

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

### Youth-led Action Initiative (YAI) Phase II

This document has been developed by the Youth Climate Action Network (YNet) – the official implementing partner of UNICEF Vietnam for the YAI 2026 Phase II programme. It is the Term of Reference (TOR) for the Call for Proposals from youth advocate including information on Terms of Reference: Open Call, Selection Criteria, Application Process, Two-Stage Review, Scoring Rubric, and Conflict-of-Interest Protocol.

## SECTION 1 — PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 About the Youth-led Action Initiative

The Youth-led Action Initiative (YAI) is a global UNICEF initiative designed to empower young people to become agents of change on issues that matter to them. The programme marks a shift from young people merely ‘being at the table’ to them taking proactive action in their own lives and communities.

In Vietnam in 2026, YNet is collaborating with UNICEF Vietnam to implement YAI, focusing on two key themes: Climate Change and Menstrual Hygiene. Furthermore, YAI prioritises providing opportunities for young people from vulnerable groups, including girls, those from rural areas, ethnic minority communities, or those facing difficult circumstances.

### 1.2 Purpose of This Document

This Terms of Reference (TOR) governs the entire Call for Proposals (CFP) process for YAI Phase II. It sets out:

- The eligibility and thematic criteria for applications
- The outreach and application submission process
- The two-stage review process
- The scoring rubric used by reviewers
- The conflict-of-interest protocol binding all reviewers and panel members

This document is intended for use by the YNet Viet Nam programme team, the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP), UNICEF Viet Nam focal points, and any external reviewers involved in the selection process. It should be read in conjunction with the YAI Project Proposal Template and the YAI Grant Management Guidelines.

### 1.3 Programme Parameters

<b>Initiative</b>	Youth-Led Action Initiative (YAI) – Phase II
<b>Cohort Year</b>	2026
<b>Implementing Partner</b>	UNICEF Viet Nam

<b>Implementing Period</b>	June – October 2026
<b>Number of Projects</b>	7
<b>Max Seed Funding</b>	100,000,000 VND per project (90% disbursed upfront)
<b>Thematic Priorities</b>	(1) Climate Action; (2) Menstrual Health & Hygiene
<b>Applicant Age Range</b>	16–24 years old

## SECTION 2 — THEMATIC PRIORITIES

All proposals must address one of the two thematic priorities for YAI 2025–2026. Proposals outside these themes will not be considered, regardless of quality.

### Theme 1: Climate Action

This theme invites young people to design advocacy projects that address the causes, impacts, or responses to climate change at the community, local, or national level. Projects may focus on, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- Raising awareness of climate impacts among specific communities, particularly those most vulnerable (coastal communities, agricultural communities, ethnic minority groups, etc.)
- Advocating for community- or school-level behavioural change (waste reduction, energy use, green practices)
- Engaging local schools, or institutions in climate-responsive planning or policy
- Documenting and amplifying youth voices and lived climate experiences through creative or media-based advocacy
- Supporting communities to adapt to climate-related changes already underway

### Theme 2: Menstrual Health & Hygiene

This theme invites young people to design advocacy projects that challenge stigma, improve access, or shift norms around menstrual health and hygiene in their communities. Projects may focus on, but are not limited to:

- Breaking the silence and reducing stigma around menstruation through peer education, community dialogue, or creative campaigns
- Improving knowledge and accurate information about menstrual health among young people, parents, teachers, or community leaders
- Advocating for improved access to sanitary products or hygiene facilities, particularly in schools, rural communities, or among girls from low-income backgrounds
- Engaging boys and men as allies and advocates in shifting social norms
- Supporting ethnic minority girls or girls with disabilities to access menstrual health information and products
- Documenting lived experiences and using storytelling as an advocacy tool

Projects under this theme are expected to go beyond information delivery toward genuine attitude or behaviour change and to engage the broader social environment around them.

