



The AER Youth Ambassador Scheme

What? Who? How? When?

A Youth Ambassador...Who...Me?

Yes, you! Congratulations for being selected as an AER Youth Ambassador! All participants in the AER Youth Summer School 2007 have been nominated by their regions to be Youth Ambassadors. Now, this might sound like quite a big challenge, so this brochure will explain exactly what a Youth Ambassador is, what they do and how they do it...so you can get going!



To put it simply, a Youth Ambassador is a young person who is responsible for getting other young people in their region interested in co-operation between young people in the regions of Europe. The theme for 2007 is sustainable development.

Whichever region you come from, your role is the same: to inform other young people in your region about what can be done in your region and in Europe to promote sustainable development and also to help to explain to politicians – regional, national and European - what young people want them to do in relation to this important topic.

By the end of the year, each AER Ambassador (including you!) will organise an activity in his/her own region on the theme of sustainable development. The activities might be, for example, a project in your region to increase knowledge about the environment, information campaigns with your friends from other European regions about their ideas on sustainable development or joint campaigns with elected politicians on issues of interest to young people.

This means that there will be activities taking place all across Europe, which will show that young citizens take responsibility for the future of their region.

As a grand finale to all your activities, we will organise an event – perhaps in Brussels - called 'Meet the Policymakers'. This will give you the chance to present your activities and ideas to important decision-makers in the EU.

At this meeting, a jury will also look at all the projects and present a prize : "AER Youth Ambassador Project Award 2007". A prominent politician and decision-maker will award this prize to the winner.



Left : Participants of the AER Youth Summer School 2006 (Baia Mare, RO) - Above : Exeter Cathedral. Devon will host the AER Youth Summer School 2007



AER Youth Ambassadors

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Questions ?

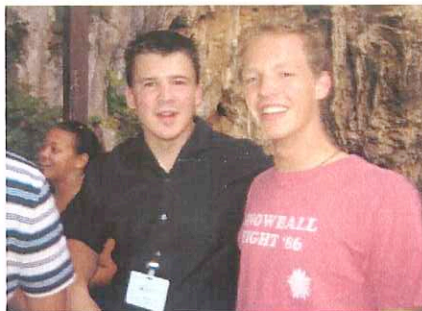
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We look forward to meeting you at the AER Youth Summer School 2007 in Devon!

How Will I Know What to Do...?

As an AER Youth Ambassador you will take part in the 2007 AER Youth Summer School in Devon, United Kingdom, from 26th August – 31st August. During the Youth Summer School, you will be provided with information on environment and sustainable development that will help to prepare you for your role as an AER Youth Ambassador.



Participants of the AER Youth Summer School 2005 (Mostar—BiH)

During the Youth Summer School, you will also receive training in useful skills, including project writing and the development of action plans. You will also get the opportunity to hear about what other young people have done in their

own regions. You will be advised on how to prepare and implement your project, and you will be able to discuss it with experts and politicians who can

help you to make sure that your plan is realistic and easy to implement.

By the end of the Youth Summer School, you will have prepared your own individual project, setting out the activities that you plan to organise in your region, deciding when they will take place, how you will advertise them and how you will find any money you need to fund them.

What Kind of Issues Should My Activity Address?

You can organise any kind of activity that you like, so long as it follows a few simple rules:

- (i) your activity should address the theme of sustainable development
- (ii) your activity should also involve other young people in your region, and if possible, young people in other European regions as well
- (iii) your activity should also involve politicians in your region, your country and/or European Institutions (or you should let these people know about the results of your activities)
- (iv) you will be responsible for finding the resources (money, equipment, venue, etc) that you need to organise your activity – your regional government might be able to give you some support



Assemblée des Régions d'Europe
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Assemblea delle Regioni d'Europa

same theme. However, remember that it is very important to be realistic about the cost of your project. Think about how you might be able to make use of the resources that are already available to you, such as your school or college hall. See whether your regional authority, which selected you to be a Youth Ambassador, can provide any help.

If you like, you can prepare an action plan together with other Youth Ambassadors from your region, or even with a Youth Ambassador from a different region. You can choose to organise just one activity (for instance, one newsletter, or one debate) or a series of activities on the

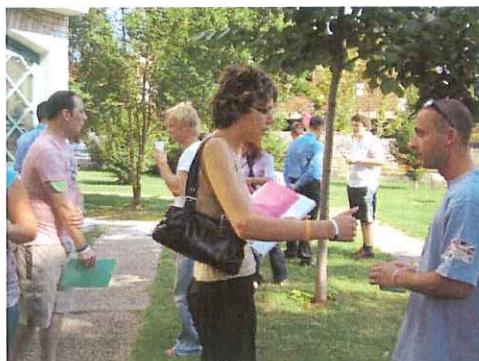
During the Youth Summer School the AER Youth Team members, already experienced in working on these topics, will help you as well and assist you with developing your project.

Can You Give me Some Examples of Possible Activities?

You can organise any type of activity you like, so long as it fits into the guidelines set out above. However, if you are stuck for an idea, here are some possible actions that you could consider.

Remember these are just intended as examples – see if you can come up with something better!

- Organise a debate.
- Organise an information campaign to inform other young people in your area about what they can do for the environment and sustainable development.
- Create a short film about what sustainable development means to young people.
- Hold an event in your Youth Parliament to discuss with politicians.
- Organise a study or a survey with Youth Ambassadors from other countries on an issue of common concern (e.g. eco-schools, sustainable transport for young people).
- Organise a quiz night about sustainable development.
- Organise your event on special dates with your friends in Europe (e.g. Youth Day).
- Organise a cross-border project with Youth Ambassadors from a neighbouring country.



Above : Participants in Mostar , BiH (2005)

Below : working session in Baia Mare, RO (2006)



AER Youth Team : President Anna Kajava and elected members

How Can I Prepare for My Role as a AER Youth Ambassador?



Before attending the Youth Summer School, you should already think of a topic that you would like to work on in your region. Don't worry if you don't know exactly what you want to do, you will have the chance to develop your plan properly during the Youth Summer School. The most important thing to decide before coming to the Youth Summer School is the broad topic of your activity.

In deciding what topic you would like to address, try to think about what interests young people in your region. What do they care about? What would they like to know more about? If you want your activity to be successful and to engage other young people in your region, it is important that you chose a topic that will really interest them.

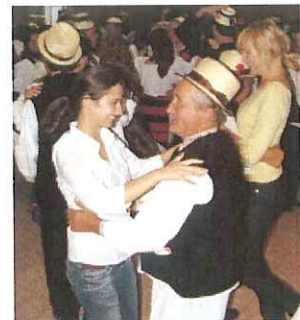
Before coming to the Youth Summer School, you should also arrange a meeting with the person in your regional authority who nominated you to participate in the event. It is important that you explain to them what you will be doing as a Youth Ambassador and that you ask them whether the region is able to give you any kind of support.

For example, they might be able to help you by giving you a meeting room to organise a debate, helping you to contact Members of the European Parliament or regional politicians, or perhaps they can print copies of your

newsletter or information material for you. Make sure you go to the meeting well prepared, so that you know where your region should help you.

You might also want to ask the regional representative whether they are prepared to pay for a flight and accommodation for the follow-up meeting for the "AER Youth Ambassador Project

Award 2007" (see below for more details).



What Happens After the Youth Summer School?



After the Youth Summer School, it is up to you to turn your ideas into reality. Probably the first thing you will want to do when you go back home is to

go and see the regional representative again who nominated you for the

Youth Summer School. You should show them your completed project plan and agree what the region can do to help you to implement it.

Then you need to do your planning, advertising and finally put your plan into action. Perhaps you want to think about how to publicise your event. Would local newspapers be interested in reporting it, for example? Remem-

ber that your region might have a press office that could help you with this.

Left and above : The AER Youth Summer Schools offer a great opportunity to mingle

The AER will set up a forum on its website for the Youth Ambassadors to exchange ideas and information about their activities. This will give you the opportunity to offer each other advice and share any problems you might be facing in organising your activity.

Once you have completed your activity, it is important that you let the AER know about the results. We will put all of the information (for example re-

ports, newspaper articles...) you send us onto the AER website. Remember to take photos of your event, so that we can include these too!



Devon flag

What is the 'AER Youth Ambassador Project Award 2007'?

At the end of 2007 or in early 2008 we will organise an event in Brussels that will give you the opportunity to tell important politicians face-to-face what young people think of the environment and sustainable development today.

All AER Youth Ambassadors are welcome to participate in this event. If you attend this event, you will have the opportunity to inform European organisations about your activity and about the views of young people in your region on sustainable development in Europe. The aim of this meeting will be to make sure that those people who make the decisions about what European organisations do on environmental issues understand and take into account the views of young people.

We will also use this opportunity to give the AER Youth Ambassador Project Award to the best projects, which will be selected by a jury.

On the same day as the 'AER Youth Ambassador Project Award 2007', we will organise a debriefing session, at which you will have the opportunity to provide the AER with feedback on the Youth Ambassador scheme and to tell us what worked well and what did not. Even if you cannot attend this event, we will ask you to provide us with your opinions by email so that you also have the opportunity to contribute.

Remember, if you want to attend the 'AER Youth Ambassador Project Award 2007', you will probably need to ask your regional authority to pay for your trip and for your accommodation for one night in a youth hostel. Don't leave this until the last minute!



The EU Parliament dominates the Brussels Skyline

What is the AER Youth Team - and how can I join it?

The AER Youth Team is a unique structure to involve young people in the work of an international organisation. The AER Youth Team members have the opportunity to give input to the AER's work, to make contributions and to make the voice of young people heard among the European regions.

Every year at the Youth Summer School, all the AER Youth Ambassadors elect the AER Youth Team for the coming two years. These elected Youth Team members then become the representatives on youth issues in the AER and meet regularly in Europe to coordinate their activities.

All AER Youth Ambassadors attending the 2007 Youth Summer School are eligible to stand for election to the Youth Team. However, you must have the support of your regional authority, who will be responsible for covering the costs of your participation in the Youth Team. This is why you should already discuss this with your region before you travel to Devon.

If you want to know more about the Youth Team, please have a look at the following website :

<http://www.a-e-r.org/home/menu-icomes/youth/test.html>

What Do I do if I Have Any Questions?

If there is anything you don't understand, or would like some more information about, just contact:



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The Assembly of European Regions/AER is the political organisation of Regions in Europe and their spokesman at European and international level.

Its goal is to defend the Regions' interests in the political process and develop interregional cooperation.

AER brings together more than 250 Regions from 32 European countries, both members and non-members of the EU, and 14 interregional organisations.