March – July 2026

Virtual fellowship program

Building people power for social and environmental justice

1. Learn how to build real people power
2. Turn your values into concrete action with expert support
3. Join a powerful international community for long-term impact

For activists from

Albania

Bulgaria

Hungary

Romania

Slovakia

Alumni Network

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Intro

The GLC Alumni Network is launching an international virtual fellowship program focused on **active citizenship and building community power** for social and environmental justice for **up to 15 grassroots leaders** from **Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia**. The program is focused on cross-continental learning, practice and reflection on community organizing **between Central and Eastern Europe, and the US.**

The fellowship is **fully virtual** and includes **online training sessions, praxis groups and pairing with a US community organization and a mentor** based on needs and interests, for **an overall of 25 hours**. It also gives you access to an alumni network of 450+ civil society professionals, activists and organizers from Central and Eastern Europe and the US.

Important dates

Jan 20th 2026
Launch of application

Feb 5th 2026, 16:00 CET
Info session, Q&A (Recording)

Feb 20th 2026, 23:59 CET
Deadline for applications (Apply)

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Profile of participants

- Currently located or actively working in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania or Slovakia
- Fluent in English: reading, listening, speaking and writing
- Currently engaged in a civil society organization, informal group/collective or civic movement, progressive political party or movement
- Reliable access to internet
- Dedicated to social and environmental justice, including commitment to non-discrimination and equality
- Passionate about citizen democracy and people's power and interested in addressing unjust power structures through concrete grassroots actions

Particularly encouraged to apply:

- Applicants belonging to and/or working with minority communities, including but not limited to ethnic and religious minorities, LGBTIQ+ people, migrants, people with disabilities, living in underserved and/or rural neighbourhoods, cities, areas
- Members or leaders in trade unions, tenants associations, neighbourhood associations or other collectives defending rights

Program elements

Element	Timing	Description
Application and recruitment	January–February 2026	Info session, online application form, interviews with applicants (if deemed necessary)
Online training sessions	March–May 2026	5 sessions of 1.5 hours (late afternoon/evening), covering basic concepts of community organizing with European and US speakers and trainers
Praxis groups	March–June 2026	4 sessions of 1.5 hours (late afternoon/evening) for sharing about local context and reflection on how to use community organizing in practice; accountability for progress toward the group.
Internship and mentoring	June–July 2026	Individual work with mentor and taking part in virtual activities in community organizations in the US (expected 8 hours)
Presenting final pitches and campaign ideas	First half of July 2026	Final event to present results of the process and pitch campaign ideas or other plans for building community power
Integration in GLC Alumni Network	Unlimited	Engagement with peer activists and organizers in national alumni groups and international alumni community through virtual channels, offline events, complimentary projects, etc.

Calendar

Training sessions,
Tuesdays, 16-17.30 CET

Praxis sessions,
Thursdays, 16-17.30 CET

Training sessions, Tuesdays, 16-17.30 CET		Praxis sessions, Thursdays, 16-17.30 CET
	05.03	Introductions
Community organising 101	**10.03**	
Building a base Outreach, membership, listening	**31.03**	
	16.04	Our communities
The art of building relationships	**21.04**	
		Mentorship and internship
Community issues	**12.05**	
	28.05	Recap from the feild: issues
Campaign planning	**09.06**	
	25.06	Reflections from internships
	16.07	Graduation ceremony

What will you get

This virtual fellowship will be beneficial for you **if you are interested to work directly with communities on grass-roots level and are interested in confronting unjust power structures**. In this case the internship can give you:

- Knowledge of concepts and processes in building and sustaining people power
- Conceptual idea of social intervention, based on empowering people to challenge unjust power structures
- Practical tools to organize people and money
- Practical tools to build and sustain relationships, growing a base, empowering leaders, mapping power, designing and winning campaigns
- Forming part of a community of inspiration, practice and accountability
- Building relationships with people across countries and borders
- Expanding networking potential with people and organisations in Central and Eastern Europe and the US
- Guidance and support to design a concrete plan or a campaign with your local community
- Civic, professional and career growth
- Hope.

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Financial aspects

Participation in the program is free!

The program is made possible due to the volunteer commitment and the financial contribution of members and friends of the GLC Alumni Network. We run annual fundraising campaigns to secure funding for our activities and as a member of the community you will be invited and encouraged to contribute with a donation of your choice, usually at the end of each year. Participation in these fundraising campaigns is optional.

About community organising

Emerging from labor and civil rights struggles, community organizing's foundational idea is to empower marginalized groups by building collective power to challenge systemic inequities. Early models emphasized mobilizing local residents to address issues like housing discrimination, workers' rights, and racial injustice. Over time, the practice evolved into a structured methodology to create lasting social change. Community organizing has played a pivotal role in landmark social movements, from the Civil Rights Movement in the US to contemporary campaigns for environmental justice and immigrant rights. Its strength lies in transforming individual grievances into collective action. By fostering solidarity and strategic pressure, organizing strives to shift power dynamics, making citizens active participants in decision-making and policy-making.

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About the organizers

The fellowship is organized by the GLC Alumni Network: an informal network of people and organizations working to advance democracy, social and environmental justice. The network was formed around the Grates Lakes Consortiums Professional Fellows Program, which was operational between 2012 and 2025. The network currently relies on small funding from its own community members and individual donors. It is operated through a flexible institutional structure, with fiscal sponsorship in the US by World Affairs Council of Northwest Ohio, and in Europe through CO-PLAN in Albania, Pro European Network Association (PEN) in Bulgaria, Civil College Foundation (CCF) in Hungary, CeRe in Romania, Center for Community Organizing (CKO) in Slovakia.
See more on https://glc-teachdemocracy2.org/.

Contact information

For any questions, please reach out to the program coordinator Vladislav Petkov at v.petkov@proeuropean.net.
Join the Info session and ask your questions live on February 5th, 16:00.
Check recording here.

Apply before Feb 20th

The application form can be accessed here.

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