

YOUTHLEAD:

EMPOWERING POLITICAL FACILITATION WITH DIGITAL TOOLS

WORKBOOK



Co-funded by
the European Union

Empowered by digital tools, young leaders transform ideas into movements and voices into impact.

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01

Introduction

About the Capacity-Building Initiative

The training course “YouthLead: Empowering political facilitation with digital tools” was an international capacity-building initiative designed to strengthen IUSY’s Member Organisations’ (MOs) global network of youth trainers. It took place from the 13th to the 18th of October 2025 in Vienna, Austria.

Supported by the European Youth Foundation (EYF), the activity equipped young activists with the knowledge, skills, and digital competencies needed to lead and facilitate impactful political youth events in an increasingly hybrid world.

At its core, the activity empowered young people as agents of social and political change. Through an experiential learning approach rooted in non-formal education (NFE) methods, participants developed facilitation skills that fostered inclusion, intercultural dialogue, and active participation. The training created safe spaces for discussion and collaboration among politically active youth from diverse backgrounds, and promoted democratic engagement and human rights education.

Purpose of the Workbook

The Workbook was developed as a key outcome of the YouthLead: Empowering political facilitation with digital tools training course. Its purpose is to capture, consolidate, and share the collective knowledge, experiences, and tools gathered throughout the activity. Designed as both a learning and reference resource, the Workbook serves to strengthen the capacity of youth trainers and organisations to design and implement effective, inclusive, and engaging political youth events.

The Workbook compiles the learnings, methods, and good practices that emerged from the training course. It includes facilitation techniques, digital tools for hybrid and online events, examples of interactive NFE activities, and project examples drawn from participants’ experiences. Together, these elements create a comprehensive guide for youth workers and trainers who seek to enhance participation, dialogue, and political engagement among young people.

Beyond documenting the outcomes of the training, the Workbook is intended as a practical tool for application and inspiration. It supports participants in transferring their newly gained competencies to their local contexts, enabling them to organise political activities, lead discussions, and facilitate capacity-building initiatives within their own organisations.



A central component of the activity was the integration of digital tools and AI-based platforms to enhance political education and event facilitation. By familiarising themselves with these tools, young trainers became better prepared to adapt to evolving forms of political participation and digital activism. Participants also learned to design, organise, and manage different event formats, namely in-person, online, and hybrid, to ensure meaningful interaction and group dynamics across all settings.

Target Audience

The Workbook was created for youth trainers, youth workers, and activists within IUSY's MOs, partner networks and everyone engaged in organising and facilitating political youth activities. It was designed to support both experienced facilitators seeking new methods, as well as emerging youth leaders who are beginning to lead events and discussions in their local or regional contexts.

The resource also aims to serve organisations and movements that work with young people on political education, social change, and human rights, offering adaptable tools and examples to strengthen their own training initiatives.

In addition, the Workbook is intended for the broader global youth community, including educators, mentors, and networks seeking to build young people's capacities in democratic participation and leadership through digital tools.

How to use the Workbook?

This Workbook serves as a **practical guide** to support youth trainers, facilitators, and activists, documenting and building on the learning outcomes of the YouthLead: Empowering political facilitation with digital tools training course. It can be used both as a reference and as a tool for planning, delivering, and evaluating political youth education activities.

Each chapter of the Workbook builds on the previous one, allowing readers to learn step by step from understanding key concepts to applying practical methods in their own contexts:

01

Introduction

Provides an overview of the YouthLead training, the Workbook's purpose, its intended audience, and guidance through the learning process.

02

Understanding non-formal education (NFE)

Introduces the concept, principles, and practical applications of NFE in political youth work. This section helps trainers design inclusive, participatory learning experiences grounded in NFE values.

03

Understanding digital tools in non-formal political education

Explores how digital tools and platforms, including AI-based tools, can enhance participation and engagement in political education. It also addresses ethical considerations, accountability, and challenges related to the use of digital technology in youth work.

04

Practical methods and tools

Offers descriptions of the facilitation methods and digital tools used during the YouthLead training, with guidance on how to adapt and implement them in various contexts (in-person, online, or hybrid).

05

Trainer's Toolkit

Provides ready-to-use resources such as a sample Training of Trainers (ToT) agenda, workshop session plans, and facilitation tips. This section supports trainers in designing and delivering effective, interactive sessions.

06

Action planning: participant--developed examples

Showcases examples of participants' individual action plans and/or projects, illustrating how the acquired skills and tools can be transferred to local organisations, contexts, and future activities.

Readers are encouraged to adapt and localise the tools, exercises, and examples included in the Workbook to fit their specific political, cultural, and organisational contexts.

As digital/AI tools are continuously evolving, readers are also encouraged to contribute their own experiences, innovations, and reflections as part of a shared learning process.

02

Introduction

What is non-formal education?

Non-formal education (NFE) is a form of learning that happens outside traditional academic systems, yet within a structured framework. Based on the belief that people learn best when they are **actively involved, emotionally engaged, and connected to real-life experiences**, NFE is intentional, participatory, and learner-centered. This differs from formal education, which follows a fixed curriculum and assessment system, and from informal education, which occurs spontaneously in everyday life.

Examples of NFE include youth workshops, training courses, summer schools, youth exchanges, community projects, peer-learning sessions, and activist training programmes. These activities are usually guided by facilitators rather than teachers, focus on shared learning rather than grades, and adapt their content and methods to the needs and experiences of participants.

In political education, NFE enables young people to explore complex issues such as democracy, human rights, and equality through dialogue, creativity, and collective reflection.

