



PROJECT PROPOSAL GYSCC

# GLOBAL YOUTH SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE



AmericaSpeaks is reinvigorating democracy by engaging citizens and policy-makers in deliberative processes for better decision-making.



## PROJECT PROPOSAL GYSCC

Global climate change is one of the most talked about problems facing the world. While opinions about the exact magnitude of the problem (global warming, rising of sea-levels, draughts, etc.) and the appropriate solutions vary, nowadays no-one denies that ages of pollution are affecting the global climate in ways that could be disastrous for all of its inhabitants. Most people agree that the window of opportunity to effectively deal with these consequences is rapidly closing and that the time to act is today, rather than tomorrow.

This proposal starts with a brief description of the current problem of climate change. Next, a critical part of the solution to the problem will be discussed (youth engagement). In order to give the youth influence in the decisions that shape the world they inherit, it is proposed to organize a Global Youth Summit on Climate Change (GYSCC). This, we believe, will help to form a new global youth movement about this issue. In the fourth paragraph the organizers of the GYSCC briefly introduce themselves. After this introduction follows a discussion of the expected outcomes and the implementation strategy for the project, concluded by a brief summary of the proposal.

### 1. PROBLEM STALLED GLOBAL CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS

Global climate change is now seen over the world as one of the most profound issues facing humanity. The global scientific community is encouraging leaders to take efforts now to stabilize atmospheric carbon dioxide to prevent a temperature increase over 2 degrees Celsius from the pre-industrial era. To do so, reductions aimed to cut Green House Gasses (GHG) emissions up to 80% by 2050 are to be initiated before 2015.

Past this point, abrupt climate change is unstoppable and will cause disastrous results: warmer air and oceans cause Antarctic and Greenland ice shelves to disintegrate, sea levels rise faster and higher than anything we can possibly handle, which would place the continuity of civilization in serious jeopardy.

To prevent this, humankind must shift attention from investing to increase global fossil fuel supply, to substituting these plans with a global program -- capitalized at the same level -- to cut emissions, improve efficiencies, and develop clean energy technologies within a decade.

This shift in attention will have to come from national leaders, most of all from the planet's wealthiest nations (i.e. the Group of 8) and the major developing countries (i.e. China, India, South Africa, Mexico, and Brazil), which are the main producers of GHG emissions.

Leaders of all nations are meeting this year to begin to develop the next global climate treaty and initial reports of their discussions show huge disagreement about the basic facts and about the preferred solutions, and a lack of support for the measures that the science community recommends.

There is no global authority that can require these countries to change their energy economies. They will all need to see it in their best interest to do so and so far they do not. The greatest resistance to do so has come from a handful of nations with large oil, coal, and gas deposits - primarily the U.S. and China. The growth of their economies has been largely reliant on these cheap sources of energy and they do not want to abandon these fuels for those that are cleaner, but more expensive.

For national leaders to make dramatic shifts toward leading this global change towards clean energy, there will need to be a change in their domestic social and political environments. They will need to be seen at home as well as abroad as responsible for the fate of the planet and their constituents will need a clear definition of how their country needs to change to fulfill this responsibility.

Because these countries' economies are interrelated, change agents will need to coordinate focused international action that is focused on limiting GHG emissions and keeps in mind the diverse interests that are at stake. This requires a change strategy which is well informed about the nature and complexity of the problem, and a focus on innovative, ambitious and realistic solutions.

Of all of the world's citizens affected by climate change, the ones that both most clearly articulates the moral challenge presented by climate change, and the ones most able to protest and take dramatic action, are the youth. Those at the negotiating table today will face the costs of action, but not the benefits - the youth of today and future generations will face both.

