



Call for nominations

2024 Kofi Annan NextGen Democracy Prize

The Democracy & Culture Foundation (DCF) in association with the Kofi Annan Foundation (KAF), is launching the second edition of the **Kofi Annan NextGen Democracy Prize**. The award will be presented jointly at this year's Athens Democracy Forum (ADF) which will take place in October.

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, the ADF has become the main global event marking the International Day of Democracy.

The inaugural [Kofi Annan NextGen Democracy Prize](#) was presented in September 2023.

Throughout his mandate as 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.

This year promises to be a highly significant election year as countries with a cumulative population of over 4 billion go to the polls. Democracy, however, is in retreat in many parts of the world, with catastrophic consequences, including the toppling of democratically elected governments, the rise of populist and authoritarian leaders on all continents, and outbreaks of conflict and war. Considering the deteriorating state of democracy globally, this prize seeks to identify and commend inspiring young people who have shown exceptional commitment to protecting and advancing democracy in their countries.

2. Objectives:

This Prize aims to:

- Recognise exceptional intellectual and/or "in action" leadership shown by a young activist in defending and promoting 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;
- 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 and is presented yearly at The Athens Democracy Forum. The Awardee will also be invited to lead 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 and shared directly with roughly one hundred organisations working 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 and KAF will receive and filter the nominations to ensure candidates meet the requirements. A list of ten nominees will then be submitted to the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will consider the following when deciding on the winner:

- **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 their actions are sustainable over time and replicable in other contexts;
- **Values:** The values displayed by the nominee through their actions.
- **Benefit:** The added value the Prize could bring 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 minutes max – can be shot on a smartphone) by the nominee explaining their work defending democracy and why they chose to engage in it.
- Other material can be included with the application, e.g., podcast or video, press interview, blog.

Please note that:

- Nominees should give permission for their names to be put forward and 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 Sunday 31 March 2024 at 11:59 pm CET. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.**