

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

# UNDERSTANDING EUROPE FELLOWSHIPS 2025

## **Transnational Solidarity and Resilience amidst multiple crises, Fundamental Rights, Security**

Young Europeans have been facing multiple crises in the past decade—from a pandemic to war at our doorstep and beyond, to forest fires, floods, earthquakes, political shifts toward anti-democratic parties, and more. In these challenging times, how can we foster resilience, defend fundamental rights, build transnational solidarity, and ensure security for our communities across Europe and beyond?

Do you have ideas for creating spaces where young people can learn, discuss, and connect through workshops? Do you have an innovative vision for educational methodologies and practices around the topics of Transnational Solidarity and Resilience amidst multiple crises, Fundamental Rights and Security?

Then apply to become one of our 2025 Fellows and turn your ideas into action!

Funded by the European Union and the Hertie Foundation, the [Schwarzkopf-Foundation](#) awards three fellowships to young European educators for 2025 as part of the Educational Network [Understanding Europe](#).

## **What is the aim of the fellowship 2025?**

The aim of the fellowship is to support young European educators in developing new workshops on topics related to Transnational Solidarity and Resilience amidst multiple crises, Fundamental Rights, and Security. These workshops should be designed for students aged 13 and older, ensuring they are accessible, diversity-oriented, and responsive to the interests and lived experiences of young people. By introducing these new formats into both formal and non-formal educational settings, the programme aims to strengthen the democratic competences of students and young adults. It creates spaces for reflection and discussion around questions such as: How can we foster transnational solidarity and build resilience in the face of multiple crises? What innovative approaches can help protect and promote fundamental rights in today's Europe? How can we rethink security to ensure it serves communities and safeguards democracy? For fellows, the programme offers a unique opportunity to professionalise their social commitment, activism, and passion for educational work.

### **Fellowship: Transnational Solidarity and Resilience amidst multiple crises**

This fellowship is all about creating fresh ideas and tools to help educators tackle the challenges of today's world. From climate change to political shifts, crises don't stop at borders—and neither should solidarity. As a fellow, you'll dive into the theme of transnational solidarity and resilience, using your unique passions and expertise to design workshops and materials that bring people together and inspire action. Whether it's developing content for classrooms or crafting new formats for trainers in the Understanding Europe Network, your work will strengthen connections, foster support, and help communities navigate tough times together.

### **Fellowship: Fundamental Rights**

How do we bring fundamental rights to life in a way that truly empowers people? This fellowship is all about making the rights protected by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFREU) more accessible and relatable to everyone, especially young people. Despite its importance, many still don't know how the Charter applies to their lives or how to use it to protect democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. As a fellow, you'll dive into these critical issues, using your creativity and expertise to design a workshop that builds awareness and sparks action. Whether you focus on storytelling through media, fostering local engagement, or creating participatory learning formats, your work will help more people understand, apply, and champion the Charter in their everyday lives. The fundamental rights fellowship is part of the [FOCUS project](#) which aims to raise awareness of the CFREU and brings together several European civil society organisations in the field of democracy.

### **Fellowship: Security**

Security in today's world is a multifaceted complex topic—it's about understanding the many angles of security, from international conflicts to human rights, cyber security and beyond. As a fellow, you'll design a peer-to-peer introductory workshop that helps young people explore these complex issues and break down how security impacts their lives and communities. Your workshop might for example highlight basic concepts, definitions, actors, institutions, and political rules and norms of security, encourage critical thinking, and empower participants to engage actively in public debates on different aspects of European security. Together, you'll build knowledge, spark conversations, and inspire action within your generation.

If you are applying for the fellowship on Security, your attendance at the [Young European Security Conference 2025](#) on 27-28 February in Berlin is mandatory. Your travel costs will be covered and accommodation will be provided.

## Who can apply?

- You are between 18 and 27 years old
- You have substantial experience in peer-to-peer education and civic education
- You have first experiences in developing educational content for young people
- You have expertise and interest in one of the three topics mentioned above in order to bring your passion and knowledge to the Fellowship programme
- You are willing to design new workshop materials in a diversity-oriented way and based on the needs of the network
- You speak, write and read English at least at B2-level
- First hands-on experience in the usage of audio-visual media and digital tools is a plus

## What are the conditions that the fellowship offers?

- You receive a financial support of 2.700,00 Euros (450,00 €/month, March-August)
- All travel, accommodation and food costs for events in person are covered.
- You are provided with collaborative software for innovative educational material development.
- Your fellowship is compatible with your vocational training/apprenticeship, studies or work (approximated 30 hours per month)

## What are your personal outcomes?

- You will strengthen your skills in developing educational materials and formats
- You'll receive support through pedagogical training, coaching, and mentoring, along with input from network members to help identify and address the network's needs.
- You gain hands-on experience by testing your formats in different learning settings.
- You get the opportunity to publish your work as an Open Educational Resource.

## What are your obligations as a fellow?<sup>1</sup>

- You are required to develop a new peer-to-peer workshop (~45mins) for the educational network Understanding Europe.
- You are committed to approximately 30 hours of work on the fellowship per month between March and August 2025
- You will have to test your workshop at schools or in non-formal learning settings and with the network. Afterwards a re-evaluation will take place (approx. 10 hours).
- You are required to participate in the three main events:

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<sup>1</sup> If for any reason, whether personal or professional, your continuity in the project is affected, it is expected that the compensation for work not performed or completed ahead of schedule will be refunded.

- The digital kick-off seminar (a weekend in March)
- The digital reflection seminar at the end of June/beginning of July
- The European Summer School (August/September in Berlin)
- You are in regular contact with other fellows and the project manager, and you receive counselling by mentors. (5-10 hours a month)
- You produce monthly short videos or social media posts (including 5-7 interviews with selected experts and civil society) about your fellowship and your focus topic for the communication channels of the Schwarzkopf Foundation.
- You will support the publishing process of your educational material in English in September/October.

## Voices from fellows

Have an insight and read personal statements of fellows from [2023](#) and [2022](#) and get an impression about their motivation and work.

## How do I apply?

Please apply **until February 13, 2025 (23:59 CET)**, using this [online form](#) and attaching the following documents:

- A sketch that introduces your ideas for a workshop centring one of the three focus topics (Transnational Solidarity and Resilience, Fundamental Rights and Security). Please write approx. half a page or make a 3-4min video statement. You can find a current overview of our materials and some inspiration [here](#).
- Curriculum Vitae/Resume and proof of experience related to the abovementioned topics and/or educational work (e.g. certificates, letter of reference, your own educational material, social media links)

We welcome applications from all interested persons, regardless of their origin, religious affiliation, sexual identity or disability. As a positive measure against socially existing disadvantages (§5 Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz), we particularly welcome applications from Black people, people of colour, people with experience of racism or antisemitism and/or applicants with a history of flight or family migration.

We are deeply committed to fostering diversity and inclusion within our fellowship cohorts. We endeavour to assemble groups that reflect the multifaceted realities of European society, ensuring that our materials and methodologies are informed by a broad spectrum of perspectives. By embracing this diversity, we aim to cultivate a collaborative and inclusive environment where every voice is valued and heard.

If you have any further questions regarding the fellowship, application process, accessibility, diversity and inclusion, please do not hesitate to contact Lena Strehmann – Programme Lead Understanding Europe (l.strehmann@schwarzkopf-stiftung.de).

We look forward to getting to know you!

The Understanding Europe fellowships 2025 are funded by:

