

## Joining the Young Friends of the Earth Europe Steering Group 2013- 14

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## **Part 1: The YFoEE Steering Group**

### **Introduction**

Every year, the YFoEE network elects a Steering Group (SG) at the Annual Network Gathering (every spring time) whose role is to work as a team to ensure the ongoing development of the YFoEE network for the continuing year.

The SG works as an interim decision making and development body for YFoEE between the Annual Network Gathering and other network events, and acts as a bridge between the FoEE office and groups in the YFoEE network. The SG takes part in the strategic and long-term thinking and direction of YFoEE, and defends and represents the needs of the network and its member groups.

Members of the SG serve a period of at least one year, are representatives from different countries and organisations within the YFoEE network, and can be re-elected a maximum of two times. At least three and up to eight individuals between the ages of 16-30 can be elected to the Steering Group. Each Steering Group member can stand for elections with a second person as their 'alternate' who participates on behalf of the first person, should they be unavailable.

The SG works as a team, with individual members leading on their own specific areas of work and responsibilities, and working closely with the YFoEE coordinator based in the FoEE office in Brussels.

The Steering Group is not the only way to be involved in YFoEE. We have many Working Groups who develop projects, events and campaigns, and which rely on volunteers to undertake various roles.

## The Role of Steering Group is to:

### *Give direction*

- Act as an interim decision making body for the YFoEE network
- Develop the YFoE network (support setting up new groups, engage more young people from FoEE and FoEI groups)
- Direct the work of the YFoEE coordinator
- Create and review yearly work plans for YFoEE
- Give input to strategic and important questions that arise from the FoEE office
- Be aware of all general developments within the YFoEE network and member groups
- Propose and help decide on strategic relationships with allies (other organisations and youth groups/networks)



### *Ensure activities and campaigns*

- Ensure the implementation of projects and other agreements defined by the network at the Annual Network Gathering and at other events and meetings during the year
- Be involved in developing new European network campaigns and actions for YFoEE, and defining the aims and objectives of these
- Lead on or be a contact person for specific tasks and working groups for areas of work for the network (e.g. Climate Justice Working Group, Food & Agriculture Working Group)
- Organise, plan the agenda, and help run the YFoEE Network Gathering and the summer camp along with the YFoEE coordinator

### *Represent*

- Represent YFoEE in relevant FoEE and FoEI network processes and meetings (including FoEE Annual General Meeting- AGM, and FoEI Bi-annual general meeting- BGM)

### *Ensure continuity*

- Help identify suitable funding for YFoEE and projects
- Find new SG members and facilitate a smooth handover with them
- When your period with the SG is over, continue to support and stay in contact with YFoEE and the new SG, for example in helping to plan and run the next YFoEE summer camp

## **Benefits of being on the Steering Group**

Depending on your time and energy resources, being a Steering Group member gives you many opportunities to develop and learn, meet people, travel and participate in great activities across Europe. Just some of the things you can expect to do and gain from being on the Steering Group include:

- dedicating your time to develop organisation which strives for achieving social and environmental justice
- organising the functioning of YFoEE and learn about the management of an organisation and events, whilst helping to shape YFoEE future plans and strategies

- developing your management, communication, representation and facilitation skills
- you can develop your own ideas, projects and initiatives, and develop your own specific areas of interest and knowledge
- getting to know interesting and wonderful people from the YFoEE network and share experiences
- participating in international events as a YFoEE representative, as well as traveling and taking part in various YFoEE and FoEE meetings, and have your travel, accommodation and food costs covered for these.
- representing an internationally known and recognized environmental organisation which can build your experience for securing future work in environmental NGOs or policy
- finally, you join a network of active people for creating better future!

## Relationship of Steering Group to FoEE Office

YFoEE has one full time coordinator based in the FoEE office in Brussels. The coordinator keeps a general overview of the progress of the YFoEE network and its relation with the FoEE and Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) networks. The YFoEE network is not a separate or legal organisation of its own, but is officially within the FoEE network and office.