### 2. SOLUTION A GLOBAL YOUTH CLIMATE MOVEMENT

Youth should have a voice in the process. A little less than half of the world population (an estimated 3 billion people) is 24 years old or younger, yet their voice is often not heard in halls of power. They are more educated and globally connected than ever before. They are also working to make their voice heard on climate change. A sample of examples of these efforts includes: the online Climate Change Youth Café for Young Canadians ([www.iisd.org/youth/internetcafe](http://www.iisd.org/youth/internetcafe)), the YOUNG GREENS in the Czech Republic ([www.mladzeleni.cz/en/index.htm](http://www.mladzeleni.cz/en/index.htm)), Greenpeace Youth in Germany

## PROJECT PROPOSAL GYSCC

(jugend.greenpeace.de), the Climate Youth Network (www.climateyouthnetwork.org), the U. S. Energy Action Coalition (www.energyaction.net), and there are many others.

Their efforts need to be supported by bringing them together, training them on how to be active in the current international climate negotiations, building connections between them, creating clear goals for a global youth climate movement, and providing mechanisms for them to continue the conversation and take global collective action.

To accomplish this we need to create an opportunity for the motivated youth of this world to actually meet, and:

- Learn about the issue of climate change and the interests that revolve around it;
- Critically discuss possibilities to mitigate the impact of climate change, and to develop a set of goals and recommendations on how to implement them;
- Create and execute follow-up strategies that will stimulate an ongoing global youth dialogue, engage more youth globally and facilitate the development of a global youth movement.

The global climate debate would benefit both from this political activity and from the media attention youth engagement would bring to the moral issue of intergenerational equity.

### 3. PROPOSAL THE GLOBAL YOUTH SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Vision21, the Youth Cabinet & Global Voices propose to bring over a 1000 youth representing the world together to learn from each other's domestic efforts on climate change, give collective recommendations to the diplomats negotiating on behalf of their countries, and launch a coordinated global youth climate change campaign. This meeting will take place in October/November 2007, in the Netherlands.

The youth participating in this meeting will become skilled communicators on the global nature of the problem and the need for global coordinated action. By engaging youth from over 200 countries, climate change can become a shared organizing principle for all youth throughout the world's most powerful nations, including major developing nations such as China and India.

During and after the summit, the global youth climate change campaign will be supported by a viral marketing campaign and an extensive webbased support structure that will involve millions of youth around the world. This will be supported by Microsoft.

The international media attention generated from this meeting can help demonstrate both the potential for international success on climate change agreements and the higher purpose those agreements serve - the livelihoods of future generations.

### 4. ORGANIZERS VISION21, THE YOUTH CABINET & GLOBAL VOICES

Vision21, the Youth Cabinet and Global Voices have formed a partnership to organize this youth summit.

#### Vision21

- Vision21 is a Dutch Citizens initiative that strives to create breakthroughs by inspiring and connecting Dutch citizens.
- In order to do this, Vision21 created in 2006, through a participative process with 2500 people, a vision for the Netherlands in 2021.
- From 2007 to 2021 Vision21 strives to contribute to the audacious goals of the vision for the Netherlands by developing a large range of activities concerning youth, education, participation, happiness and the environment.
- One of the audacious goals of this vision is to use energy that is a 100% clean in the Netherlands by 2021.
- Inspired and supported by Vision21 the Dutch Youth Cabinet was formed consisting of 45 youth between 14 and 24 years old. The Youth Cabinet voices the opinion of youth about how their country should look like in the future. Research shows that their first priority is the climate.
- Recently the youth cabinet launched an educational programme to increase the level of youth participation in society.

#### Global Voices

- Global Voices is the international branch of *AmericaSpeaks*, an American non-profit organization that seeks to engage citizens in decisions that impact their everyday lives.
- Global Voices' model of deliberative democracy ensures that organizations and governments gain valuable input from citizens on issues such as budgeting, land use planning and policy development --input that leads to more transparency, accountability and better decision-making.
- In January 2005, the Global Voices methodology was used at the World Economic Forum in Davos, where more than 5,000 global leaders gathered to discuss the global agenda.