## **SECTION 3 — ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

### **3.1 Applicant Eligibility**

To be eligible, the Project Lead must meet ALL of the following criteria:

- Age: The Project Lead must be between 15 and 24 years old at the time of application. Team members may include individuals outside this age range, but the Project Lead and at least 60% of core team members must be aged 15–24.
- Applicants must be Vietnamese nationals currently residing in Viet Nam, with the ability to implement activities locally.
- Applicants must have participated in at least one YAI-related activity, including YAI Phase I or Phase II training or attendance at one of the YAI Online Training and Info Sessions held during the 2026 open call period.
- Applicants must not be current staff members, contractors, or immediate family members of YAI-involved staff at YNet Viet Nam. See Section 6 for full conflict-of-interest provisions.
- Commitment: The Project Lead must be available and committed to: (a) leading project implementation from June to October 2026; (b) attending the Financial Management Orientation before fund disbursement; (c) maintaining a valid personal bank account; (d) participating in bi-monthly individual mentoring sessions; and (e) attending all mandatory group touchpoints including the Kick-off Meeting, Monthly Group Catch-ups, and Concluding Session.

3.2 Project Eligibility In addition to applicant eligibility, proposals must meet the following project-level criteria to be considered:

- The project must address one of the two YAI 2025–2026 thematic priorities (Climate Action or Menstrual Health & Hygiene).
- The project must be owned and led by the applying youth team and not by an adult organisation, institution, or external body on their behalf.
- The project must be implementable within the period of June to October 2026 and within the budget ceiling of 100,000,000 VND.
- The project must take place in Viet Nam.
- The proposed activities must go beyond a single one-off event and demonstrate a clear advocacy logic (a progression from awareness or engagement toward some form of meaningful change).
- The project must comply with YNet Viet Nam's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and UNICEF's Child Safeguarding Policy. Any proposed activity involving participants under 18 must include appropriate safeguarding measures.

## **SECTION 4 — OUTREACH AND APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **4.1 Open Call Launch**

YNet Viet Nam will launch the open call for proposals through the following channels simultaneously:

- YNet Viet Nam platforms (website, Facebook fanpage and community group, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, mailing list)
- YNet's youth network of 25 member organisations and a community of over 8,000 young people
- Universities, other youth networks, youth unions, social protection centres, and community hubs with priority outreach to institutions serving girls, ethnic minority youth, and youth with disabilities

The open call is directed primarily at youth who have participated in YAI Phase I or Phase II training.

#### 4.2 Online Training and Info Session Series

Running concurrently with the open call period, YNet Viet Nam will deliver a series of 4 thematic online training sessions (approximately 1.5 hours each). These sessions serve three simultaneous purposes: raising awareness of the YAI seed fund and driving applications; building knowledge and motivation on the two thematic priorities; and creating structured match-making opportunities between prospective applicants and YAC, YAI alumni from the 2023–2024 cohort to encourage stronger team formation.

Attendance at at least one session satisfies the prior YAI engagement eligibility requirement for applicants who have not previously participated in YAI activities.

Session topics will cover: (1) Introduction to YAI, the Youth Action Guide, and the grant mechanism; (2) Climate action — understanding the issues and designing advocacy; (3) Menstrual health and hygiene — breaking stigma, building advocacy; (4) How to write a strong YAI proposal (Q&A and team-building session).

#### 4.3 Targeted Inclusive Outreach

Beyond general promotion, YNet Viet Nam will conduct targeted outreach to groups who are most likely to be underrepresented in applications. This includes:

- Young women and adolescent girls, with particular focus on those outside major urban centres
- Youth from ethnic minority communities, including outreach through ethnic minority youth networks and community liaisons
- Youth with disabilities, through partnerships with disability-focused organisations and the provision of accessible application formats (including video-based submission options)
- LGBTQI+ youth, through trusted community organisations
- Youth from climate-vulnerable communities (coastal, mountainous, flood-prone areas)
- Prospective applicants from any of the above groups who face barriers to completing the application form (language, access, literacy) may contact YNet Viet Nam directly to request application coaching support.

#### 4.4 Application Submission

Completed proposals must be submitted using the official YAI Phase II Project Proposal Template, available in both Vietnamese and English at [ ] and upon request by email. Submissions must include:

- Template for Proposal Application
- B
- C
- D

All submissions must be submitted via the designated online form or emailed to <info@ynetvietnam.org> with the subject line: [YAI 2026 Proposal] — [Project Title] — [Project Lead Name]

The submission deadline is 23:59 on [TBC]. Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered under any circumstances. YNet Viet Nam will send a confirmation of receipt to all applicants within 5 working days. If you do not receive a confirmation within that period, contact YNet Viet Nam immediately.