Core principles of NFE

NFE is not defined by the place where it happens, but by the **principles** that guide it. The following are core values that shape non-formal learning environments:

- **Participation:** Every participant is both a learner and a contributor. Learning is understood as a shared, collective process.
- **Learning by doing:** Knowledge is created through experience, practice, and reflection rather than through passive reception.
- **Empowerment:** The aim is not only to transfer knowledge, but to strengthen critical thinking, self-confidence, and the ability to take initiative and responsibility, both individually and within a group or community.
- **Inclusivity and equality:** NFE promotes respect for diversity, accessibility, and equal voice for all participants.
- **Reflection:** Every activity includes a moment to pause, reflect, and connect experiences to personal and collective meaning.
- **Voluntary engagement:** Learners choose to participate out of their own will and take responsibility for their own learning process, supported by a trainer or facilitator.

NFE is not defined by the place where it happens, but by the principles that guide it. The following are core values that shape non-formal learning environments:



Example exercise

- Three headings are placed on the floor: formal education, non-formal education, and informal education.
- Participants are given a set of example learning situations (for example: a school exam, a youth workshop, a conversation with friends, an online tutorial, a protest training).
- Working together as a group, participants discuss and match each example to the heading they think it belongs to. They are encouraged to explain their choices and may add additional examples based on their own experiences.

This exercise helps visualise how NFE bridges the gap between structured teaching and spontaneous learning, a space where activism and education meet.

Trainer's reflection

“As a trainer, my role is to create the conditions for learning, not to deliver all the answers. I guide the process, but the group builds meaning together.”



NFE in Practice

NFE is expressed not through a single format, but through methods that actively involve learners in shaping the learning process. These methods emphasise experience, interaction, and reflection, allowing participants to learn with and from one another.

During the YouthLead Training of Trainers, several NFE methods were applied in practice, including:

- **Icebreakers and energisers:** to build trust, reduce hierarchies, and create a safe and open learning atmosphere, especially in newly formed or diverse groups.
- **Small-group work and facilitated discussions:** to encourage dialogue, cooperation, and the exchange of perspectives, while ensuring that different voices within the group are heard.
- **Role-playing and simulations:** to explore power dynamics, decision-making, leadership roles, and conflict situations in a hands-on and reflective way.
- **Learning through play and creative methods:** to approach complex political topics in an accessible, engaging manner.
- **Reflection circles and debriefings:** to help participants process personal experiences and learning outcomes together, connecting practice to personal contexts and group dynamics.

Each of these approaches reflects a key idea of NFE: Learning is shaped not only by content, but also by process and relationships. When participants feel connected, respected, and involved, motivation to engage, collaborate and learn together increases.

Trainer tips for applying NFE in political education

When applying NFE in political contexts, trainers play a key role in shaping the learning environment and guiding the process. The following tips offer practical orientation on how to translate NFE principles into facilitation practice:

- **Create a safe space:** establish clear agreements (for example, a code of conduct) and discuss what safety means for everyone at the beginning of the programme.
- **Balance structure and freedom:** plan activities carefully, while leaving space for participant input, adaptation, and flexibility.
- **Encourage critical thinking:** use open-ended questions such as: What do you think?, Why might others see it differently?, instead of yes/no questions.
- **Be aware of power dynamics:** facilitate inclusively by ensuring that all voices are heard, not only the loudest ones, and by respecting and using participants' correct pronouns.
- **Include reflection time:** learning deepens when participants have space to connect experiences to personal and collective meaning.

Link learning to action: support participants in translating insights into their activism or community projects. Throughout the process, invite them to reflect on how the learning connects to their own lives, organisations, and local or national contexts.

Reflection Box

Think about your own
learning experiences:

- When did you feel most engaged in a learning process?

- What made it meaningful: the topic, the method, or the people?

- How can you bring that same energy into the activities you facilitate?



03

Understanding digital tools in non-formal political education

Defining digital tools

Digital tools are technologies and applications, such as online platforms, that can support learning processes, international collaboration, and creativity. In the context of non-formal education, digital tools are not just technical aids, but also spaces for participation, communication, and innovation, and can help create more inclusive environments.

Why digital tools matter in NFE settings

Digital tools can enrich non-formal education when they are used intentionally and in line with NFE principles. They should not replace human interaction, dialogue, or reflection, but rather support participation, creativity, collaboration, and learning processes that extend beyond a single physical space or moment.

NFE often takes place in time-limited settings, heavily relies on physical presence, and depends on the energy and availability of participants, making it challenging to sustain engagement, document learning outcomes, or continue collective processes after an activity ends. Digital tools can help address some of these limitations by enabling connection across borders, supporting continuity, and offering additional ways for participants to express themselves and collaborate.

At the same time, digital tools are not neutral. While they can increase accessibility and engagement, they can also reinforce inequalities, exclude participants with limited digital access or skills, and contribute to information overload, polarisation, or superficial interaction. For this reason, their use in non-formal political education requires critical awareness and conscious facilitation.

When used thoughtfully, digital tools can support NFE by helping trainers to:

- reach participants across different countries, languages, and contexts,
- encourage creativity through visual, interactive, and participatory methods,
- document learning processes and share outcomes instantly,
- support continuous learning beyond physical sessions.

More importantly, digital tools can empower young activists to design campaigns, tell their stories, and connect with global movements easily. In political education, this means that learning becomes part of activism: digital platforms can become spaces for democratic participation, mobilisation, and social change.

When trainers work with digital tools, they are not only introducing technology. They are also shaping how participants experience voice, agency, and connection within political and learning processes.

Integrating digital tools in NFE practice

To use digital tools effectively in a non-formal setting, trainers should focus on intention, participation, and reflection:

1. Start with purpose: Choose a tool because it serves a clear learning goal, not because it is popular.
2. Keep it interactive: Invite participants to actively use the tool themselves, rather than only observing demonstrations.
3. Combine digital and other methods: Alternate between digital tools (which may be online or offline) and in-person discussion or reflection to deepen learning.
4. Encourage co-creation: Enable participants to use digital tools to create their own content, outputs, or project ideas, strengthening ownership and engagement.
5. Debrief and reflect: Always include reflection questions such as: How did the tool support your learning? What challenges or limitations did you experience? Who might be excluded when using this tool?

