

## CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

“Western Balkan Project Lab” on how to use the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth and European Solidarity Corps meaningfully

### WHY THIS LAB?

The European Union’s Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth and the European Solidarity Corps open the doors for organisations for European and transnational cooperation. Getting involved enables organisations to build capacities, extend their networks, develop the competences of their staff, contribute to the development of local and international youth work, and most importantly, offer life changing experiences and learning opportunities for young people.

The opportunities offered by the Programmes are surely exiting, but at the same time, can provoke many questions and doubts. Often the potential beneficiaries wonder how to design a project in a way, that it fits as precisely as possible to the Programmes’ criteria. Yet, no matter the criteria play an important role, the secret is that the best projects for any programme are the ones, which are in the end the best for the beneficiaries as well. In other words, a quality project does not one-sidedly aim at fitting into a programme frame, but uses the programme as an instrument to fulfil the organisation’s mission, vision and targeted aims. The “magic” happens where these two come together.

SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre organises the “Western Balkan Project Lab” with a purpose of bringing the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth and the European Solidarity Corps closer to organisations in the Western Balkan Partner Countries and finding ways how to use the Programmes in a meaningful way with an intention to increase the quality of project proposals.

### FOR WHOM?

The activity addresses representatives of organisations, who are interested in working with the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth and / or European Solidarity Corps. We welcome everyone from newcomers to experienced project leaders, however, all participants should have an intention to take a leading role in their future projects within the Programmes (either as applicants or as partners).

We are looking for participants representing an organisation with the following situation/need:

- The organisation has identified specific needs in its local context, has an idea how to respond to these needs through transnational cooperation, and is interested in finding out how the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth or European Solidarity Corps can play a part in the process.
- The organisation has a concrete project idea to be implemented in the frame of the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth or European Solidarity Corps but needs further information or inspiration to take it forwards.
- The organisation or its partner has tried to apply for grants within the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth or European Solidarity Corps, but has so far not been successful, and needs further advice how to improve their proposals.
- The organisation has a specific vision what it wants to achieve in its local context and is interested in developing the competences of their staff through transnational cooperation.
- The organisation is interested in building its capacities and / or contributing to the development of youth work and youth systems in the Western Balkan region through transnational cooperation.

## BY WHOM?

Organiser of this activity is SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/> which promotes the cooperation with the Western Balkan Partner Countries in the frame of the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth and the European Solidarity Corps. The programme of activities of the lab will be designed and implemented in cooperation with two facilitators from the organiser's pool of trainers. The workshops will be conducted by a variety of experts and practitioners.

More information about the activity, please contact [suzana.puhar@movit.si](mailto:suzana.puhar@movit.si).

## WHEN AND WHERE AND HOW TO APPLY?

The activity will take place **21 October – 23 October** (departure at lunch) **2019** in **Tirana, Albania**, in the hotel Mondial: <https://www.hotelmondial.al/>. The application is available at: <http://trainings.salto-youth.net/8287> until **22 September**.

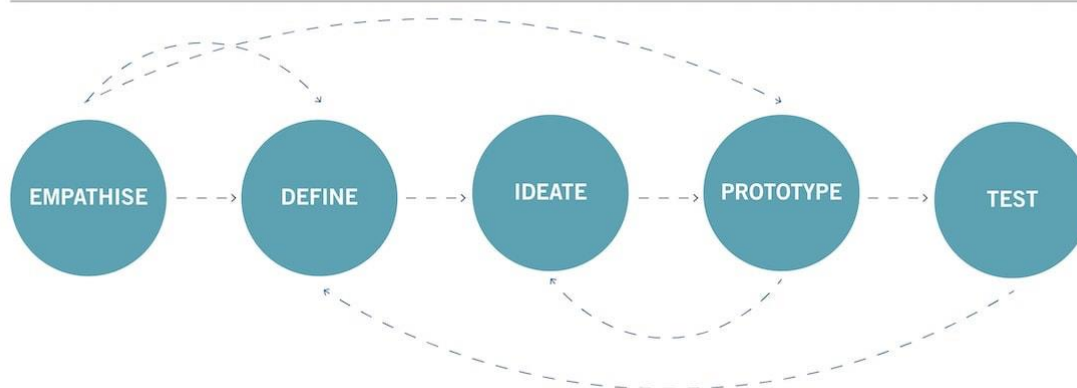
## HOW IT IS DESIGNED?

