



# EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy

## Call for applications and programme description

**Call opening: 19/04/2023**

**Call closing: 21/06/2023**

### 1. Background and overview

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

The [EUTOPIA Alliance](#) is a network of European universities that has been enlarged from six to ten members within the framework of the ERAMUS + EUTOPIA MORE project starting in December 2022. The [EUTOPIA Alliance](#) gathers the [Vrije Universiteit Brussel](#), [CY Cergy Paris University](#), [University of Gothenburg](#), [University of Ljubljana](#), [Pompeu Fabra University](#) and [University of Warwick](#), [Babes Bolyai University](#), [Ca' Foscari Venezia University](#), TU Dresden University of [Technology](#) [https://tu-dresden.de/?set\\_language=en](https://tu-dresden.de/?set_language=en), [Nova Lisbon University](#).

The EUTOPIA Alliance was first awarded an Erasmus+ 'European Universities' pilot project in 2019 and officially launched in December 2019 that gathered the six initial partners: [Vrije Universiteit Brussel](#), [CY Cergy Paris University](#), [University of Gothenburg](#), [University of Ljubljana](#), [Pompeu Fabra University](#) and [University of Warwick](#). The alliance also awarded a second project under Horizon 2020 EUTOPIA TRAIN (Transformation of Research and Innovation) starting in January 2021.

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 programme

The main objectives of the Young Leaders Academy are:

1. To contribute to the broader objectives of the EUTOPIA Alliance **acting as EUTOPIA ambassadors** in their research groups and beyond, to promote a student-shaped, research and challenge-driven integrated academic community.
2. To promote **research excellence in all academic fields**– Through dedicated training programmes, 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;
3. 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;
4. 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.
5. 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.

The YLA has drawn on similar initiatives developed in different contexts<sup>1</sup>. In comparison with other programmes, the EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy offers two distinctive features: the twofold objective of offering leadership training as well as promoting scientific exchange and collaboration; the promotion of the programme 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 programme;
- 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 (see definition below in 4) contributing to the Alliance's activities and fostering the emergence of an integrated research community at the EUTOPIA scale.

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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 Programme](#).

### 3. Programme activities

#### a. Overview

The EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy will offer the following activities:

- skill development and training activities;
- scientific exchange and networking activities;
- visits aimed at acquainting the Fellows with the research environment of the universities of the EUTOPIA Alliance
- participation in EUTOPIA week, a global meeting for researchers, students and staff of the alliance taking place every six months in one of the partner universities.

The detailed programme of activities will be defined by the YLA Steering Committee, composed of academic leads from each of the partner universities 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 (maximum of 8 training sessions over 2 years). The programme will take into account Fellows' needs and suggestions such as:

- Skills in scientific and scholarly leadership
- Team and research project management (such as PhD supervision)
- Grant applications
- Innovation and impact, including IP management
- Open Science and Fair data
- Ethics and integrity in research

#### c. Scientific exchange and networking activities

The YLA will propose to the fellows scientific exchange and networking activities that could 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. The kick off meeting of the cohort selected in 2023 will take place during the EUTOPIA week at Dresden (4-8 Dec 2023).

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, **through a dedicated allowance of up to 5 000 euros per fellow**. The YLA fellows' individual allowance is strictly limited to the following scientific activities:

- Academic mobility of the fellow to another EUTOPIA partner or global partner (travel and subsistence costs)

- The reception of scientific colleagues from a EUTOPIA partner or global partner in the fellows' home university.
- The organization of a scientific event during an academic mobility of the fellow in a EUTOPIA partner or global partner or in the fellow's home university if the event includes the participation of a colleague from a EUTOPIA partner or global partner.

**The YLA fellows' allowance can only be spent during the two-years appointment of the fellows in the Young Leaders Academy and only for academic and scientific exchange or research collaboration purposes.**

The fellows will be invited to attend to two EUTOPIA Weeks during their fellowship, travel costs and subsistence will be provided by each partner university under EUTOPIA MORE budget.

#### 4. YLA Fellows conditions of appointment

- The EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy will enrol a second cohort of 20 Fellows (2 per university), starting in November 2023. A third call for applications is scheduled to open in early 2024, 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 allowance of 5 000€ for the duration of their appointment. The fellows' allowance may be supplemented by additional contributions from their home university. Fellows are also funded for their participation in YLA activities (2 attendance at EUTOPIA weeks).
  - 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> as well as from the supporting structures of their home institution.
- Commitments: Fellows commit to:
  - attending YLA training sessions (maximum of 8 training session over 2 years)
  - networking and scientific events (minimum of 2 events over the 2 years, organised by the YL fellows with the support of the coordination team);
  - contributing to the development of collaborative research projects, joint proposals, common publications, scientific events organization with other YLA Fellows and/or other researchers from the EUTOPIA Alliance;
  - contributing to the development of EUTOPIA research-led learning programme;
  - extensively representing the EUTOPIA Alliance, aims and achievements in internal and external EUTOPIA community-building events and acting as EUTOPIA ambassadors (see definition below);
  - 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.

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

- Delivering an Annual activity report to the YLA coordination (short report describing collaborations and joint productions).

**The YLA fellows are expected to act as EUTOPIA ambassadors:**

*The fellows represent the EUTOPIA Alliance as members of the YLA and highly promising early-stage researchers in events, meetings or scientific activities at a local level in their laboratories and faculties as well as at an international level within the alliance and outside the alliance. The fellows' ambassador role is designed to ensure the visibility of EUTOPIA at a local and external level.*

## 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 including staff responsibility;
- 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 programme's main page (link below) and which includes:
    - A summary of past research achievements and on-going research agenda;
    - **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 direct hierarchy (the Head of Department, Head of Research group of the applicant, Vice rector for research ...).
- Applications must be sent by email before **21/06/2023** to the Local Programme Manager of the applicant's Home university (see the list of programme managers below).

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

### c. Selection procedure

- Each EUTOPIA University shall select 3 to 5 candidates for appointment as Fellow of the EUTOPIA Young Leader Academy, under the present call. The YLA Steering Committee will then finalize the selection process.
- 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 programme managers of the EUTOPIA Young Leaders Academy, in charge of the application and selection procedure and practical questions about the programme, are:

- *Vrije Universiteit Brussel*: Tania Van Loon, [elo@vub.be](mailto:elo@vub.be)
- *CY Cergy Paris University*: Karine Guerin and Thibaud Chambon, [karine.guerin@cyu.fr](mailto:karine.guerin@cyu.fr), [thibaud.chambon@cyu.fr](mailto:thibaud.chambon@cyu.fr)
- *University of Ljubljana*: Iris Ivanis, [Iris.Ivanis@uni-lj.si](mailto:Iris.Ivanis@uni-lj.si)
- *Pompeu Fabra University*: Eva Martin, [eva.martin@upf.edu](mailto:eva.martin@upf.edu)
- *University of Gothenburg*: Andreea Maris, [andreea.maris@gu.se](mailto:andreea.maris@gu.se)
- *University of Warwick*: John Burden, [j.p.burden@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:j.p.burden@warwick.ac.uk)
- *Babes Bolyai University*, Romana Cramarencu, [romana.cramarencu@ubbcluj.ro](mailto:romana.cramarencu@ubbcluj.ro)
- *Ca' Foscari Venezia University*: Fiorella Giacometti, [fgiacometti@unive.it](mailto:fgiacometti@unive.it)
- *TU Dresden University of Technology*: Barbara Könczöl, [barbara.koenczoel@tu-dresden.de](mailto:barbara.koenczoel@tu-dresden.de)
- *Nova Lisbon University*: Rita Rua Ferreira, [rita.ferreira@unl.pt](mailto:rita.ferreira@unl.pt)

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

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