Examples of digital tools used in non-formal political education

The tools listed below were used during the YouthLead training and are presented as examples rather than recommendations. The choice of tool should always serve the learning objectives and the needs of the group, not the other way around.

When selecting and using digital tools in non-formal political education, trainers are encouraged to consider the following questions:

- Does the tool support active participation and inclusion?
- Does it strengthen dialogue, reflection, or collective learning?
- Is it accessible to participants in terms of language, devices, and digital skills?
- Does it align with the political and educational values of the activity?

A NOTE ON LIMITS AND INTENTIONAL USE

While digital tools can enhance participation and creativity, they should never replace critical dialogue, human interaction, or reflection. Trainers are encouraged to use digital tools selectively and consciously, ensuring that technology supports the learning process rather than leading or dominating it.



Example exercise

- As an energiser, facilitators can use a digital quiz or game-based tool to introduce a political topic or activate prior knowledge. The activity should be designed so that it can be adapted if technical issues arise, such as limited internet access or device availability.
- In this context, the exercise is not only about using a new platform, but about designing meaningful and playful learning experiences that can be applied to political topics such as gender equality, climate justice, or democracy. A short debrief should follow, focusing both on the content and on the experience of using the tool itself.



Collaborative platforms



(<https://miro.com>)

A collaborative online whiteboard platform designed for real-time teamwork. It allows users to create mind maps, flowcharts, timelines, project boards, lesson plans, and visual brainstorming spaces. Miro supports synchronous and asynchronous collaboration, and includes features such as sticky notes, workshop templates, diagramming tools, commenting, and integration with Google Workspace and Microsoft Teams.

- In non-formal political education, Miro supports participatory learning by enabling collective idea-building, visual discussion of complex topics, and collaborative planning across diverse and geographically distributed groups.



(<https://miro.com>)

A visual collaboration board that allows users to post text, images, videos, links, voice notes in a shared space. Padlet supports multiple layouts such as wall, grid, timeline, and map, and is commonly used for collecting ideas, showcasing student work, sharing resources, or running ongoing discussions.

- In non-formal political education, Padlet encourages inclusive participation by allowing different forms of expression and by giving all participants equal space to contribute.



(<https://workspace.google.com/products/jamboard/>)

A digital whiteboard tool within Google Workspace designed for interactive brainstorming. It enables participants to draw, add notes, insert images, and collaborate visually in real time.

- Jamboard can support non-formal political education by creating low-threshold spaces for participation, especially for visual learners and groups working on shared reflections or quick collective exercises.

Interactive participation tools



(<https://www.mentimeter.com>)

A presentation tool that engages participants through live polls, word clouds, quizzes, scales, and open-ended questions, with results displayed instantly on screen.

- Mentimeter supports non-formal political education by amplifying participant voices, encouraging reflection, and enabling facilitators to respond to group needs in real time, including those of quieter participants.



(<https://kahoot.com>)

A game-based learning platform used to create competitive quizzes and interactive learning activities. Questions are displayed on a shared screen while participants respond using their own devices.

- Kahoot can be used in non-formal political education to reinforce knowledge, stimulate group energy, and create shared learning moments through play and friendly competition.



(<https://www.slido.com>)

A tool for meetings and learning sessions that enables live polls, quizzes, surveys, and Q&A. Participants can submit questions anonymously or vote on others' questions.

- In political education contexts, Slido helps address power dynamics by lowering barriers to participation and allowing facilitators to identify themes and concerns emerging from the group.

Creative tools



(<https://www.canva.com>)

A user-friendly design platform for creating presentations, posters, worksheets, social media content, videos, and infographics. Canva includes templates, stock photos, animation tools, and collaborative editing features, with additional options available through Canva for Education.

- Canva supports non-formal political education by enabling participants to creatively express ideas, campaigns, and messages, and by supporting visual storytelling and activist communication.



(<https://www.freepik.com>)

A visual content library offering illustrations, photos, icons, vector graphics, and templates, available in free and premium versions.

- Freepik can enhance non-formal political education by supporting the creation of accessible and visually engaging learning materials that help communicate complex political topics.



(<https://gamma.app>)

An AI-supported tool for creating presentations, documents, and webpages from simple prompts. Gamma automatically organises content and applies consistent visual design.

- In non-formal political education, Gamma can support rapid content creation and collaborative storytelling, allowing participants to focus on ideas and political messages rather than technical design.

Generative and AI-supported tools

(Note: Many digital tools today include AI features, this section therefore focuses on tools where AI is central to content generation.)



(<https://chat.openai.com>)

A conversational AI tool used for generating ideas, drafting texts, explaining concepts, summarising content, creating exercises or session plans, and supporting creative thinking.

- *In non-formal political education, ChatGPT can support trainers and participants in preparing activities, exploring perspectives, and reflecting on political topics.*



(<https://www.adobe.com/products/firefly.html>)

A generative AI tool within Adobe's Firefly suite that allows users to create and edit images and videos using text prompts, including scene generation, style changes, image-to-video transformations, and visual effects.

- *Adobe Firefly can support non-formal political education by enabling the creation of instructional videos, visual narratives, animated content, campaign materials, and explanatory media that strengthen political communication and advocacy.*

Gamification platforms



(<https://www.wayground.com>)

A learning gamification platform that turns educational content into interactive games, challenges, missions, and quests. Facilitators can design learning pathways where participants earn points, badges, or progress through levels.

- Wayground supports non-formal political education by increasing motivation, encouraging active participation, and framing learning as a collective and experiential process rather than passive knowledge consumption.



Classcraft

(<https://www.classcraft.com>)

A gamified learning platform that allows facilitators to turn learning objectives into collaborative quests, narratives, and role-based challenges. Participants work together to progress through storylines and solve tasks.

- In non-formal political education, Classcraft can support collective responsibility, cooperation, and engagement by embedding learning in shared narratives rather than individual competition.