The SG has a responsibility to direct and take decisions on behalf of YFoEE, in partnership with the YFoEE coordinator, and will regularly think about, discuss and take decisions on important and relevant issues. The YFoEE coordinator's role is to facilitate the SG to do this by presenting the SG will all relevant information, opportunities and updates to the SG, and ensure that SG members can participate effectively in discussions and decision making. The Steering Group should direct the work of the YFoEE Coordinator in the office.



The coordinator will ideally run all big issues past the SG, will make proposals to the SG and ask for specific direction on content and ways forward from the SG. The coordinator is also able to act on their own accord to move the network further. At each meeting (face to face or conference call) the coordinator will update the SG on his/her actions.

YFoEE strives to be independent and led by young people and groups in the network, which is why the active involvement of volunteers and the Steering Group is fundamental.

## Role of Alternate Steering Group members

Each full Steering Group member can stand for election with a second person as their 'alternate', though it is not obligatory that all SG members have an alternate. The alternate's role is to replace the full member if s/he should be absent from meetings or from the role of the Steering Group for a period of time, and is agreed beforehand with the team.

### Guidelines for Alternate Steering Group members:

- Alternate members act as a replacement in meetings when the full member is absent.
- There is no country or organisation limit for alternate members (i.e. there can be several alternates from one group or country).
- The alternate SG member can and should support the full member bi-laterally on issues and discussions.
- Alternate members can be the contact point for a working group if there is no other SG member wanting to take that role
- Alternate members can join SG meetings when their full member is present, but only to observe. They do not take part in discussions or decisions.
- Alternate members have full access to YFoEE Steering Group communication tools: the Steering Group crabgrass group and the [steering.yfoee@foeeurope.org](mailto:steering.yfoee@foeeurope.org) mailing list. They receive all the information and documents that full Steering Group members do
- Alternate SG members can be elected three times (as well as being a full SG member three times)

## Expectations of Steering Group members

### Steering Group members are expected to:

- Work in a personal capacity to serve the European network - not simply represent a national member group and national priorities
- Work together as a team, with mutual respect for each other, including on deadlines set by fellow SG members
- Lead and develop on one task or area of work, either within a working group or in close collaboration with the YFoEE coordinator
- Be motivated, active and committed
- Be committed to the YFoEE network, make efforts to develop the network further, and can commit the time and energy to doing this. The SG is a voluntary task, but not without the need for real commitment



### Steering Group members should also be able to:

- Contribute a minimum of **4 hours a week** to the work of the SG and YFoEE (including to prepare and take part in SG meetings, do work for working groups, attending events and meetings), and expect higher workload during times of events and activities

- Join conference calls **every 2 to 4 weeks** by Skype or from a landline phone (YFoEE covers your costs)
- Attend a number of **face to face SG meetings** throughout the year (see following plan of the year)
- **Attend 80%** of SG meetings, and apologise when you are not able to join (out of politeness and respect of the rest of the group)
- Have good **access to internet, email and Skype** and be able to respond to discussions and proposals within given timeframes.

## Individual roles within SG

Individuals on the SG take the lead and are the contact person for areas of work and working groups. Volunteers from the YFoEE network and member groups also make up the Working Groups and take responsibility for leading projects and work. We are flexible to and support new areas of work and working groups starting up when needed.

We currently have the following Working Groups:

### Climate Justice Working Group

Main areas of work: Developing climate related campaigns and events of YFoEE; maintaining YFoEE's cooperation with FoEI on the UNFCCC; facilitating the collaboration between YFoEE and Y/FoE groups working on climate issues nationally; taking part in the European Youth Climate Movement and YOUNGOs (youth constituency to the UNFCCC) on behalf of YFoEE



### Food and Agriculture Working Group

Main areas of work: Developing the working group and facilitating involvement of YFoE groups, working on food and agricultural topics; developing activities and educational resources; developing and running of our reCAP campaign.

