

FEPS Young Academics Network

Est. 2010 by FEPS and Karl Renner Institut

Open Call for New Members

10th Jubilee Cycle

Brussels / Vienna, 5th June 2026

It is with great excitement that FEPS – Foundation for European Progressive Studies and Karl Renner Institut are launching this Open Call for New Members who would like to join the Young Academics Network (YAN) and become proud members of its very special 10th Jubilee edition.

Background:

The FEPS Young Academics Network (FEPS YAN) was established in March 2010 with an aim to gather and offer a space to the promising progressive PhD candidates and young PhD researchers, who would like to use their academic experience to contribute to the debate about a more progressive Europe. Throughout the years and nine completed cycles, the initiative has gathered more than 450 members – many of whom are today professors at renowned universities, prominent experts in their respective fields, and frontbench politicians. Their exchanges and interdisciplinary research at the time of their involvement have resulted in a number of stimulating studies, contributing to the European socialist and social democratic movement, to a broader discussion about the design and policies of the EU, and in several cases have been a base for scientific papers published in the relevant journals subsequently. The alumni have remained a community, whose members keep close contact with one another and frequently further engage with FEPS and Karl Renner Institut. Today, FEPS YAN is one of the cornerstones of the FEPS European Progressive Training Lab.

Addressees of the Call:

This new open Call is addressed to the outstanding progressive young researchers:

- PhD Candidates
- Post-Docs

Who are:

- Passionate about the European Union and want to contribute to a debate on how to shape its future in a progressive manner
- Keen on working in an interdisciplinary, international environment
- Ready to explore new ideas and use their own expertise to join an innovative collaborative project
- Desire to learn – from lecturers, trainers and peers
- Curious about the role of academics in politics and intrigued by the perspective of experiencing how research can be translated into policy recommendations through the work of a think tank
- Fluent in English (the language of the FEPS YAN)
- Ready to commit to a 1,5 years cycle that will feature seminars (online and in person), training sessions and work in the interdisciplinary Working Groups (with the aim of writing a collective paper and the support from the side of both the Academic and Political Mentors)

10th Cycle:

The new jubilee cycle will start in September 2026 and will end by December 2027. It will consist of five phases:

- (1) Recruitment process
- (2) Inaugural Lectures from the Alumni and forming the working groups, which will be a collaborative process, building on the research interests described in the entry abstracts by the successful candidates. The participants will present their theses to their fellow FEPS YAN members. Based on the convergence/connection among the research interests, thematic working groups shall be formed. Each working group will formulate a joint research question and develop a research strategy. The minimum number of members per WG is 4.
- (3) Research: The working groups will conduct interdisciplinary and transnational research. They will receive guidance and advice from selected academic and political mentors. And there will be further seminars, training sessions, as well as befitting lectures organized for all to learn from.
- (4) Publication: Working groups will write (at least one) academic and/or policy publication. You can find the papers delivered in the previous cycles [on our website](#).
- (5) Dissemination: The outcomes and findings are disseminated to relevant European politicians and stakeholders, as well as to the general public.

Throughout the cycle, we will convene at FEPS YAN seminars (3 planned, taking place in Brussels or Vienna) and online meetings. Working group coordination and collaboration take place online (and via communication channels chosen by the WGs, respectively).

Because this is an extraordinary jubilee edition, we will also propose interactions with the prominent alumni in diverse formats and a reunion moment for past and current members.

What can you expect?

FEPS YAN is a unique, formative experience. What it offers is an opportunity:

- To acquire an instructive experience within the community of FEPS and Karl Renner Institut
- To get involved in the multidisciplinary debate about the future of the European Union, as well as the state and strategy for progressive family
- To conduct research, to contribute to policy papers within thematic Working Groups and to challenge yourself to build on your expertise while exploring new angles/perspectives
- To meet inspiring progressive academics, politicians, trade unionists, civil society activists and many more
- To belong to a vibrant and internally diverse community, where members stimulate one another, inspire each other in the scientific quests and also enjoy the time together!

FEPS is committed to promoting equal opportunities, fairness and diversity. We therefore strive to provide an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone feels respected and supported in fulfilling their potential.

While there are no quotas, we are determined to work towards ensuring that the FEPS YAN community is geographically and gender balanced.

What can you not expect?

Entering FEPS YAN is an opportunity, and as FEPS and Karl Renner Institut, we will cover the costs connected with the program, including the travel, accommodation and food during the FEPS YAN events (in accordance with the established rules that we apply for these). We cannot, however, pay any honoraria for the YAN participants, and we consider taking part in FEPS YAN as a voluntary membership in a community and not a remunerated post.

What is expected from you if selected?

As FEPS YAN is a prestigious programme, we have important traditions to uphold and a new successful chapter to build. So what we hope to expect from successful candidates is:

- commitment to the fulfilment of the goals for which FEPS YAN was established
- active participation in all FEPS YAN seminars (online and physical)
- conduct of a responsible member of the Network and of the respective working group, providing inputs and actively contributing to the final publication(s) within the agreed deadlines.

How do I apply?

The application should include three documents, each submitted as a separate document and coded as: FEPS-YAN10_Name_CV / FEPS-YAN10_Name_Motivation / FEPS-YAN10_Name_Research)

- (1) **CV**, focused on academic achievements and working experience
- (2) **Letter of motivation**, with an emphasis on the specific contribution you will bring to FEPS YAN
- (3) **Abstract of 600–800 words**, outlining the research interest that you would like to explore within FEPS YAN, including methodological and conceptual approaches, as well as an explanation why this is an important topic to you, to the academic world, as well as to politics/society.

The language used in the application process, and working language of FEPS (and FEPS YAN), is English.

Although the Call is open to a great variety of the topics, in accordance with the priorities shared by FEPS (in its drafting of the new Framework Activity Programme) and the Karl Renner Institut, we would like to suggest a focus on:

- The world and Europe in the transformative era – how to shape Digital Capitalism?
- The European Union at the crossroads – how to define a new developmental model for its internal and external policies?
- The European societies in transition – how to make them more cohesive, egalitarian and prosperous?

When do I submit my application and what is next?

The complete application (others will not be considered) shall be submitted to the attention of the FEPS YAN Steering Committee to Ms Elena Gil, FEPS Training and Project Coordinator (elena.gil@feps-europe.eu) by **28th June 2026**.

After the closing of the Call, the applications will be carefully evaluated, and for the pre-selected Candidates, there will be short online interviews scheduled with a panel of 3-5 members (representing FEPS and KRI).



Subsequently, the final list of the FEPS YAN 10th Jubilee cycle members will be composed with all the participants of the Call duly informed. We aim to admit 35 participants, observing principles of equality and fair representation.

First seminar will take place in Vienna from 10th to 12th September.

Importantly, the new applications have priority over returning applicants. And no exceptions will be made for the candidates who do not fulfil the academic criteria – so if you are a Master student and are interested, we would strongly encourage you to stay in touch and await the next cycle.

This activity is part of FEPS European Progressive Training Lab

