



ASSOCIATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NEW OPTIONS



REGIONAL INCUBATOR FOR  
SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS

## **RISE Journey III: Call for Applications**

Supporting social entrepreneurship ideas  
and development of young people from  
the Western Balkans



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**Hello there! Are you ready to embark on a Journey?** This is not just any journey; this is your chance to change the World! Ok, maybe first your community, then the World. Everyone can RISE as a hero of their own micro world. All you need is motivation, an idea, a bit of courage, and possibly some sort of support. This is where we come. And who are we, you wonder?

## 1. Who Are We?

We are a group of 10 partners from the Western Balkans, Germany and France<sup>1</sup>, looking for young change-makers from the region, like yourself, to help us develop social businesses for better societies.

We strongly believe that social entrepreneurship can be a great bridge between young people, but also societies and that it can bring amazing opportunities for growth and development.

This is why we have formed a network of 6 local incubators: ARNO (N. Macedonia), Balkan Green Foundation (Kosovo)\*<sup>2</sup>, Nesto Vise (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Smart Kolektiv (Serbia), IEC Tehnopolis (Montenegro) and Yunus Social Business (Albania). The incubators will be a valuable support to all of the great ideas emerging in the Western Balkans.

We have dedicated the next three years to continue the development of social enterprises, a regional community of change-makers, raising awareness of this important topic and fortifying already existing initiatives. Why? For a great reason, to bring the young people of the region closer together in building a prosperous and stable region, because we know that you can do it.

### 1.1 What is a social business?

A social enterprise is an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for its owners or shareholders.

It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives.

It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involves employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities.

Basically, it's business for social good!

Here is a good [video](#) (in Macedonian) explaining the definition in short

<sup>1</sup> The Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), GROUPE SOS Pulse, the South East European Youth Network (SEEYN), the Franco-German Youth Office, ARNO, Balkan Green Foundation, Nesto Vise, Smart Kolektiv, IEC Tehnopolis and Yunus Social Business.

<sup>2</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

## 1.2. Look at the RISE success stories

Check out the social enterprise ideas that we have supported in the previous years of RISE!!!

ARNO is super proud of:

- ★ [Football Frame](#) (Using football as an incredible tool for social change).
- ★ [Skopje goes zero waste](#) (we look forward to having the first Zero Waste store in Skopje- buying products without packaging, refill stations, etc.)
- ★ [Yes for less](#) (Yes to super motivated youngsters that promote eco lifestyles)
- ★ [Camp](#) (Wow- the first outdoor kindergarten in Macedonia, located in Stip)
- ★ [O-krug](#) (Young people (now NGO) that produce essential oils and aromatizers from orange peel waste)
- ★ [Ambrosia](#) (eco-catering facility based in Negotino that engages women from marginalized groups)
- ★ ...and [the others](#) still working on their prototypes and market strategies.

## 2. What is RISE?

RISE - Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs is a project for the motivated, committed youth, willing to learn and change things for the betterment of the Western Balkans. We aim to support your social business ideas that will make the region a better place.

**RISE Journey** is a specially tailored programme that is free of charge to participate in and it will help you learn, grow, and make a change in your surroundings. We focus on cooperation, ideas exchange, and peer learning to get better results.

Do you have an idea or innovative solution for a new and better way to approach education, women empowerment, culture, rural development, health, or employment in your community? Social entrepreneurship skills, knowledge, and experience will help you solve social and/or environmental issues that you are passionate about and help you make a profit while doing it!

**RISE Journey** also provides you with the chance to participate in special mobility and business development grants in the second phase of the Journey. These grants will help you to explore regional social business practices and give you a financial kick-off.

RISE supports young change-makers in making their ideas a reality. Let's work together and make better societies grow!

## 3. What Do We Offer?

We will support a new generation of regional change makers to RISE up and help solve problems in their local communities. This is why we developed our supporting programme, the **RISE Journey**, which consists of two phases: Ideation and Incubation Chapter.