The participants in the “Western Balkan Project Lab” will:

- discover what kinds of opportunities are offered by the Programmes;
- explore the ways the Programmes can support the organisations' core mission in the field of youth;
- hear and see variety of good practices and practical approaches relevant for designing and implementing meaningful projects within the Programmes;
- have an opportunity for networking and exchange of practices with other organisations in the Western Balkan countries;

The programme is designed to follow the adapted version of Design Thinking process stages:

## 5 PHASES OF THE DESIGN THINKING PROCESS



Design Thinking is an approach used for practical and creative problem-solving. It is based strongly on the methods and processes that designers use (hence the name), but it has actually evolved from a range of different fields — including architecture, engineering and business. Design Thinking can however be applied to any field; it does not necessarily have to be design-specific.

Design Thinking is notably user-centric. It focuses on humans first and foremost, seeking to understand people's needs and come up with effective solutions to meet those needs. It is what we call a solution-based approach to problem-solving.

***This is how we foresee the process and its stages and how they apply to our programme:***

***EMPATHISE:*** You as participants will have a task prior the activity in Albania to analyze the needs of your target group, your organisational capacities and learn about the opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth and the European Solidarity Corps. In this stage, we would like you to empathise, think and gather relevant information about what is the current situation in our community/society, who are the people you want to support, what is their need/issue/problem you would like to address and what resources you have to do that.

***DEFINE:*** At this stage, when the activity starts, you will be using the information gathered in the empathizing stage, and with the support of colleagues and experts, clearly define the problem (you want to solve) and the aims you have set for yourselves in relation to that, understand how they fit in the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth or the European Solidarity Corps and gain other relevant information to help you with the further stages.

***IDEATE:*** With a solid understanding of your target groups and a clear problem defined in your mind, it is time to start working on the potential solutions. This is the stage where creativity happens through different ideation methods and with the help of inspiring examples, tools and support mechanisms.

***PROTOTYPE:*** The fourth step in the Design Thinking process is all about experimentation and turning ideas into tangible products. This means we will give you space and support you to transform your ideas to concrete products (depending on your needs and where you are in the process) – putting things on paper and having something tangible to bring back home.

***TEST:*** This is the stage which will happen after you leave Albania, when you go back home where you can test your idea by putting it in practice. This can mean either by applying for a project, presenting the idea to your colleagues and working further on it, work more on networking with relevant partners... or whatever comes out of your process and experience.

TIME	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
	SESSION	SESSION	SESSION
AM	Welcome & Intro	Start of the day	Start of the day
	Getting to know each other	PARALLEL SESSIONS 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to ideate (tools and approaches)</li> <li>• How to assess and connect needs</li> </ul>	PARALLEL SESSIONS 5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building projects in the field of youth</li> <li>• ESC rules and procedures</li> <li>• Project quality criteria and common challenges in applications</li> </ul>
	Key note speech “Bridging the European and local context” – How to use the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth and the European Solidarity Corps meaningfully?	PARALLEL SESSIONS 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching out to marginalised youth using creative methodology</li> <li>• Sessions proposed and led by participants</li> </ul>	Reflection and sharing ideas  Planning the TEST phase and next steps in the pairs of buddies
PM	Summary of findings from the SALTO-YOUTH SEE RC Study on the involvement of organisations in Western Balkans in the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth and the European Solidarity Corps	PARALLEL SESSIONS 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disseminating your results</li> <li>• Bringing digital to Erasmus+</li> </ul>	Evaluation and Closure
		PARALLEL SESSIONS 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing Erasmus+ differently + inspiring/good examples</li> <li>• Doing ESC differently + inspiring/good examples</li> </ul>	DEPARTURES
	Ideation in practice		
	Parallel working groups (beginners and more advanced) on the Programmes	Buddy support system	
Reflection and harvesting	Short summary of the day and evaluation in plenary		