



## **Activating youth innovators: Pathways to enable youth leadership in STI for the Green Economy**

*Side Event at the 26th Commission on Science and Technology for Development  
28 March 2023, 08:30-09:45 CET, Online and Palais des Nations Geneva*

### Concept note

#### **Background**

Global challenges such as climate change coupled with rapid technological changes have created green windows of opportunities for countries all around the world to accelerate the development and implementation of green technologies.

Compared to other generations, there is a shared belief among youth that climate change is an emergency. Thus this concern is currently being translated into climate action initiatives led by youth actors that are amplifying the impact of green technologies. However, young social entrepreneurs are facing barriers to advance their solutions particularly in regards to access to financial resources, connection to relevant partners and lack of education and training<sup>1</sup>.

Youth remains committed to drive climate action initiatives but require support from an ecosystem of actors that enable them to advance their efforts at local levels and provide guidance on how to appropriately interact with the industries being developed for green technologies.

#### **Objective**

This side event aims to explore the role of youth in STI for the promotion of innovation in the sustainable production sector, alongside providing a space for a range of stakeholders to discuss pathways, opportunities and challenges to strengthen the technical and innovation capacity of youth, as well as how ecosystems could be maintained, supported and strengthened for young people to green windows of opportunities to create, adapt and implement green technologies.

#### **Session format**

The format of this side event will be split into two different sections. The first section will allow experts with tracked career experience and early career professionals to each share their perspectives of the roles and drivers for young entre(intra)preneurs in taking advantage of green windows of opportunities. The second half will be a semi-structured debate on gaps, barriers, and opportunities for multi-stakeholder engagement to increase youth participation in the green economy.

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<sup>1</sup> Climate Concern to Climate Action: The Role of Young Social Entrepreneurs, UNDP

## Programme speakers & agenda

Time (CEST)	Duration	Activity	People involved
8:30 - 8:35	5 mins	Opening Remarks	Jonathan Kemp, MGCY SPI Platform
8:35 - 8:40	5 mins	Topic Snapshot: green windows of opportunities	Giulia Marzetti, Sustainability Consultant
8:40 - 9:05	25 mins	<u>Interactive Dialogue Part I: Green windows of opportunities and drivers for youth engagement</u>	Shea Sinnott, Social Innovation Canada and Foresight Canada
			Brighton Kaoma, SDSN Youth
			Fereshteh Rafieian, UNESCO
			Damiana Pacheco, Autodesk Foundation
9:05 - 9:30	25 mins	<u>Interactive Dialogue Part II: Visions for a multi-stakeholder engagement to increase youth participation</u>	Shea Sinnott, Social Innovation Canada and Foresight Canada
			Brighton Kaoma, SDSN Youth
			Fereshteh Rafieian, UNESCO
			Damiana Pacheco, Autodesk Foundation
9:30 - 9:40	10 mins	Q&A Session with the Audience	Moderated by Giulia Marzetti
9:40 - 9:45	5 mins	Closing Remarks	Giulia Marzetti

Topics for interactive dialogue:

- **Green windows of opportunities and roles and drivers for youth engagement**
  - How have green windows of opportunities been capitalised effectively so far or not?
  - What are the barriers/challenges that youth are facing when it comes to youth entrepreneurship?
  - What role can open science play in accelerating innovation and deployment for clean tech? What are drivers for youth leading innovation through open-science?
  - What specific skills/knowledge do young people need to develop to be effective innovators in sustainable production and innovation?
- **Visions for a multi-stakeholder engagement to increase youth participation**
  - What ecosystems can be enabled to increase youth participation in the development of green technologies?
  - What does an ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship in the Sustainable Economy look like? What needs and opportunities exist to better support youth engagement with sustainable production?
  - How can multi-stakeholder partnerships support the scaling up and dissemination of successful youth-led sustainable production innovations?
  - What impact, and how could multi-stakeholder engagement have on improving the opportunities, working conditions and rights of young people in the sustainable production sector?