Example exercise: presentation challenge

- Participants explore different platforms to support political education.
- They use Mentimeter to brainstorm ideas to create a five-minute presentation on a political topic of their choice using the platform Gamma.app. In the following session, they present their work one by one.

Ethics and accountability in using digital tools in non-formal political education

Using digital tools in political education comes with **ethical responsibilities**. Because these tools shape how information is accessed, discussed, and shared, trainers must consider not only what digital tools enable, but also what they limit, exclude, or distort.

When using digital and AI-supported tools in non-formal political education, trainers should be particularly aware of the following ethical considerations:

- **Privacy and data protection:** Understand what data is collected, where it is stored, and how it is used. Avoid tools that require unnecessary personal data or compromise participants' privacy.
- **Digital safety:** Protect participants from online harassment, hate speech, doxxing, or unintended exposure of personal information, especially in political or sensitive discussions.
- **Credibility and reliability of information:** AI tools such as text generators may produce inaccurate, misleading, or fabricated information. Content generated by digital tools should always be critically reviewed and verified, particularly in political education contexts.
- **Representation and bias:** Digital and AI tools reflect the biases embedded in their data sources and design. Trainers should address whose perspectives are amplified, whose are missing, and how power relations are reproduced through technology.

- **Polarisation and echo chambers:** Digital platforms can reinforce polarised viewpoints and limit exposure to diverse perspectives. Trainers should actively design activities that encourage dialogue rather than reinforce existing divisions.
- **Transparency:** Be open about which tools are used, how they function, and why they are chosen. This supports trust and informed participation.
- **Accessibility and inclusion:** Select tools that are accessible to participants with different levels of digital literacy, language skills, devices, and internet access, and provide alternatives where needed.

TRAINER TIP

Before introducing a new digital or AI-supported tool, invite critical reflection, both individually and with the group:

- Is it necessary to use a digital tool in this specific context, or could the learning goal be achieved equally well without it?
 - What are the potential benefits and limitations of using this tool for this group and topic?
 - Why is this tool being used in a political education setting, and what responsibilities come with that choice?
 - What ethical principles do we want to agree on together when using digital tools during this activity?
-

Risks and challenges in using digital tools in non-formal political education

While digital tools bring opportunities, they also raise challenges that trainers must manage carefully:

Challenge	Potential risks	Trainer's response
Overreliance on technology	Participants may disengage from human interaction, reducing meaningful dialogue during tool-driven processes	Use digital tools as a supplement rather than the focus, and prioritise discussion, reflection, and group interaction
Unequal access or skills	Some participants may feel excluded or participate less due to limited access, confidence, or experience with digital tools	Offer step-by-step support, provide alternatives where possible, and pair advanced users with beginners
Digital fatigue	Extended screen time can reduce attention, motivation, and overall engagement	Balance digital activities with active methods, movement-based exercises, and offline reflection
Data privacy	Personal or sensitive information may be collected, stored, or shared without participants' full awareness or consent	Use secure platforms, minimise data collection, and clearly inform participants about how their data is used
Algorithmic bias based on hidden criteria (such as engagement, popularity, or past behaviour)	Algorithms prioritise certain content and perspectives, which can reinforce stereotypes, amplify misinformation, and contribute to polarisation	Encourage critical discussion about how algorithms work, whose voices are amplified or silenced, and how digital systems shape political narratives



Example exercise

- Before experimenting with digital tools, trainers can use the fishbowl method to stimulate an ethical discussion about their use and about the balance between creativity and responsibility in digital learning. Participants are invited to debate these aspects together.

TRAINER'S CHECKLIST: ETHICAL AND EFFECTIVE USE OF DIGITAL TOOLS

- ✓ Define the learning goal before choosing a tool;
- ✓ Test tools in advance and prepare alternatives in case of technical issues (for example, unstable Wi-Fi);
- ✓ Use inclusive and accessible platforms that suit participants' needs and contexts;
- ✓ Encourage participants to question how digital media shapes society, opinions, and power relations;
- ✓ Model responsible digital behavior by citing sources, respecting privacy, and promoting empathy online.

Reflection Box

Think about your own
facilitation context:

- What digital tools have you used before, and how did they shape group dynamics?

- When does technology enhance learning, and when does it get in the way?

- How can digital tools be used for empowerment and not just efficiency?

LEARNING OUTCOME

Participants develop a deeper understanding of group dynamics, leadership roles, and the emotional processes involved in team development.

Dialogue and reflection

Purpose: To connect experience with learning, and learning with action.

Examples:

- **Daily reflection circles:** Participants share insights, emotions, and key learnings from each day.
- **Peer feedback loops:** Participants provide constructive feedback on facilitation practices.
- **Final evaluation of the week:** Participants reflect on their overall learning, what they would change, technical aspects of the training, and group dynamics.

TRAINER TIP

Reflection can be emotionally demanding. Trainers should create a calm and supportive atmosphere, for example by using music, slowing down the pace, and encouraging deep listening and mutual respect.

Experiential learning: learning through play and role play

Purpose: To develop communication, leadership, and conflict-resolution skills, and to make complex political and social concepts more accessible and memorable through games.

Examples:

- **Conflict role-plays:** Groups act out challenging facilitation situations and practise mediation.
- **Power dynamics barometer:** Participants position themselves physically along a line to express agreement or disagreement with statements related to authority, power, and equality in facilitation.
- **Elevator speech practice:** Participants prepare and deliver short persuasive speeches on selected topics.
- **Wayground learning game:** Participants design and play a quiz based on the day's themes using Wayground, experiencing how gamification can increase motivation and retention in political education.

LEARNING OUTCOME

Participants explore trainer roles, personal biases, and the responsibility involved in leading inclusive and reflective discussions. Games are experienced not as breaks from learning, but as integral learning methods, especially when combined with structured reflection.

Digital tools and how to use them

Digital tools played a central role during the YouthLead ToT, not only as technical resources but as pedagogical companions supporting participation, creativity, and reflection. In this section, selected platforms used during the training are briefly described, together with examples and trainer notes for adaptation in non-formal political education contexts.