### Communications Working Group

Main areas of work: Coordinating all publications of YFoEE with the YFoEE Coordinator (pdf and e-newsletters, the YFoEE yearbook, YFoEE website, social media, etc), helping develop more effective internal communications within YFoEE, YFoEE brand and image development.

### Internal Structures

Following and developing discussions around YFoEE's relationship to FoEE and FoEI; as well as being responsible for issues related to the YFoEE structures paper and YFoEE 'membership'.

### Summer Camp

A team of people who are involved in all elements of organizing and running the YFoEE Summer Camp, taking place this summer in Norway.

## Part 2: Joining the Steering Group in 2013

### Nomination and election process for 2013

The election of new Steering Group members will take place on **14<sup>th</sup> April** at the **YFoEE Network Gathering in Croatia**. You must be present for the full duration of the Network Gathering in order to join the SG, and able to stay until 20:00 on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April to take part in a SG induction meeting from 14:00-18:00. We can provide accommodation for you on the 15<sup>th</sup> April.

If you are interested in nominating yourself to join the SG you will need to discuss and have the agreement from your YFoE or FoE group or organization. We also recommend that you talk with current SG members or Sophie, the YFoEE Coordinator, to get a good idea of the work involved with the SG.

To nominate yourself you will need to write your name up on a nomination sheet on the wall at the Network Gathering, along with the name of your alternate if you intend to stand with one. You will also be asked to present yourself verbally, telling us who you are, where you are from and which YFoE group you are active with, why you would like to join the Steering Group, your experience, and finally your particular areas of interest for YFoEE. The Network Gathering will then have the opportunity to ask you questions.

Nominations will open on the first day of the AGM and will close on the morning of the 14<sup>th</sup> April, so you will have several days to find out more about the SG and discuss with current members. On 14<sup>th</sup> April the SG elections will take place by secret ballot. Each YFoEE member group or affiliate group present will have a vote.

If you would like to discuss the role and expectations of Steering Group members further you can contact Sophie ([sophie.manson@foeeurope.org](mailto:sophie.manson@foeeurope.org) or Tel: +32 2 893 1009) or talk to any of the current YFoEE Steering Group (contact details below).

#### **Our current Steering Group is:**

Susi Hammel, Germany: [suhamasi@hotmail.com](mailto:suhamasi@hotmail.com)

Paul Daly, Scotland: [pdaly@foe-scotland.org.uk](mailto:pdaly@foe-scotland.org.uk)

Thessa Meijlis, Netherlands: [thessa@jma.org](mailto:thessa@jma.org)

Tage Erlend Tellnes, Norway: [erlendt@nu.no](mailto:erlendt@nu.no)



## Calendar of dates and activities 2013/14

Further to the expectations outlined in Part 1, the following table highlights the dates and times of the year when there are YFoEE events and activities taking place. Some are obligatory for SG members to join.

Month	Location	Event/Activities/responsibilities
11-15 <sup>th</sup> April	Croatia	2013 YFoEE Network Gathering
15th April PM	Croatia	Steering Group induction and team building meeting immediately after the Network Gathering. Compulsory attendance to all prospective SG members
April		Skype call
May		Skype call
June	Hungary	2013FoEE AGM. One SG representative will join and participate in YFoEE and FoEE workshops/discussions
June		Skype call
July		Skype call
August	Norway	YFoEE Summer Camp. SG will be expected to attend, facilitate sessions and help out practically.
September	Brussels	Three day SG meeting (face to face) Finalise 2012 YFoEE work plan, assess recent work, make short-term future plans, training.
October		Skype call
November		Skype call
December		Skype call
January 2014		Skype call
February 2014		Skype call
March 2014		2014 YFoEE Network Gathering. SG will be expected to attend, facilitate sessions and help out practically.
March		Skype call

**Contact Young Friends of the Earth Europe about the Steering Group 2013- 14**

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