



EURASIA FOUNDATION

## **Civil Society Support Program in Central Asia**

### **Central Asia Youth Leadership Academy**

### **Request for Applications**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

Eurasia Foundation (EF) announces a call for applications for the Central Asia Youth Leadership Academy (CAYLA) for young civic leaders. CAYLA is part of the Civil Society Support Program in Central Asia, a five-year program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by EF. The goal of the program is to cultivate a vibrant and responsive civil society in Central Asia.

CAYLA will support a cohort of young leaders and community activists dedicated to promoting positive development in their communities. Through CAYLA, youth will learn foundational skills in community engagement and leadership, which they can then apply in community development projects that are supported with small grants and technical assistance.

#### **2. ABOUT CAYLA**

CAYLA is an interactive and engaging platform for young leaders of Central Asia that supports learning, networking, expanding leadership skills and making a positive impact on the development of youth and their communities. Over the course of five years, CAYLA will serve as a network for at least 450 young leaders and community activists across Central Asia and will offer them online and in-person training and mentorship. The network will facilitate contacts between young civic leaders, established CSOs and local government officials who share their goals, values and passion for positive development. Members of CAYLA who complete all trainings will receive Certificates of Completion and will be invited to apply for small-grant funding for community initiatives, allowing them to put their new knowledge and skills into practice.

#### **3. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

CAYLA is open to active young citizens (18-30 years old) from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. The ideal candidates for CAYLA are “heroes of our time,” that is, active and responsible members of their community from the villages, towns and cities across Central Asia. CAYLA intends to

unite young professionals, entrepreneurs and other youth capable of contributing to positive development in their society.

#### **4. ACTIVITIES**

Through the Civil Society Support Program in Central Asia, members of CAYLA will be enrolled in the following series of activities:

##### *National and Regional CAYLA Conferences*

*(Almaty for Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; Dushanbe for Tajikistan)*

CAYLA will launch in summer 2020 with two-day conferences in Almaty and Dushanbe. During these conferences, CAYLA members will have the chance to network with each other and discover and discuss opportunities in and challenges facing their respective communities. The conferences will feature interactive presentations from social media specialists and young positive role models from civil society, the public sector and private businesses to develop and share new models for engaging constituents and communities.

##### *Online Learning Platform*

*(Online for members from all countries)*

CAYLA members will be granted access to an online platform that will provide knowledge, resources, networking and inspiration. The online platform will serve as the main hub for members to learn about upcoming events and learning and development opportunities. CAYLA members will participate in five months of eLearning courses, completing one module each month on their own schedule to improve their knowledge, leadership, project design and management soft skills like decision-making and problem solving. Online courses will be followed by monthly webinars on related topics.

##### *Roundtable Meetings*

*(Locations Vary; Open to members from all countries)*

CAYLA members will be invited to demonstrate their own leadership and organize roundtable meetings to gain a broader understanding of civic development and have an opportunity to network with government officials and representatives from the private sector on issues that are important to their communities.

##### *Interactive Lectures*

*(Online for members from all countries)*

CAYLA will invite youth opinion leaders and influencers, journalists and other “heroes of our time” to participate in TEDx-style talks that will be livestreamed to all CAYLA members for inspiration from people who are making a difference in Central Asia today.

### National and Regional Networking Camps

*(Almaty for Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; Dushanbe for Tajikistan)*

CAYLA members will be invited to participate in national and/or regional networking camps, which will offer team-building activities and deeper engagement among members from different communities and countries. At the networking camps, CAYLA members will be able to share experiences and lessons learned from implementation of their social projects, find opportunities for collaboration, and build professional and social networks that transcend geographic boundaries.

### Study Tours

*(Locations Vary; Open to members from all countries)*

Highly engaged CAYLA members will be eligible to participate in a regional study tour, which will provide an opportunity to learn from counterparts in other countries. The first study tour will take place within Central Asia and the second one will be to a destination in the broader Eurasia region.

### Internship and Mentorship Opportunities

*(Locations vary; Open to members from all countries)*

CAYLA members can participate in a mentoring program that will help to establish professional connections between young leaders and professionals in the non-profit sector. CAYLA members will also be eligible for internships of up to three months at local non-profit organizations. More information will be announced on the CAYLA eLearning platform after members have been selected.

### Scholarships Program

*(Locations vary; Open to members from all countries)*

CAYLA alumni whose experience has led them to seek a career in the non-profit sector and plan to pursue an advanced degree in non-profit management or public administration will be eligible for partial academic scholarships of up to \$2,500. To be eligible, CAYLA alumni must be accepted into an applicable degree program at an accredited institution of higher learning and have a demonstrated commitment to working in the non-profit sector after graduation.

### Small Grants

*(Locations vary; Open to members from all countries)*

CAYLA alumni will be invited to apply for small-grant funding to support youth-led development projects in their communities across Central Asia. Successful applicants will receive financial support averaging \$3,000 per project. A formal notice of this funding opportunity will be issued separately from this RFA. In subsequent years, EF will provide opportunities for additional funding to scale up the most successful projects that have the potential to make a major contribution to the young leaders' communities.

## 5. SELECTION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

With this announcement, EF invites active youth to apply for CAYLA using the [online application form](#).

EF invites Tajik-language applicants to use this [online application form](#).

Applicants must apply no later than **Tuesday, May 5 at 18:00 (Nur-Sultan) / 17:00 (Dushanbe, Tashkent and Ashgabat)**. The selection process is open and competitive, and participants will be selected based on the criteria outlined below.

The online application will require some basic information, including your name and contact information, as well as details about your education, work experience and references. In addition, you will be asked to prepare a statement of purpose that addresses the following questions:

- What motivates you to enroll in CAYLA? Please describe your long-term plans, expectations from CAYLA and how CAYLA can help you to achieve those goals. (max. 300 words)
- What is a challenge that youth in your community or your country are facing now, how are you currently engaged with your community on that topic, and what are solutions that you see for addressing that issue in the future? (max. 600 words)
- What was your greatest failure and what did you learn from it? (max. 300 words)
- What valuable experience would you like to share with other CAYLA participants? (max. 300 words)

**Applicants should prepare resumes and statements of purpose before beginning the application form.**

## 6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

In the CAYLA competition, preference will be given to applicants with a strong background in community engagement, volunteerism and community development projects. All complete applications will be reviewed, and CAYLA members will be selected based upon the following criteria:

- Age: 18 – 30 years old
- High leadership potential
- Ability to clearly and concisely articulate a challenge facing youth in the applicant’s community as well as a potential solution(s)
- Record of promoting youth involvement in community issues
- Motivation to learn about promoting youth initiatives at the local level

- Track record of volunteering or community service; professional or entrepreneurial experience a plus

All applications should clearly address the evaluation criteria above. If EF requires additional information or clarification on an application, the applicant will be notified in writing and will be asked to submit additional information and/or documentation.

Final participant selection will be announced on **May 25, 2020**.

All questions regarding CAYLA and the application process may be directed in writing to [CAYLApply@eurasia.org](mailto:CAYLApply@eurasia.org). Please include "CAYLA Kazakhstan", "CAYLA Tajikistan", "CAYLA Turkmenistan" or "CAYLA Uzbekistan" in the Subject line to ensure a quick response.