Mentimeter and Miro	
Use:	Mentimeter is used for brainstorming, polling, and gathering instant feedback, while Miro functions as a collaborative whiteboard for group mapping and
Example:	Both tools are used to collect participants' ideas on AI and leadership qualities through live polls and shared visual boards.
Trainer tip:	Keep polls short and visually engaging, and use open-ended questions to stimulate discussion. When sharing screens, ensure that results are clearly visible to everyone and take time to reflect on patterns that emerge.

Freepik and AI image generators	
Use:	These tools are used to create visual metaphors for abstract concepts such as leadership or activism.
Example:	Participants design AI-generated images that expressed their personal understanding of AI and its role in society.
Trainer tip:	Combine creative tasks with reflection on ethics, bias, and digital representation. Encourage participants to question how images influence perception and political narratives.

Wayground	
Use:	Wayground is used to transform educational content into interactive games and quizzes.
Example:	At the end of the digital tools day, Wayground is used as an energiser through a "Fun Facts Quiz" related to the themes explored during the training.
Trainer tip:	Invite participants to design their own quiz questions related to the workshop topics, strengthening ownership and reinforcing learning through co-creation.

Adobe AI video generator	
Use:	The tool is used to create short videos that summarise learning outcomes or deliver a campaign message.
Example:	Participants create 10-second video clips responding to the question "What makes an impactful event?"
Trainer tip:	Encourage simplicity and authenticity rather than technical perfection. Focus on clear messages and intentional choices rather than polished visuals.

Gamma.app	
Use:	Gamma.app is used as an AI-supported presentation tool for storytelling and advocacy.
Example:	During the presentation evening, participants used Gamma.app to share personal or political topics in creative and visually appealing formats.
Trainer tip:	Encourage short, focused presentations of no more than five minutes, and prioritise personal engagement and clarity over quantity of information.

NOTICE

Technology does not replace facilitation; it amplifies it. The trainer remains the architect of the learning process, while digital tools expand the possibilities for engagement, expression, and participation.

Reflection Box

Think about your own
facilitation setting:

- Which of these tools or methods could you adapt for your group?

- How can you balance technology with human connection?

- Which new tools could you explore next to keep your learning practice innovative?



05

Trainer's Toolkit

ToT sample agenda

This section presents an example of a one-day Training of Trainers (ToT) agenda. It is inspired by Day 3 of the YouthLead programme and focuses on leadership, facilitation, and the use of digital tools in non-formal political education.

Time	Session title	Purpose	Methods/Tools
09:15 - 09:30	This section presents an example of a one-day Training of Trainers (ToT) agenda. It is inspired by Day 3 of the YouthLead programme and focuses on leadership, facilitation, and the use of digital tools in non-formal political education. Energiser: "Just Dance"	Build group energy, connection, and have fun	Music, movement
09:30 - 10:30	Trainer's role and identity	Explore the values and skills of a facilitator	Group discussion, visual mapping
10:30 - 11:00	Group dynamics	Understand group stages and the trainer's role in each stage	Case studies, playdough modelling
11:00 - 11:15	Break		
11:15 - 12:15	Conflict management in facilitation	Practice mediation and empathy	Role play
12:15 - 13:45	Lunch Break		
13:45 - 14:30	Think outside the box	Develop creative problem-solving	SCAMPER technique, paperclip exercise
14:30 - 15:30	Introduction to digital tools	Explore platforms that support participation	Mentimeter, Miro
15:30 - 16:00	Reflection and evaluation	Consolidate learning and share insights	Reflection circle, Mentimeter feedback

Step-by-step workshop session plans

This session offers a **practical toolkit** with examples for trainers who want to design and deliver political education sessions using non-formal education methods and digital approaches. It includes **ready-to-use workshop outlines**, **step-by-step guidance for planning and facilitating an event**, as well as **examples of possible activities and events** developed by the YouthLead ToT participants.

The five steps to building an event

01

Define the event's purpose and target audience: Understanding the why and the who

Before anything else, pause and clarify the intention behind your event:

- Why are we organising this event?
- What do we want participants to think, feel, or do afterwards?
- Who are the people we want to reach?

A strong purpose is clear, specific, and meaningful.

Examples

- To raise awareness about gender equality among young people in Paris.
- To connect new and long-term residents through a community culture night.

Without a clear purpose, all other decisions risk losing focus.

02

Design the idea and the experience: How the event will look and feel

Once the purpose is clear, we can now move on to shaping the overall character of the event:

- What will the atmosphere be like? (serious, festive, creative, activist, intimate)
- What kind of experience do you want participants to have? Where and when will it take place, considering season, weather, accessibility, and inclusiveness?

Tip

Think of your event as a coherent experience guided by its theme or story. For example, if the topic is sustainability, the decor could use recycled materials, the food could be plant-based, and the event could take place outdoors.

03

Plan the programme: content and logistics

This is where ideas are translated into concrete action.

Content

- What happens in each part of the event? (opening, activities, main moment, closing)
- Who is responsible for leading each section?
- How does the programme flow from one part to the next?

Logistics

- Venue, equipment, permits, insurance
- Transportation, food and drinks
- Budget: What can be borrowed, reused, or supported through volunteering?

Good planning includes a clear task list with responsibilities and deadlines.

04

Promotion and engagement: getting people to come

Promotion is not only about visibility, but also about connection. It is now time to spread the word and get people excited!

Key questions to consider:

- What is the core message of your event's promotion? Why should people attend?
- How should the event appear "from the outside"?
- Which channels will you use? (social media, posters, messaging apps, personal invitations, schools, community boards)
- How will you maintain engagement after the event? (photos, thank-you messages, follow-up activities)

Tip

Add a human touch: Using real faces, short stories, or personal invitations often creates stronger engagement than generic messages.

05

Execution, reflection, and learning

On the day of the event, stay present, energetic and flexible. Preparation is essential, but your energy, attention, and responsiveness shape the experience.

After the event, organise a short team reflection:

- What worked well?
- What could be improved?
- Did we achieve our original goal?

Document the process through photos, materials, and notes, which will become a valuable resource for learning and for planning future events.

Group facilitation tips

1. Build a safe and inclusive space

Establish group agreements early. These can include respect, active listening, and confidentiality. Take time to reflect on the behaviour you want to encourage, such as openness, empathy, and curiosity.

2. Balance structure with flexibility

Have a clear session plan, but remain ready to adapt to the group's needs and dynamics. Non-formal learning benefits from spontaneity and responsiveness.

3. Listen more than you speak

Facilitators guide discussion rather than dominate it. Use silence strategically; it gives participants space to think and reflect. Your role is to stimulate dialogue, not to provide all the answers.

4. Encourage collective learning

Shift the focus from trainer-to-group towards group-to-group learning. Create opportunities for participants to co-create content, share experiences, and recognise each other's expertise.

5. Manage energy and emotions

Pay attention to body language and group atmosphere. Alternate between active and reflective activities to maintain engagement. When tension arises, acknowledge it. Conflict can be a meaningful learning opportunity when handled with care.

6. Reflect and debrief

Use open-ended questions to support reflection, such as:

- "What happened?"
- "How did it feel?"
- "What can we take from this into our work?"

7. Celebrate learning

End sessions or days with appreciation. This could take the form of a small ritual, a thank-you circle, or a moment of creative sharing.

06

Action planning: participant-developed examples

This chapter presents examples of event concepts and action plans developed by the YouthLead ToT participants. These examples illustrate how learning from the training can be translated into concrete ideas for political education activities in different contexts. The events described below are planning outputs and have not necessarily been implemented.



Raising awareness about the situation of women in Afghanistan

Sara Hjelm

Purpose

To raise awareness about the situation of women in Afghanistan and how their rights and freedoms have deteriorated since the Taliban takeover in 2021.

The event aims to inform, create empathy, and inspire reflection and solidarity, while ending on a hopeful note by highlighting women and activists who continue to resist and advocate for equality and human rights.

Target Audience

Young socialists and other politically or socially engaged young people.

Concept and Atmosphere

The event is designed to be serious and reflective, while remaining accessible and open. A relaxed, classroom-like setting encourages discussion, empathy, and critical engagement.

Programme overview

1. Opening presentation (approx. 1 hour)

- **Speaker:** preferably a young person, such as a youth organisation spokesperson, or a well-prepared guest with knowledge of the topic.
- **Format:** presentation supported by visuals (PowerPoint slides, flipcharts, photos, key facts, short video clips)
- **Content:**
 - Overview of the situation for women in Afghanistan since 2021
 - Comparison with progress made during the previous 20 years
 - Stories of women and activists continuing their struggles and fights for their rights today
- The presentation ends with a call to action and a hopeful perspective on resistance and solidarity.

2. Discussion and reflection

(approx. 1 hour)

- Open discussion and Q&A
- Informal setting with shared food (for example, pizza)
- Guiding questions:
 1. What are your overall thoughts about the situation?
 2. Were you aware of these developments before this event?
 3. What actions can we take to raise awareness or show solidarity?

Voices for change: Political Art Day

Stefani Valeva and Tekle Jgarkava

Purpose

To raise political awareness and create a safe, creative space where young people can express opinions and participate actively in political discourse.

Concept and Atmosphere

Creative, activist-oriented, inclusive, energetic, and youth-centred.

Programme overview

1. Opening

(10 minutes)

- Welcome with upbeat music
- Short introduction to the purpose of the event
- Icebreakers (for example, Soulmate Game or Wind Blows)

2. Educational session

(20 minutes)

- Short, engaging talk about youth-relevant political topics
- Facilitated by a youth leader or educator
- Use of visuals, videos, and interactive questions
- Brief Q&A

3. Creative painting activity

(40 minutes)

- Participants work in small groups to create political or empowerment-themed posters or paintings
- Presentation of the artwork and voting process simulating democratic decision-making (vote - debate - elect), in order to select a winner
- Winning artwork displayed in a public or political space

4. AI quiz and interactive game

(30 minutes)

- Digital quiz using tools such as Kahoot or Mentimeter
- Immediate feedback and small prizes

5. Social media engagement challenge

(15 minutes)

- Participants create short videos or posts related to the event, using the event hashtag
- Most-engaged post wins the chance to facilitate the next social media activity

6. Closing and call to action

(10 minutes)

- Summary of key messages
- Invitation to future activities and continued engagement

Promotional message

“Join us for a creative and inspiring day of learning, art, and debate!
Discover how YOU can make a difference through politics and activism.
Your voice matters - come express it and be part of the change!”

Armed conflicts around the world: Beyond the headlines

Silvia Nemchuk Shulzhyk, Yeva Kosinova, Joel Rishi Mehta, and Samuel Ingerö Alias

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase awareness of lesser-known armed conflicts• Challenge media bias and stereotypes• Encourage empathy and youth engagement in peacebuilding
Target audience	Young people aged 18-30 interested in social justice and global issues.
Concept and Atmosphere	Serious but engaging; informative, emotional, and participatory. Includes a photo exhibition, soft background music, and optional documentary visuals.

Programme overview

1. Opening (30 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome and introduction• Icebreaker: world map activity identifying conflict zones
2. Main session (90-120 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal testimonies from a refugee and/or a humanitarian worker• Expert talk on conflict causes and media influence• Interactive debate and group work using “4 corners” opinion activity and small group discussions on different conflicts (for example, Ukraine, Sudan, Yemen)
3. Reflection breaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coffee break• Photo exhibit• Feedback wall (“What did you learn?”)
4. Closing (30-40 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open-mic reflections• Short video on hope and peace• Call to action with humanitarian organisation contacts

Team and logistics

- Moderator: leads flow
- Guest speakers: personal and academic
- Facilitators: group work and tech support
- Volunteers: setup, photos, snacks
- Venue: university or community hall
- Materials needed: projector, maps, flipcharts, pins, refreshments

Promotional message

“Discover the stories behind the headlines.
Understand, connect, and take action for peace.”

