



World Forum for Democracy

Strasbourg, 19-21 November 2018

Call for initiatives - **CLOSED**

WHY IS THE WORLD FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY SPECIAL?

The World Forum for Democracy is a platform for dialogue and democratic innovation which brings new ideas into the work of the Council of Europe and promotes its principles across the world. A unique event of its kind, it deals with challenges facing democracy taking as a starting point innovative initiatives and practice, and fostering debate between different actors in order to find **SOLUTIONS**. The Forum highlights and encourages democratic innovation to strengthen the foundations of democratic societies. A democratic exercise in itself, the Forum aims at giving the people – *demos* – their rightful place in political decision-making. It thus contributes to the evolution of democracy towards more participatory and inclusive structures and institutions.

WHAT IS THE 2018 WORLD FORUM ABOUT?

In 1918, courageous women formed women's rights movements to challenge discriminatory practices of democracy that excluded them from participating in public and political life, resulting finally in their emancipation. The most recent outcry triggered by #MeToo, highlighted once more the pervasive extent of violence against women in all walks of life and across countries and continents. Is this movement an isolated phenomenon or is it the acid test of something which goes far deeper into the very fabric of our societies, something which has not yet been rooted out despite a century-long struggle? Are unequal power relations between women and men at the heart of why women are still victims of gender-based violence? Are gender role stereotypes still preventing women from reaching equal treatment in public, political and economic affairs? Can democracy fix this?

If the answer to these questions is yes, we have a duty to step up our efforts to achieve two key objectives, to which the world committed within the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda: Eradicating all violence and discrimination against women and girls and achieving gender equality in public, private and economic life.

This is the ambition of the 7th World Forum for Democracy.

WHAT IS THE FORMAT OF THE WFD 2018?

The 2018 World Forum Democracy will address the fight to eradicate all forms of violence against women and women's role in public, political and economic life, based, inter alia, on the extensive work of the Council of Europe. This includes the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, the Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and other relevant standards and tools that feed into the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Plenary sessions will be an opportunity to discuss with speakers from all continents, including politicians, public and private officials, international organisations, civil society, academics, as well as survivors of violence and discrimination who will share their experience and discuss how to improve the current situation. The labs will allow participants to learn about ground-breaking initiatives that offer responses to the key questions above based on an analysis of their real impact and replicability. The initiatives must help us understand how democracy and democratic institutions and practices can help re-establish balanced power relations between women and men and put an end to all forms of discrimination and abuse.

HOW DO THE LABS WORK?

The labs are the ♥ of the World Forum for Democracy. Their idea is to address specific issues through the critical analysis of tested initiatives. The initiatives will be presented in short speeches of ten minutes and critically assessed by multidisciplinary panels and participants in the labs. The key conclusions and lessons learnt from the labs will be discussed in a summing up session in order to prepare the overall conclusions of the Forum. The Forum participants will vote to choose the winner of the Democracy Innovation Award among the presented initiatives.

Organisations/institutions worldwide are invited to express their interest in presenting an initiative aimed at changing the diverse range of experiences women are facing. These initiatives should be able to share evidence about efforts that have led to the strengthening and protection of women's rights and/or to a balanced representation of women and men in public, political and/or economic affairs.

Examples of possible initiatives and their challenges (non-exhaustive):

- Understanding of how gender inequality works.
- Fighting gender-based discrimination resulting from patriarchal attitudes and related social norms
- Victim support and prevention
- Women's rights movements influencing decision-making structures from the local to the global level, reaching broad audiences and addressing root causes of gender inequality.
- Political parties managing to establish gender parity within their structures.

- Supporting women from diverse backgrounds running for elected office, e.g. career advice, access to campaign finance, fighting against intimidation during campaigns.
- Monitoring initiatives, e.g. for the implementation and impact of quota systems, or the impact of policy changes for women of diverse backgrounds.
- Closing data gaps about persisting gender inequalities, e.g. unpaid work and participation in the informal economy, representation in local governance, political organisations etc.
- Fighting gender stereotypes, e.g. in the media, in advertisement, etc.
- Increasing competition between companies for gender equality.
- Doing business differently (e.g. actors of the circular economy, sharing economy etc.) to promote women's engagement in public affairs.
- Strengthening women entrepreneurs and their ecosystems, including advisors, supporters and finance providers, with a special focus on those that support women in the transition to digitalised economies.
- Digital technologies fighting gender inequalities, e.g. through increasing transparency about gender pay gaps, strengthening support networks between women etc.
- Abolishing male bias in artificial intelligence.
- Religious actors that foster women participation in public political spaces, public institutions, elected offices, and the economy.

Submissions should be made by answering the questionnaire in the appendix and sending it to forum_democracy@coe.int by **30 May 2018**. The World Forum Task Force will select the most interesting and relevant proposals in June 2018.

Any public or private organisation is eligible to apply. One presenter for the selected initiatives will be invited to Strasbourg to take part in the World Forum. Travel and accommodation expenses may be covered by the Council of Europe if required.

For further information about the World Forum for Democracy 2018, please visit the following websites:

www.world-forum-democracy.org

www.facebook.com/wfdemocracy

[@WFDemocracy](https://www.instagram.com/WFDemocracy)



World Forum for Democracy

Questionnaire for the submission of an initiative at the World Forum for Democracy, 19-21 November 2018

Country:
Organisation/institution:
Title of the initiative:
Contact person (Mr/Ms):
Address:
Telephone:
Mobile phone:
E-mail:
Website:
Social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.):
Brief presentation of the organisation (legal status, number of members/employees, field of operation, goals, other relevant information).
Brief description of the initiative (max. 200 words): goals, actions, scope, participants, partners.

What is the origin of the initiative (sources of inspiration, relevant academic debate etc.)?
How is this initiative contributing to the protection/ strengthening of women's rights and/or a balanced participation of men and women in democracy?
How was the initiative implemented?
What have been the results so far?
Which indicators did you use to assess the initiative's results?

What challenges have been encountered in the implementation phase?
How does your initiative differ from other existing initiatives? What makes your initiative a democracy innovation?
To what extent is your initiative transferable to other organisations and countries?
Any additional relevant information/references.

Practical information

(Please note: the following information will not feed into the jury’s assessment of your initiative)

Please indicate who will present the initiative, as well as a replacement in case of an emergency that prevents the first presenter from participating in the Forum (Mr/Ms, name, position, city, country, e-mail, telephone):

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Language of presentation :

- English
- French
- other (please specify, presentations in other languages will be an exception)

Will you need a Visa for entering France?

Yes No

Are you in position to fund your participation in the World Forum?

Yes No

Will you need assistance during the World Forum because of any kind of disability?

Yes No

Please note that the Council of Europe’s premises are fully accessible.

Will you be able to prepare a 2-3 min. video about your initiative prior to the Forum, in case you are selected?

Yes No