For the first phase, **Ideation Chapter**, at least 36 RISE Ventures from the region are going to be selected for a 3-month-long ideation process (at least 6 from each - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, N. Macedonia and Serbia). The **Ideation Chapter** will help you build your ideas



from scratch to a solid project, while being supported by experts and mentors, covering all of the important subjects in social entrepreneurship.

After building up your idea, you will have an opportunity to pitch your idea on the **Demo Day**, and get a chance to be financially and practically supported to implement your ideas towards a positive impact on the community. In total, 12 teams will be selected, two per Local Incubator (per country).

The selected Ventures will continue the RISE Journey with the **Incubation Chapter**. This phase is dedicated to:

1. Testing and validating your social business model through a tailor-made support program and a business development grant
2. Regional mobility opportunities, such as **RISE Bootcamp** and **RISE Mobility** to visit your peers, role-model businesses and trainers/mentors/experts across the Western Balkans region and get more inspiration, knowledge, know-how and connections

The Journey comes to an end with a **Final RISE regional event**, attended by all of the stakeholders of the project recognizing and celebrating our achievements!

To summarize, RISE Journey consists of:

**1) The Ideation Chapter - lasting for 3 months**

- Tailor-made programme to help you develop your idea
- Demo day – pitch presentation in front of a Jury

**2) The Incubation Chapter - lasting for 4 months**

- Testing and validating your idea supported with a business development grant
- Regional mobility opportunities
- Final event

As program organizers, if necessary, we will adapt the program timeline and modules in accordance with the Covid-19 situation or any other severe challenges that can influence the program.

## 4. Who Can Apply?

**Teams\* of a minimum of 2 local young people (16-35 years old) with an idea that is still in the early stage (not generating a profit)**

- Can be cousins, friends, colleagues, couples, neighbours, informal groups...
- Can be part of an NGO (wishing to develop economic activity)

**The teams:**

- Should be available and ready to participate in a program with 4-5 hours of active participation per week and meetups during 3 months of the ideation phase (whether these are in an online or offline format).
- Should have high motivation to learn about social entrepreneurship and to be involved in a regional intercultural program
- Should have the ambition to develop a concrete idea with a social impact; the willingness to learn from other actors in the region; at least, have identified a social/environmental issue

they want to tackle; at most, worked on their idea on a small scale / at a personal level, without having engaged in a real business activity yet

- Should have an idea whose impact is local or regional

## 5. Who Cannot Apply?

- Registered entities/informal initiatives with an idea that already generates profit (or is at a more advanced stage)
- Political parties, government, and state agencies
- Scholarships ideas
- Capital funding ideas
- Research ideas
- Projects already selling their products or services
- Ideas with discriminatory practices, risking to create or reinforce divisions
- Ideas where the main impact is outside the region
- Ideas in ethical or morally controversial sectors such as genetic modified organisms, nuclear energy, gambling, production of alcohol and tobacco etc.

## 6. What are our criteria for selection?

**Key criteria:** The key criteria that applicants will need to demonstrate are:

- Strong motivation to participate in the program, the mindset of a true change-maker
- Commitment to fully participate in 3 months of ideation program
- How the idea tackles a critical social/environmental issue
- The potential for the idea to become a sustainable business
- More than half of the team members speak English
- The team leader should be above 18 years' old

**Advantageous criteria:** Additional points are going to be awarded if the idea:

- The innovation is implemented in a local context
- Has the potential to scale or replicate in the region
- Has the potential to create additional jobs
- Respects gender equality principles
- Advantage will be given to teams that haven't previously been supported/funded by another existing support program that delivers similar training and knowledge to entrepreneurs.

## 7. How to apply?

You can apply simply by filling out the **application form** available at the following [LINK](#)

\*The application should not take you more than 30 minutes of your time.

## 8. Deadline and selection

The deadline for application is **extended** until **06 November 2022** until midnight (23:59). The results will be published within five working days from the closure of the call for applications.

**For any questions, please contact us at: [marjan@arno.org.mk](mailto:marjan@arno.org.mk)**