#### 4.5 Application Support

YNet Viet Nam will provide the following support to prospective applicants during the open call period:

- A Q&A email address monitored during working hours (Monday–Friday, 09:00–17:30)
- Live Q&A time built into each Online Training Session Application coaching for applicants from marginalised groups upon request
- A publicly available Call for Proposal TOR document updated throughout the open call period based on questions received

YNet staff may assist applicants in understanding the requirements and strengthening the clarity of their proposals, but must not write, substantially edit, or co-author any application on behalf of an applicant. See Section 6 for conflict-of-interest provisions governing staff involvement.

## **PART 5 — TWO-STAGE REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

YAI Phase II uses a structured two-stage review process designed to be transparent, bias-mitigating, and youth-participatory. Youth reviewers constitute at least 50% of the review panel at every stage.

#### 5.1 Review Panel Composition

Role	Number	Who
Youth reviewers (aged 18–28)	At least 3	Current and previous YAC and/or active members of YNet's youth network,

		selected based on their knowledge of advocacy and the YAI framework
<b>Technical reviewer — Climate Action</b>	1	Expert in climate, environment, or youth climate advocacy, drawn from YNet's expert network
<b>Technical reviewer — Menstrual Health</b>	1	Expert in public health, gender, or menstrual health and hygiene programming
<b>YNet programme team representative</b>	1	Programme & Advocacy Officer or Team Leader (non-voting in case of tie)
<b>UNICEF observer</b>	1	UNICEF Viet Nam focal point (non-scoring, advisory role)

All panel members must acknowledge the Conflict-of-Interest Protocol before participating in any review activity. Panel members with a declared conflict regarding any specific application must recuse themselves from scoring that application.

Youth reviewers will receive a briefing and orientation session before Stage 1 review begins, covering: the YAI programme objectives; the scoring rubric and how to apply it; safeguarding considerations in reviewing proposals involving minors; and the conflict-of-interest protocol.

All applicants will be notified of the final outcome within 2 weeks of the Stage 2 pitches.

## 5.2 Stage 1 — Written Proposal Review

**Objective:** To assess all submitted proposals against the eligibility criteria and scoring rubric, and to produce a ranked shortlist of at least 12 proposals to advance to Stage 2.

**Process:** All submissions received by the deadline are first screened by the YNet programme team for completeness and basic eligibility. Proposals that are incomplete (missing sections, unsigned, or exceeding page limits) or clearly ineligible (wrong age, wrong theme, outside Viet Nam) are returned to the applicant with a notification and if time permits, before the deadline, then an opportunity to resubmit a corrected version.

Eligible proposals are then assigned to reviewers using a partial blind review protocol: reviewer names are not visible to applicants, and applicant names are visible to reviewers. Each proposal is scored independently by a minimum of 2 reviewers using the Stage 1 Scoring Rubric (see Section 5.4).

After independent scoring, reviewers convene for a calibration session to discuss scores, surface disagreements, and reach consensus on the shortlist. The shortlist includes a minimum of 12 proposals, ranked by average score. In cases of near-equal scores at the shortlist boundary, the panel will prioritise proposals from underrepresented groups (ethnic minority youth, youth with disabilities, applicants from rural or remote areas) as a positive equity measure.

Shortlisted applicants are notified in writing within [TBC] days of the Stage 1 deadline. The notification includes: confirmation of shortlisting, written feedback from reviewers on 1–2 specific areas where the proposal could be strengthened, and an invitation to clarify or adjust their proposal before Stage 2.

**Proposal Refinement Window:** Shortlisted applicants are given a 5-working-day window to submit a revised or clarified version of their proposal based on reviewer feedback. This is an opportunity to sharpen the clarity, feasibility, or inclusion approach of the original idea but not an opportunity to submit a substantially different project. Revised proposals replace the original for Stage 2 scoring.

Non-shortlisted applicants are notified in writing with brief feedback on why their proposal did not advance.

### 5.3 Stage 2 — Pitch and Interview

**Objective:** To allow shortlisted applicants to present their projects directly to the full Review Panel, clarify their proposal, and demonstrate their understanding of and commitment to the YAI principles. To produce the final selection of 7 grantee teams.

**Format:** Each shortlisted team presents for a total of 20 minutes: 8 minutes for a short pitch (free format), followed by 12 minutes of questions from the Review Panel.

Pitches are delivered online and in either Vietnamese or English. Sign language interpretation will be provided upon request. Where teams have members who are not confident presenting in Vietnamese or English, alternative arrangements (e.g. presenting in a local language with interpretation, or pre-submitting a video pitch) will be accommodated.

What reviewers are assessing at Stage 2:

- The applicant's genuine understanding of the problem they want to address and the community context they are working in
- The clarity and feasibility of their implementation plan
- Their commitment to and understanding of youth-led ownership
- Their awareness of and approach to safeguarding, equity, and inclusion
- Any clarifications or adjustments made since Stage 1

Stage 2 is scored using the Stage 2 Scoring Rubric (see Section 5.5). Each reviewer scores independently during the pitch, and the panel reconvenes immediately after all pitches are complete for a final consensus discussion.

**Final selection:** The 7 highest-scoring teams across Stage 1 and Stage 2 combined scores are selected as grantees. In cases of near-equal scores at the selection boundary, the equity tie-breaker provision applies. The final selection list is submitted to UNICEF Viet Nam for review and approval before any announcement is made.

All applicants (selected and non-selected) are notified in writing with feedback. Selected teams are notified first, and a public announcement is made by YNet Viet Nam.

## 5.4 Post-Selection Onboarding

All 7 selected project leaders must:

- Attend the Financial Management Orientation before fund disbursement
- Attend the Kick-off Meeting to confirm participation, meet their assigned mentor, and agree on working schedule
- Project leaders who fail to attend mandatory onboarding without prior notice may forfeit their selection. The next team in grade ranking will be given the opportunity.

## SECTION 6 — SCORING RUBRICS

### 5.4 Stage 1 Scoring Rubric — Written Proposal Review

Each criterion is scored on a scale of 1 to 5, where: 1 = Very weak or absent; 2 = Weak, significant gaps; 3 = Adequate, meets basic expectations; 4 = Strong, clear, and well-reasoned; 5 = Exceptional, stands out clearly.

There are 7 criteria that gradings are based on:

CRITERION	WEIGHT (%)
<b>Problem Identification and Thematic Relevance</b>	20
<b>Relevance, Impact, and Advocacy Approach</b>	25
<b>Youth Leadership and Ownership</b>	10
<b>Feasibility</b>	15
<b>Equity, Inclusion, and Reach</b>	10
<b>Innovation and Creativity</b>	10
<b>Budget Appropriateness and Transparency</b>	10

#### **CRITERION 1: Problem Identification and Thematic Relevance — Weight: 20%**

Score	Descriptor
<b>5</b>	The proposal identifies a highly specific, well-evidenced problem clearly rooted in the applicant's community. The thematic connection is direct and compelling. Community voice or lived experience is evident.
<b>4</b>	The problem is clearly identified and thematically relevant. Some local grounding. Minor gaps in evidence or specificity.
<b>3</b>	The problem is stated and thematically relevant but remains general. Limited evidence of local context or community-specific insight.

<b>2</b>	The problem is vague, only loosely connected to the theme, or appears borrowed from generic issue statements rather than locally observed.
<b>1</b>	No clear problem identified, or the proposal falls outside the two YAI themes entirely.

Theme-specific guidance: For Climate Action proposals, look for evidence that the applicant understands how climate issues are manifesting in their specific community and not just global or national framing. For Menstrual Health & Hygiene proposals, look for evidence of understanding around the local stigma, access, or norm barriers the project will address.

**CRITERION 2: Relevance, Impact, and Advocacy Approach — Weight: 25%**

This criterion combines assessment of whether proposed activities are well-designed and realistic with whether the project has a credible advocacy strategy: stakeholder engagement, messaging, and a logic connecting activities to meaningful outcomes.

Score	Descriptor
<b>5</b>	Activities are clearly described, logically sequenced, and directly address the identified problem. The advocacy strategy is explicit: the proposal explains who will be influenced, how, and why. Timeline and budget are realistic and detailed.
<b>4</b>	Activities are clear and mostly feasible. Advocacy logic is present but partially developed. Budget is reasonable.
<b>3</b>	Activities are present but partially vague or not clearly connected to an advocacy goal. Limited stakeholder engagement strategy. Budget lacks detail.
<b>2</b>	Activities are poorly described, unlikely to be feasible, or show little advocacy logic beyond awareness delivery.
<b>1</b>	No coherent activity plan, or activities bear no relationship to the stated problem or advocacy goal.

**CRITERION 3: Youth Leadership and Ownership — Weight: 10%**

This criterion assesses the degree to which the project is genuinely owned, designed, and led by the young applicant(s).

Score	Descriptor
<b>5</b>	Authorship and ownership are unmistakably the applicant's own. Personal motivation is specific and credible. The team brings relevant lived experience or direct community connection. No sense of adult proxies driving the project.
<b>4</b>	Strong sense of youth ownership. Personal motivation is clear. Minor questions about the degree to which youth vs. adult partners are driving design.

<b>3</b>	Ownership is stated but not strongly demonstrated. The project may read as adult-designed with youth as implementers, or motivation is generic.
<b>2</b>	Limited evidence of youth ownership. The proposal appears primarily designed by or for an adult organisation, with youth in a minor role.
<b>1</b>	No meaningful youth ownership evident.

**CRITERION 4: Feasibility — Weight: 15%**

Score	Descriptor
<b>5</b>	Plan, budget, timeline, and team capacity are realistic and well-matched to the June–October 2026 implementation window. Risks are acknowledged and addressed.
<b>4</b>	Mostly feasible. Minor questions about timeline or team capacity.
<b>3</b>	Feasibility is asserted but some aspects are over-ambitious or insufficiently planned.
<b>2</b>	Significant feasibility concerns: timeline unrealistic, budget miscalculated, or team capacity unclear.
<b>1</b>	Not feasible as described.

**CRITERION 5: Equity, Inclusion, and Reach — Weight: 10%**

Score	Descriptor
<b>5</b>	Equity and inclusion are embedded throughout the project design. The proposal specifically identifies which marginalised groups will be reached, explains why, and describes concrete measures for meaningful participation.
<b>4</b>	Clear attention to inclusion. At least one marginalised group is specifically targeted with some concrete measures.
<b>3</b>	Inclusion is mentioned but not deeply embedded. General references to "youth" without specificity about who might be excluded.
<b>2</b>	Little attention to equity or inclusion. Project appears designed for a relatively homogeneous, accessible group.
<b>1</b>	No attention to equity or inclusion.

**CRITERION 6: Innovation and Creativity — Weight: 10%**

Score	Descriptor
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<b>5</b>	The proposal demonstrates a novel, creative, or distinctive approach: use of digital tools, cross-sector collaboration, participatory methods, or original advocacy formats.
<b>4</b>	Some creative elements present. Approach is not standard but not highly distinctive.
<b>3</b>	Conventional approach; limited originality but adequate.
<b>2</b>	Little evidence of creative thinking.
<b>1</b>	No innovation present.

**CRITERION 7: Budget Appropriateness and Transparency — Weight: 10%**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>5</b>	Budget is detailed, every line item has a clear rationale and calculation, costs are proportionate and realistic, personnel costs are within the 20% cap, and total is within 100,000,000 VND.
<b>4</b>	Budget mostly clear and realistic. Minor gaps in justification.
<b>3</b>	Budget present but lacks detail or has some unclear items.
<b>2</b>	Budget vague, significantly off, or lacking cost calculations.
<b>1</b>	No budget provided, or clearly non-compliant.