## PROJECT PROPOSAL GYSCC

- Global Voices organized and facilitated *Meeting of Minds: European Citizens' Deliberation on Brain Science* in June 2005. 125 participants representing nine European countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, and the UK) came together five times in Brussels, Belgium over a nine-month period to consider the policy implications for new-found knowledge about the brain.
- *AmericaSpeaks'* international brand Global Voices partnered with a UK firm, Opinion Leader Research, to organize and facilitate a 1,000-person national citizens' forum on health care in England, as part of an extensive citizen input process in October 2005.

### 5. OUTCOMES

The Global Youth Summit on Climate Change seeks to:

- Educate the participants on the issue of climate change, the ongoing negotiations and ways to influence them;
- Build relationships between youth from virtually every nation in the world grappling with climate change;
- Enable the participating youth to develop and recommend climate policy solutions to global policy leaders;
- Launch a global youth-led initiative on climate change;
- Raise awareness in the global media of the intergenerational moral issue behind climate change.

### 6. IMPLEMENTATION

In order to mobilize global youth and ensure that their voice is heard, the following three elements are essential:

1. Youth Recruitment and preparation through a specially designed learning program (global, Summer 2007)
2. Global Youth Summit on Climate Change (the Netherlands, October/November 2007)
3. Report and delegation to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - COP13 (Indonesia, December 2007)
4. Engage more youth worldwide by facilitating a viral dialogue and other follow-up strategies.

#### 1. Youth Recruitment

Potential youth participants will be recruited from existing youth, environmental, and governmental organizations. Efforts will be made to have a balance of youth from all nations. Recruitment will be conducted to ensure

gender, ethnic, and geographic diversity from within their nations as well.

#### 2. Global Youth Summit on Climate Change

In October/November 2007, some 1000 young people between 17 and 26 years of age, will come together for a 5 day meeting in the Netherlands. This location fits the theme of the GYSCC, as the Netherlands is amongst the countries that will be devastated by some of the most dramatic affects of climate change: rising sea levels and drastically changing weather conditions. This can therefore be seen as symbol of the urgency of action on climate change.

At the GYSCC, the 1000 youth will meet to learn about climate change treaty negotiations, to envision their collective future where energy sources will be a 100% clean, to make recommendations to global decision-makers, and to launch a global youth-led climate initiative of their choosing. A report documenting this vision and other outcomes of the meeting will be distributed to all of them before departing to their respective countries.

#### 3. Report and delegation to UNFCCC - COP13

The report from the GYSCC will be made available to the media through a globally broadcasted press conference. The report will also be distributed to the delegates at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties, December 3<sup>rd</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, 2007 (Indonesia).

#### 4. Viral dialogue and other follow-up strategies

In addition to this report, the youths will take home a kit designed to assist them in hosting meetings with 100 citizens in their home countries. This way, the discussion will continue to involve thousands of global citizens who will be invited to contribute to the global dialogue as well. Moreover, the participants at the summit will be asked to come up with their own ideas about effective follow-up strategies. Implementation of the most promising ideas will be supported by Vision21, the Youth Cabinet and Global Voices.

A delegation of youth, chosen at the Summit, will accompany the report to present their recommendations regarding climate change, thereby ensuring that global climate negotiators take their voice seriously.

## PROJECT PROPOSAL GYSCC

### 7. BUDGET\*

Issue Framing	110.732
Communication and PR	255.000
Summit	2.347.277
Report and follow up	520.000
Staffing	543.301
Total	3.776.311

\*All amounts are in Euros

### 8. CLOSING

Climate change is a global problem that affects us all, and every individual should have the opportunity to discuss solutions and influence policy. Considering that youth will inherit the world that is created today, their thoughts and opinions on the matter have to be heard. Because of the long term nature of the problem it is essential to engage the youth of this world to think about the problem, to set priorities and to act on them. Every effort should therefore be undertaken to inspire and mobilize the youth on the problem of climate change. The Global Youth Summit on Climate Change aims to do just that.