Follow-up

- Promotion via social media (Instagram), university newsletters, NGO networks, flyers, student cafés.
- Post-event sharing of photos, thank-you notes, resources, and volunteering opportunities.

International Youth Congress: “Brazil and the BRICS”

Leni Hein and Isabella Simpson

Purpose	<p>A two-day international youth congress bringing together young people to exchange ideas on global issues and possible solutions. The congress aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• build international networks for cooperation, equality, and sustainable development,• raise awareness of international challenges and youth-led approaches to addressing them,• encourage collaboration between youth organisations across countries.
Target audience	<p>Young leaders, activists, and youth organisation members aged 18–30.</p>
Tone, logistics and setup	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Venue equipped with projectors, microphones, and translation headsets• Vegetarian and inclusive catering• Accommodation in a partner hostel or youth centre• Supported through NGOs, sponsors, and participation fees
Promotion channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instagram, TikTok, Facebook,• Website with registration form,• Youth organisation newsletters• Posters at schools and universities

Main to-do steps

1. Planning and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define the theme and goals• Form an organising committee and assign roles• Set the date, venue, and budget• Seek funding (sponsors, grants, participation fees)• Build a timeline with clear deadlines
2. Programme development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose the overall structure (keynotes, workshops, panels, cultural activities)• Confirm speakers and facilitators• Prepare session descriptions and objectives• Plan networking and social activities• Include reflection and action-planning moments
3. Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrange travel and accommodation for guests• Organise catering and accessibility requirements• Prepare technical setup (projectors, sound, Wi-Fi)• Prepare registration materials (badges, schedules, welcome kits)
4. Communication and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a visual identity (logo, colours, slogan)• Develop a communication plan and social media strategy• Launch the website or event page• Distribute flyers, invitations, and press releases• Activate partner youth networks
5. Registration and participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set up online registration and data collection• Send confirmations and practical information• Provide pre-event materials (agenda, readings, code of conduct)
6. During the Congress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage the registration desk and volunteer coordination• Conduct technical checks before each session• Ensure smooth programme flow• Document the event (photos and video)
7. After the Congress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send thank-you messages• Collect feedback through surveys• Publish a summary or post-event video• Conduct an internal evaluation• Plan follow-up activities

Programme overview

Day 1		Day 2	
09:00	Registration and welcome	10:00	Welcome and logistics
10:00	Opening ceremony	10:30	Speaker talk from an invited organisation
10:30	FINTA Connection: Critical masculinity workshop	12:00	Lunch
11:30	Workshop 1	13:00	Queer connection workshop: How to be
13:00	Lunch	14:00	Workshop 3
14:30	Workshop round 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A: Cross-cultural understanding B: Youth and climate responsibility C: Digital tools for global cooperation 	15:30	BiPoC connection: <i>Critical whiteness</i> workshop
16:00	Meeting with a local youth organisation	16:00	Farewell and closing
17:30	Dinner		
18:30	Panel with youth organisations, NGOs, and politicians		
20:00	Free time / social evening		

Political training platform on LGBTIQA+ topics

Alonso Salvador Quintanilla Guzmán

Purpose	A four-day political training programme strengthening knowledge, activism, and internal party capacity around LGBTIQA+ issues within the Socialist Youth of Chile.
Context	Responds to the rise of right-wing populism, anti-gender narratives, and digital radicalisation affecting youth politics nationally and globally.
Target audience	Youth activists, party members, and emerging leaders committed to equality and diversity.
Format	Four sessions of approximately two hours each, combining panels, case studies, world café, and appreciative inquiry.

Programme overview

Day 1: Launch panel discussion

"New youth conservatism - a future setback for the LGBTIQA+ community?"

Purpose	To understand why young people are increasingly drawn towards conservative ideologies and how this shift affects LGBTIQA+ rights, legal protections, and public attitudes.
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Structure

(2 hours + social space)

- Introduction
- Panel I: Why are young people becoming more conservative?
- Panel II: How does this trend impact LGBTIQ+ rights, legal protections, and public attitudes?
- Q&A
- Closing
- Informal socialisation (1 hour)

Day 2: Case study analysis

"Understanding anti-gender discourses"

Purpose

To examine real national and regional examples of anti-gender narratives and explore political strategies to counter them.

Structure

(2 hours)

- Introduction: What are anti-gender narratives?
- Case study 1: Latin America
- Case study 2: Chile / regional context
- Group work: Identifying tactics, emotional appeals, political consequences, and counterstrategies
- Plenary presentations
- Synthesis: lessons for internal communication
- Closing reflection

Day 3: World Café

"Building Inclusive and Resilient Youth Movements"

Purpose

To collectively reflect on how to strengthen the inclusion of LGBTIQ+ members within the youth organisation.

Structure

(1 hour - 1 hour 40 minutes)

- Rotating discussion tables focusing on:
 - Inclusion in practice
 - Leadership and representation
 - Education and political culture
 - Alliances and collective strategy
- Collective sharing of insights, commitments, and next steps

Day 4: Appreciative Inquiry

"From Training to Action"

Purpose

To transform positive experiences into long-term strategies for LGBTIQ+ inclusion and organisational change.

Structure

(1 hour - 1 hour 40 minutes)

- Discovery: identifying moments when inclusion worked well
- Dream: imagining the ideal inclusive organisation
- Design: develop initiatives and policies
- Destiny: committing to concrete actions and accountability
- Closing reflection

Final output

A collective commitment charter for inclusion and diversity.