**Stage 1 Score Sheet**

<b>CRITERION</b>	<b>WEIGHT (%)</b>	<b>SCORE (1–5)</b>	<b>WEIGHTED SCORE</b>
<b>Problem Identification and Thematic Relevance</b>	20		
<b>Relevance, Impact, and Advocacy Approach</b>	25		
<b>Youth Leadership and Ownership</b>	10		
<b>Feasibility</b>	15		
<b>Equity, Inclusion, and Reach</b>	10		
<b>Innovation and Creativity</b>	10		
<b>Budget Appropriateness and Transparency</b>	10		
<b>TOTAL</b>	100		

Reviewer recommendation:

Strongly recommend for shortlist     Recommend     Borderline     Do not recommend

Reviewer notes (mandatory — minimum 2 sentences; these will be shared as feedback with the applicant):

**5.5 Stage 2 Scoring Rubric — Pitch and Interview**

Stage 2 uses a simplified 4-criterion rubric focused on what a written proposal cannot reveal. Each criterion is scored 1–5 using the same scale as Stage 1.

CRITERION	WEIGHT (%)	SCORE (1–5)
<b>A. Depth of understanding of the problem and community</b>	30	Does the applicant demonstrate genuine, first-hand knowledge of the problem? Can they speak to specifics: names of communities, concrete observations, conversations they have had?
<b>B. Clarity and conviction in explaining their approach</b>	35	Can the applicant clearly explain what they will do, why they chose this approach, and what they expect to happen as a result?
<b>C. Youth-led ownership</b>	15	Does the applicant speak about this project as their own? Do they show personal investment? Is it clear that the project design came from them?
<b>D. Response to panel questions</b>	20	Does the applicant engage thoughtfully with challenging or clarifying questions? Do they acknowledge limitations honestly? Can they adapt their thinking in real time?

**Stage 2 Score Sheet**

CRITERION	WEIGHT (%)	SCORE (1–5)	WEIGHTED SCORE
<b>A. Depth of understanding of the problem and community</b>	30		
<b>B. Clarity and conviction in explaining their approach</b>	35		
<b>C. Youth-led ownership</b>	15		
<b>D. Response to panel questions</b>	20		
<b>TOTAL</b>	100		

Final combined score calculation: Stage 1 revised score × 60% + Stage 2 score × 40% = Final Score

## PART 7 — CONFLICT-OF-INTEREST PROTOCOL

### 7.1 Purpose

The integrity of the YAI Phase II selection process depends on all participants (reviewers, panel members, YNet staff, and UNICEF observers) acting impartially and in the sole interest of identifying the strongest, most deserving proposals.

### 7.2 Definition of a Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when a person involved in the review or selection process has a personal, professional, financial, or relational interest in the outcome for a specific applicant. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Being a current or former employer, employee, contractor, or business partner of the applicant or their organisation
- Being a family member (by blood, marriage, or long-term cohabitation) of the applicant or a core team member
- Having co-authored, substantially contributed to, or advised on the specific proposal being reviewed
- Having a close personal friendship with the applicant that could reasonably affect objectivity
- Having a financial interest in the success or failure of the applicant's project
- Being a member of the same youth organisation, club, or group as the applicant in a way that could create bias

A conflict of interest may be actual, potential, or perceived. All three types must be declared.

### 7.3 Obligations of All Review Panel Members

Before participating in any review activity, all panel members must:

- Read this conflict-of-interest protocol in full.
- Recuse themselves from scoring any application for which a conflict has been declared. This means no scoring, no presence during panel discussion of that application, and no access to other reviewers' scores for it.
- Report any conflict that becomes apparent during the review process immediately to the YNet Team Leader.

Failure to declare a known conflict of interest is a serious breach of this protocol and may result in removal from the panel and the affected scoring being discarded.

### 7.4 Obligations of YNet Viet Nam Staff

YNet Viet Nam staff involved in any stage of the CFP process must:

- Not provide substantive editorial assistance to any applicant beyond explaining the requirements
- Not share any information about other applicants' proposals with any applicant
- Not advocate for or against any specific proposal in panel discussions beyond their non-voting role
- Declare any personal relationships with applicants to the Team Leader before the review process begins

### 7.5 Confidentiality

All proposals, reviewer scores, panel discussions, and selection deliberations are strictly confidential. Panel members must not share, discuss, or reference any proposal contents, applicant information, or scoring outcomes with anyone outside the review panel including via social media, messaging apps, or informal conversation until the official public announcement has been made.

Breach of confidentiality will result in removal from the panel and may be escalated to UNICEF Viet Nam.