



**Call for nominations for the inaugural
Kofi Annan NextGen Democracy Prize**

Athens, September 2023

The Democracy & Culture Foundation (DCF) in association with the Kofi Annan Foundation (KAF), is launching an annual “Kofi Annan NextGen Democracy Prize.” The award will be presented jointly at this and each year’s Athens Democracy Forum (ADF) which takes place at the end of September.

1. Background

The ADF was founded 10 years ago, inspired by Kofi Annan’s work on peace and democracy and his establishment of the United Nations Democracy Fund. In 2017 Mr. Annan delivered the Aristotle Address and the keynote speech at the opening of the Forum. With the annual endorsement of the UN Secretary-General, ADF has become the main global event marking the International Day of Democracy. In 2015, it established the “City of Athens Democracy Award”.

Throughout his mandate at Secretary-General of the United Nations and later at the head of KAF, Kofi Annan worked to promote democracy, which he called “a catalyst for better governance, greater security, and human development.” He was also a great believer in youth leadership and inclusion, and he strived to facilitate the participation of young people in local, national and international decision-making forums.

Democracy, however, is in retreat in many parts of the world, with catastrophic consequences such as the war in Ukraine, the toppling of elected governments in countries in Africa and Asia, and the rise of populist and authoritarian leaders on all continents. Young people have lost faith in the system, express their disillusionment with the capacity of elections to deliver representative and accountable governments, and yet most are committed to positive change.

2. Objectives:

This Prize aims to:

- Recognise exceptional intellectual and/or “in action” leadership shown by a young activist in defending, promoting or renewing democracy;
- Provide the recipient of the prize with support including through a one-year mentorship with a recognised democracy expert or senior leader;
- Through appropriate publicity, inspire young people to commit to the advancement of democracy.

The Prize will highlight actions taken by young people to:

- foster genuine participation in decision-making;
- promote peaceful dialogue on divisive political issues;
- propose innovative approaches to democratic participation and democratic governance;

- advance intergenerational exchange on matters related to democracy;
- give a real voice to people and communities who have traditionally been excluded from decision-making;
- contribute to or advocate for the organisation of free and fair elections and their acceptance;
- protect freedom of assembly, freedom of the press and freedom of expression;
- garner support for the independence of democratic institutions; or
- fight for reform in both the public and private sectors to ensure that democracy adapts, develops and survives as the pre-eminent method of government.

The Prize includes a monetary prize of USD 10,000. The award will be presented each year at the Athens Democracy Forum and all travel and accommodation expenses linked to the Awardee's participation in the Forum will be covered by the organizers. Awardees will be invited to take a leading role in organising a session on youth and democracy at the following year's Forum.

3. Selection criteria and process

Every year, the call for nominations will be publicly announced as well as shared directly with roughly one hundred organisations who work in democracy promotion or youth empowerment. Nominees must be **aged between 18 and 30** at the time of nomination. There are no restrictions in terms of nationality, gender, or occupation.

DCF will receive and filter the nominations to ensure candidates meet the requirements. A list of no fewer than ten nominees will be submitted to the Selection Committee, which will consist of representatives of the following organisations:

- Democracy & Culture Foundation
- Kofi Annan Foundation
- One Young World
- A youth-led democracy organization

The Selection Committee will consider the following when deciding on the award:

- **Impact:** The nominee's actions had a demonstrated outcome, for instance a change in policy in a given country, the rate of participation in elections, the number of people reached through a specific campaign, the number of users of a specific application, the number of students gaining a wider understanding of the importance of the democratic process, the number of community associations engaged in an educational campaign etc.
- **Innovation:** The innovative character of these actions.
- **Sustainability:** Whether the nominee has advanced the cause of democracy and human rights for a sustained period of one year minimum, and whether her/his actions are sustainable over time and replicable in other contexts;
- **Values:** The values displayed by the Nominee through her/his actions.
- **Benefit:** The added value which the Award could bring to the nominee in terms of international notoriety and support.

4. Submission of proposals

We invite you to nominate a young person in your network who would match these criteria. Nominating organisations need to submit:

- A detailed letter of support (maximum 500 words) explaining why they feel the person they are nominating should be recognised.
- The attached Submission Form, duly completed, describing the nominee, their actions in support of democracy and their accomplishments.

- A brief video (2-minute max, can simply be shot on a smartphone) by the nominee about his/her work. The video can be sent via WeTransfer at nominations@democracyculturefoundation.org or shared by Loom.
- Other material can be included with the application, e.g., podcast, press interview, blog.

Please note that:

- Nominees should give permission for their names to be put forward and should be willing to participate in public activities in the context of the Athens Democracy Forum.
- **Applications and supporting documents must be sent to the following email: nominations@democracyculturefoundation.org**
- **The application deadline is Friday 31 March 2023 at 5 pm UTC. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.**