

*Call for Expression of Interest*

# Youth-Led Digital Storytelling for Social Change: Promoting Healthy Lifestyles, Inclusion, and Violence Prevention in Kyrgyzstan” under the EU-funded project ‘Strong Youth, Strong Country’.

**CEF/KGZ/2026/012**

## 1 **Timeline**

Posted	Jun 5, 2026
Clarification Request Deadline	Jun 10, 2026
Application Deadline	Jun 19, 2026
Notification of Results	Jun 30, 2026
Start Date	Aug 1, 2026
End Date	Jul 30, 2027

## 2 **Locations**

- A Kyrgyzstan
  - a Naryn oblast
  - b Jalal-Abad oblast
  - c Talas
  - d Batken
  - e Talas
  - f Osh
  - g Osh Oblasty
  - h Osh Oblasty
  - i Naryn oblast
  - j Gorod Bishkek

## 3 **Sector(s) and area(s) of specialization**

- A Cross Sectoral Areas
  - a Communication for development
  - b Disability and inclusion
  - c Gender equality and women empowerment
- B Education
  - a Skills development for adolescents

## 4 **Issuing Agency**

UNICEF

## 5 **Project Background**

Young people in Kyrgyzstan are increasingly active in digital spaces, however, their voices are still underrepresented in shaping positive narratives around key social issues such as healthy lifestyles, gender equality, diversity, psychosocial wellbeing, and prevention of bullying and violence. At the same time, adolescents and young people face multiple social and behavioral risks, including unhealthy eating habits, lack of awareness on mental health and psychosocial support, and exposure to harmful stereotypes and online content. These challenges are compounded by limited access to structured opportunities for youth to safely express themselves and contribute to public dialogue. Digital storytelling offers a powerful and accessible tool for youth to share lived experiences, promote peer-to-peer learning, and influence social norms. However, young people often lack structured mentorship, technical skills, and financial support to develop high-quality content that can reach wider audiences. This initiative responds to this gap by using the UPSHIFT/Human-Centered Design (HCD) approach to empower youth-led teams to design and implement digital storytelling projects that address priority social issues. By combining small grants, mentorship, and structured learning, the programme aims to strengthen youth agency, creativity, and civic engagement while contributing to healthier and more inclusive communities. To ensure sustainability, the project will strengthen the long-term capacity of young people and local youth networks through the UPSHIFT/Human-Centered Design approach, equipping participants with transferable skills in digital storytelling, advocacy, content creation, and civic engagement that can be applied beyond the project period. The initiative will promote gender equality as a cross-cutting principle by ensuring equitable participation of girls and boys, young women and young men, and by supporting youth-led content that challenges harmful stereotypes, promotes inclusion, and amplifies diverse voices. Partnerships with youth organizations, educational institutions, and community stakeholders will further support the continuation and scaling of successful youth-led initiatives and the sustained use of project outputs for awareness-raising and social norm change.

## 6 **Expected Results**

Increased number of youth-led digital storytelling initiatives addressing key social issues; • Improved knowledge and skills of young people in storytelling, content creation, and ethical communication; • Increased awareness among adolescents and communities on healthy lifestyles, gender equality, inclusion, and violence prevention; • Amplified youth voices through national platforms and strengthened visibility of youth perspectives in public dialogue; • Selected youth-produced stories are featured on national platforms and used in consultative meetings and shadow reports, contributing to evidence-based advocacy and policy discussions; • Strengthened youth participation in civic engagement and social norm change processes.

## 7 **Indicative Budget**

150000.00000

## 8 **Other Information**

The project will support 40–50 youth-led teams across Kyrgyzstan through small grants and structured mentorship under the UPSHIFT/HCD model. Participants will receive capacity building in storytelling, digital content production, and ethical communication. Produced content will include short videos, reels, photo essays, blogs, and animated explainers reflecting lived experiences and community-based solutions. Selected outputs will be featured on national platforms and may also contribute to consultative processes, advocacy efforts, and youth-focused reporting. The initiative will be implemented in partnership with youth networks and relevant national stakeholders to ensure broad outreach and sustainability. Project Location The project will be implemented in selected urban and rural areas across Kyrgyzstan, including: Osh city and Nookat (Osh oblast), Bishkek city (Chui oblast), Kochkor and At-Bashy (Naryn oblast), Kyzyl-Kiya (Batken oblast), Suzak (Jalal-Abad oblast), and Talas city (Talas oblast).

## 9 **Selection Criteria**

Name	Description	Weight
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Relevance of proposal to achieving expected results	Strong alignment with project objectives and expected outcomes related to youth-led digital storytelling, civic engagement, healthy lifestyles, gender equality, inclusion, and violence prevention.	40
Innovative approach	Use of creative, youth-led storytelling methods, digital media tools, and innovative approaches to promote positive social and behavioral change.	25
Sector expertise and experience	Proven experience in youth development, digital media, storytelling, civic engagement, social and behavioral change, and community-based initiatives.	35

**10 Attachments**

Description	URL
Concept Note template	<a href="#">Download the document here</a>

**11 Concept Note Template**

[Download the document here](#)

**12 For more information on this partnership opportunity, and to apply, please visit**

[UN Partner Portal](#)