



Network UK

YOUNG  
SDG  
INNOVATORS



## FAQs

### General

#### **1. What is the Young SDG Innovators Programme?**

The Young SDG Innovators Programme (YSIP) is an accelerator programme designed to engage young professionals working in companies that participate in the United Nations Global Compact. The programme aims to equip them with skills to advance sustainability efforts, drive innovation and deliver tangible sustainability solutions for your company.

#### **2. What does the programme involve?**

In the programme, young professional participants (“Innovators”) explore new innovations and learn from leading experts and sustainability leaders about how to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the development of breakthrough ideas, products and business models. Using the tools and training from the programme, the Innovators work in teams to identify an SDG-related challenge that is relevant to their company and, over the course of the programme, develop a solution to address that challenge. Please refer to the [programme brochure](#).

#### **3. What are the benefits of participating for companies?**

The programme offers companies the opportunity to engage their top talent at the junior and middle manager level and develop a new generation of employees that think between the intersection of corporate sustainability and innovation. Companies also benefit from the development of real business solutions that have the potential to provide value for both the company and society.

#### **4. How can my company ensure the protection of our intellectual property if we take part in the programme?**

While the programme is designed to facilitate cross-pollination of knowledge, new skills and ideas across project teams, we recognise the importance for companies to safeguard proprietary information and ideas. As part of the application process, we require the Innovators and Mentors to sign a [non-disclosure agreement \(NDA\)](#) to cover any intellectual property being used or discussed as part of the programme.

## **5. Is there an extra cost for my company to participate?**

As the programme is run in several different countries, your participating Local Network may require some fees such as fees related to sending additional young professionals to take part in the programme as well as programme activity costs, such as travel and incidentals, which are not covered through the programme.

To offset the significant costs of delivering this programme, we will require participants to make financial contributions. The total costs are as follows:

### Signatories

£1500 for first 2 innovators

£750 for 3rd innovator

£500 for 4th innovator

### Participants

£1000 for the first 2 innovators

£500 for 3rd innovator

£300 for 4th innovator

## **6. Where does the programme take place?**

The programme is currently being run by Global Compact Local Networks in the following countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Philippines, South Africa, Turkey, Ukraine, and the UK.

## **7. My company is not based in a participating Network country. How can we take part in the programme?**

Unfortunately as this is a country-level programme, only companies based in countries whose Global Compact Local Network is taking part can participate. However, non-eligible companies may be able to take part in the programme as Mentors or Experts. Please refer to the information brochure for more information or contact [youngsdginnovators@unglobalcompact.org](mailto:youngsdginnovators@unglobalcompact.org).

## **8. Can young professionals from subsidiaries of UN Global Compact participating companies take part in the programme?**

As long as the parent company is a UN Global Compact participating company and the subsidiary is based in a country whose Global Compact Local Network is taking part, their young professionals are eligible to participate.

## **9. What is the commitment my company has to make to take part in the programme?**

As a participating YSIP company, you commit to:

- Select 2 – 4 Innovators to take part in the programme for the full duration of 10-months
- Allow Innovators the time needed for full participation in the programme
- Identify a Champion who will support the Innovator team internally within the company

#### **10. What is the time commitment for Innovators?**

Innovators are expected to attend five (5) in-person 2-day workshops throughout the course of 10 months in addition to spending approximately 2-3 hours per week on online learning and activities, and group project development.

#### **11. What is the difference between Innovators, Champions, and Mentors?**

Innovators are the young professionals that form teams to take part in the programme to develop viable SDG business solutions for their companies. Champions are senior-level executives within the same company as Innovators that ensure the teams have high-level support in their company and the SDG business solutions are aligned with the company's strategic goals and objectives. Only companies in participating Networks can select Innovators for the programme. Each Innovator team must have a designated Champion throughout the programme.

Mentors are individuals outside of the Innovators' company with knowledge of technical and relevant subjects in the programme, such as sustainability, innovation, product design and breakthrough technologies. Mentors are matched to Innovator teams to shepherd the team throughout the programme and provide guidance in their training and project development.

#### **Eligibility:**

#### **12. Why is the programme only for young professionals?**

The programme is designed to target employees that do not yet have senior management responsibilities and therefore have more time to dedicate to a 10-month development programme.

#### **13. Why do you categorise young professionals as 35 and under?**

There is no set definition for the age of a young professional. Young professionals can be categorised as working individuals anywhere between the ages of 21 to 40. The age of 35 was selected as the upper age limit for the programme given that many demographic and population statistical organisations recognise young adulthood at being between the ages of 18 and 34.

**14. Is any company participating in the UN Global Compact eligible to take part in the programme?**

All companies participating in the UN Global Compact are eligible to take part in the programme as long as they are based in a country whose Global Compact Local Network is participating.

**15. How many young professionals can my company select for the programme?**

Companies can select up to four (4) young professionals to participate in the programme per cycle.

**16. What are the eligibility criteria for the Young SDG Innovators?**

While there are no set requirements, the programme is designed to target employees aged 35 and under who have a passion for sustainability, creativity; and demonstrate strong teamwork skills. Employees from business innovation, Research and Development, marketing, logistics, procurement, customer experience/service and sustainability units are encouraged to participate.

**17. Does the Global Compact have to approve the Young SDG Innovator candidates from my company before they are selected?**

No, we encourage companies to choose individuals who best fit the Innovator profile to ensure diversity among the candidate pool in terms of business unit and background. Guidance is provided to companies as to desired qualifications for Innovators.

**18. What kind of companies are encouraged to apply?**

Companies from the 2019 Round were from all sectors. Because this is an innovation-focused program, we will favour companies that are involving departments such as Innovation, Research & Development, and Engineering. To encourage knowledge sharing, we want companies to recruit participants that are not involved in sustainability-related aspects of the company. Companies should use the Young SDG Innovators Programme as an opportunity to teach departments traditionally separate from sustainability about the SDGs.

**Application:**

**19. How do I apply?**

Companies interested in joining the programme can fill out the sign up [form](#) or connect directly to their participating Global Compact Local Network. Due to demand and limited spots in the programme, Local Networks will need to confirm company participation before approved companies are able to put forward programme participants.

**20. When does the programme start?**

November 2020 is when the on-boarding period for Innovators starts, where they are given time to better understand concepts on SDGs and breakthrough innovation before they start the in-person camps. This can be completed on their own time or delivered by the Global Compact Local Networks. The in-person programming for the programme will begin in January 2021, and run for 10-months until October 2021.

**21. What is the duration of the programme?**

The Young SDG Innovators Programme runs in annual cycles over the course of 10 months.

**22. My company is not able to take part in the programme this year but would like to participate next year. Can we sign up now for the next round?**

Programme applications are managed by Global Compact Local Networks which have the right to determine how and when to waitlist companies for future rounds of the programme.

For further questions, please contact:

**Cynthia Adebisi-Yekinni**

Global Goals Project Manager

Tel: +44 (0)7706440223

Email: [cynthia.adebisi-yekinni@unglobalcompact.org.uk](mailto:cynthia.adebisi-yekinni@unglobalcompact.org.uk)