Overall vision of the training platform

The platform aims to develop politically prepared, inclusive, and resilient youth leaders who are able to:

- recognise conservative and anti-gender strategies,
- strengthen internal equality practices,
- build alliances, and
- lead long-term cultural and political change within the movement.

Transcultural festival of light

Julia Kosciuk

Concept and purpose	<p>A peaceful and creative festival celebrating cultural diversity, unity, and environmental awareness.</p> <p>The event aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote intercultural dialogue and creativity, • raise awareness of ecological migration and local environmental issues, • build connections between international students, local residents, and the university community, • create a calm and symbolic act of solidarity regarding planned tree cutting (not a protest), • invite new members to join the student organisation.
Target audience	<p>Students of the University of Klagenfurt (approximately 50-70 participants), international residents, faculty members, community partners, and anyone interested in ecology, migration, culture, and peace.</p>
Atmosphere and experience	<p>Theme: "Light as a symbol of unity, peace, and environmental connection"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peaceful, warm, and festive environment • Lanterns, candles, banners, and world music • Art installations and soft lighting • On-site student psychology support team
Location and time	<p>Participants enter a softly illuminated park filled with art, music, and light, moving through workshops, performances, a peace walk, and communal activities.</p>

Programme overview

All afternoon

- Peace art installations
- Mulled wine and children's punch
- Dedicated support team space

Promotional message

"Light up the park for peace, nature, and community. Join us to celebrate culture, learn, and stand together for our environment."

Schedule	
16:00	Welcome and live graffiti art
16:30	Collective creation of a light mandala
17:00	Lecture: Ecological migration
17:30	Belly dance workshop
18:00	Dance performance
18:15	Peace song creation
18:30	Light walk for peace (candles in jars)
19:00	Potluck dinner, jam session, and silent disco community dance

Execution and follow-up

On the day

- Warm welcome for participants
- Presence of the support team
- Smooth transitions between activities
- Coordination with performers and lecturer

After the event

- Team reflection on successes, challenges, and achieved goals
- Participant feedback collection
- Sharing photos, quotes, and stories online

Appendices

Glossary of key terms



Non-formal education (NFE): A structured, intentional, and participatory form of learning that takes place outside formal school systems. It focuses on experience, dialogue, and reflection rather than exams or rigid curricula. In NFE, participants learn with and from each other in a learning space that aims to be inclusive and participatory.

Experiential learning: A learning approach in which people gain knowledge and skills through direct experience followed by reflection. It often follows a cycle of experience → reflection → conceptualisation → application, helping participants connect learning to real-life situations and activism.

Facilitation: The process of guiding a group's learning or discussion so that participants can actively engage. A facilitator does not primarily "teach" content, but creates the conditions for learning by ensuring safety, supporting inclusion, and active involvement. Good facilitation balances guidance with openness and flexibility.

Hybrid learning / hybrid events: A combination of in-person and online learning environments in which participants engage both physically and digitally. Hybrid formats can increase accessibility and participation across locations and time zones, but require careful attention to group dynamics, technology access, and facilitation methods.

Digital tools: Online platforms, applications, and technologies used to support communication, creativity, collaboration, and learning. In NFE, digital tools are not only technical aids, but also spaces for participation and interaction, such as Miro, Mentimeter, Canva, or AI-supported applications.

AI tools (artificial intelligence tools): Software or platforms that use artificial intelligence to generate, analyse, or support content creation and facilitation, for example: ChatGPT, Adobe Firefly, or Gamma.app. Trainers may use AI tools to support creativity, accessibility, and efficiency, while remaining attentive to ethical, political, credibility and privacy-related considerations.

Reflection: A deliberate process of looking back on experiences to extract meaning and learning. Reflection can take place individually or collectively and often uses guiding questions such as "What did I learn?", "What surprised me?", or "How can I apply this?". Reflection helps transform activity into understanding.

Participation: The active involvement of learners in shaping their own educational process. In NFE, participants are not passive recipients of information, but contributors and co-creators of the learning experience. Meaningful participation includes opportunities for decision-making, expression, shared ownership and responsibility.

Inclusion: The creation of learning environments in which participants feel respected, valued, safe, and able to contribute, regardless of background, identity, or ability. Inclusion requires ongoing awareness of power dynamics, accessibility needs, and diverse learning styles.

Learning by doing: A central principle of NFE in which participants learn through active experience and practice. Rather than only discussing ideas or theories, learners try out methods, roles, or actions and reflect on the outcomes.

Safe space: An environment in which participants feel able to express themselves without fear of judgment, discrimination, or harm. Facilitators create safe spaces through clear agreements, mutual respect, empathy, and attention to emotional well-being.

Digital activism: The use of digital platforms and tools to promote social or political change. This can include online campaigns, awareness-raising videos, or virtual community building, connecting activism with creativity, communication, and global participation.

Ethics in digital education: Principles guiding responsible and fair use of digital tools in learning contexts. This includes respect for privacy, transparency, inclusion, data protection, and critical awareness of bias in algorithms, platforms, and media content.

Gamification: The use of game-like elements - such as points, challenges, quizzes, or competition - in learning activities. Gamification can increase motivation and engagement, particularly when aligned with meaningful learning objectives rather than superficial rewards.

Youth participation: The active and meaningful involvement of young people in decisions that affect their lives, organisations, or societies. It is based on the understanding that young people are *partners in social and political change*, not merely beneficiaries of education or policy.

Intercultural dialogue: Exchange and communication between people of different cultural backgrounds. In NFE, intercultural dialogue supports understanding, empathy, and cooperation across borders, diverse perspectives and experiences.

Trainer: A facilitator or educator who supports learning processes using non-formal education principles. A trainer helps participants develop skills, reflect on experiences, connect ideas, gain skills, and apply learning in practice — not by delivering lectures, but by guiding exploration and collective learning.

Democratic participation: The act of engaging in decision-making processes and public life with respect for equality, diversity, and collective voice. Political education aims to strengthen young people's capacity to participate democratically and influence their societies.





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