work and policy:

- Ongoing development of the European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA) and follow-up to the [4th European Youth Work Convention](#).
- Preparation of the future EU Youth Strategy and evolving policy priorities under the Irish EU Presidency.
- Anticipation of the new Erasmus+ programme from 2028, which will significantly shape youth work funding and mobility opportunities.

Building on these developments, the conference focuses on how youth work can contribute to whole community approaches where:

- Young people shape decisions
- Policies support their lives (housing, employment, health, education)
- Towns and cities actively retain and attract young people
- Youth-centred design is embedded across systems

Purpose of the Call

As with similar events this conference aims to create a learning community of practice, where participants can exchange knowledge and inspire each other through real-life examples.

We invite stakeholders across Ireland and Europe to submit practices, projects, and initiatives that demonstrate how youth work contributes to creating safe, inclusive and meaningful physical spaces for young people.

Selected practices will be featured through:

- Workshops
- Interactive sessions
- Practice showcases
- Contributions to the conference publication

Conference Intentions

The call supports the conference objectives to:

- Explore what safe and inclusive physical youth spaces mean in diverse contexts
- Share methods for engaging young people in shaping their environments
- Showcase how youth work contributes to participation, wellbeing and community belonging
- Highlight the role of European programmes (Erasmus+, ESC) in supporting practice development
- Generate input for future European youth policy and strategy discussions

Who Can Apply:

We welcome submissions from organisations who are currently active in the field of youthwork

- Youth workers and youth organisations
- Local authorities and municipalities
- Policymakers and public bodies
- Researchers and educators
- Volunteers and youth leaders
- Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps beneficiaries

Themes for Practice Submissions

We invite submissions addressing one or more of the following themes:

1	Creating Safe and Inclusive Youth Spaces	• Community-based youth spaces (urban and rural) • Safe environments for marginalised or underrepresented groups • Inclusive design of youth centres and public spaces
2	Youth Participation and Co-Creation	• Youth-led or co-designed spaces • Participatory planning and decision-making processes • Youth engagement in local governance and civic life
3	Whole Community / City Approaches	• Cross-sector collaboration (youth work, education, health, housing) • Youth-friendly cities, towns and rural communities • Strategies to retain and attract young people
4	Youth Work Practice and Innovation	• Tools, methods and methodologies in youth work • Use of design thinking or participatory approaches • Outreach, detached or mobile youth work
5	Tackling Barriers to Inclusion	• Addressing inequality, access, or geographic disadvantage • Supporting young people from minority or marginalised backgrounds • Overcoming structural barriers to participation
6	European Dimension and Mobility	• Erasmus+ and ESC projects supporting youth spaces • Cross-border cooperation and exchange • European learning mobility linked to community development
7	Youth Wellbeing and Belonging	• Initiatives supporting mental health, safety and connection • Creating welcoming and trusted environments • Intergenerational dialogue and social cohesion
8	Digital and Hybrid Spaces	• Use of digital tools to complement physical youth spaces • Safe online environments linked to youth participation • Information access and media literacy initiatives

What Makes a Strong Practice:

We are particularly interested in practices that:

- Demonstrate clear impact on young people's lives
- Show innovation or transferable approaches
- Reflect youth participation and co-creation
- Highlight the role of youth work
- Offer learning potential for other contexts

Format of Contributions

Selected practices may be presented as:

- Interactive workshops
- Practice demonstrations
- Panel contributions
- Creative contributions

Submission Process

Please submit your practice using the webform:

including:

- Title and short description
- Objectives and target group
- Description of the practice
- Impact and outcomes
- Relevance to conference themes
- Link to evidence of work

Submission deadline: August 7th 2026

Preselection Deadline: August 14th 2026

Notification of selection: August 31st 2026

Additional Information

- Selected contributors may be invited to join national or thematic delegations
- A limited number of external presenters may be supported for participation
- Selected practices will be featured in a conference publication/resource
- If selected one presenter per project will be invited to attend

Join the Community of Practice

This conference offers a unique opportunity to:

- Share your work at European level
- Connect with peers across sectors and countries
- Influence the future of youth work and youth policy
- Contribute to creating spaces where young people want to live, stay, and contribute

Contact

For questions, please contact:

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