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| **Project: “Strengthening capacities and policy engagement of community service providers -** **IRIS PROGRESS”****Regional Social Academy : Human rights based approach in social service provision****Belgrade, 11-15 December 2023****Call for Applicants** |
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**IRIS** (Network of CSOs providers of social services) and **Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V.** are announcing the Call for participants of the Regional Social Academy, which will be held in Belgrade, Serbia from **11th to 15th December 2023.**

**THE FOCUS**

Academy offers participants a unique opportunity to benefit from a diversified training package, exploring human rights based approach (HRBA) in the region, linkages between HRBA and social service delivery, and instruments and mechanisms for protecting beneficiaries’ rights. Participants will attend 4 day tailor-made training consisted of different learning methodologies including lectures, workshops, discussions and field visit. The Academy program will enable further improvements and optimization to the needs, interests and constraints of the participants and their institutional and organizational environments.

Through a series of lectures and practical workshops students of the Academy will have a chance to learn:

* How to combine the HRBA with gender mainstreaming in the service provision/advocacy actions;
* Analyse the current human rights protection and service delivery and compare it with target group needs, identifying gaps, ensure lessons learned from the countries in the region and EU;
* Promotion of HRBA at all levels - strengthening the trust of vulnerable groups in civil/public sector and role of institutions in addressing obligations to protect, respect and fulfil human rights;
* Take part in drafting recommendations for the improvement current policy framework on human rights and discrimination;
* Become part of regional community of stakeholders around IRIS Network.

**ELIGIBILITY OF THE PARICIPANTS**

Ideal participant should:

* **Be mid-career professionals** (at least 3 years of engagement) from one of the following sectors: (i)Civil Society Organizations representatives active in protection and social service delivery, (ii) Think thanks, researcher and academics working on social and welfare issues, (iii)Government bodies, institutions and agencies involved in social protection,
* **Be at an inflection point**. Ready or expected to scale-up their projects, take up new challenges or positions or jump-start new ventures. Ideal candidate goals are aligned with IRIS network principles and he/she is willing to engage in promotion of the networks goals.
* **Be caring for the social good**. We want candidates focused not solely on their careers and personal success but rather people who see their success and positions as leverages to make contributions to society and to have a broader impact. Participants will be obliged to organise follow-up seminar/lectures take part in the Balkan caravan organized by IRIS Network.
* **Have leadership potential**. We look for talented people who also have passion and a track record of starting new initiatives and ventures, organizing and engaging people. Candidates must indicate in which field of service delivery they need additional learning/skills and the reason for that.

The Academy will be offered in English. **Excellent command and understanding of the English language is precondition to the application.**

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

In order to apply, **all applicants fill the Application form in English,** link to the form is <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSelJi5IGekrvisXwEjEh1yWZYzqmb5P-q0_2jQsuNLYKthS8w/viewform> . Based on Call criteria and submitted applications, in total 30 participants will be selected from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

**Deadline for application is 30th November 2023 at 12.00 (noon).**

Final participant list **will be announced on the IRIS Network web site no later than 5 days upon** the closing of the Call for Applicants.

Logistical information concerning the accommodation, transportation and other logistical issues will be subsequently delivered to the selected participants. All costs, except of per diems will be covered by the organizers.

**Detailed agenda will be shared with successful candidates**.

**FOLLOW UP**

Successful participants will obtain certificates, and enter **Academy Alumni**. **Upon the training each of the participants will be obliged to take part in Balkan caravan. This activity will be completed in framework of 10 months upon the completion of the education.**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

IRIS network connects more than 200 CSOs, providers of social services from Western Balkan region. Members of the IRIS network provide necessary social and health services to more than 10 000 beneficiaries each day. IRIS aims to strengthen the role of non-profit social service providers throughout SEE and to ensure that these organizations are recognized as equal partners by the public sector**.**

IRIS network was founded in 2012 and from the mere beginning it had a strong support from its partners in the European Union and in the Civil Society Facility program. Through its work IRIS network encourages a consensus among decision-makers, experts and civil society on the needs on effective coordination and use of available local resources and future EU funds earmarked for social inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

 In February 2023, IRIS Network commenced new initiative within the project “Strengthening capacities and policy engagement of community service providers - IRIS PROGRESS” that is focusing on protection of human rights and anti-discrimination policies of marginalized groups in WB region. Main objective of the project is to achieve participatory democracies in EU approximation process of WB countries by advancing regional cooperation and good neighborly relations.

Regional Social Academy is part of the regular IRIS programme activities, organized annually.

**CONTACTS**

For more information on the IRIS Network visit <http://iris-see.eu/>

**For additional questions contact iris@iris-see.eu.**

