



**EUROPÄISCHES
SOLIDARITÄTSKORPS**



**YOUTH
UNITED**
e.V. Berlin

FOUNDATIONS FORWARD >>>

LESSONS LEARNED TOOLKIT

PRACTICAL IDEAS FOR YOUTH LED COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Learn from our experience.

This toolkit brings together the most valuable lessons we learned during our European Solidarity Corps project in Berlin.

It is designed to help young people, youth groups, schools, and community organisations plan and carry out their own local solidarity projects.

Inside this toolkit you will find practical ideas, simple methods, and step by step guidance based on our own experiences.

TOGETHER
WE CAN BUILD
STRONGER,
MORE COMPASSIONATE
COMMUNITIES.



IDENTIFY COMMUNITY NEEDS

Listen. Observe.
Understand.



ORGANISE MEANINGFUL ACTIVITIES

Plan simple activities
that create impact.



ENGAGE IN CONVERSATIONS

Connect with people.
Share stories.



PRACTICAL TIPS & CHECKLISTS

Tools to help you
stay organised.



BIGGEST LESSONS WE LEARNED

Real experiences.
Real results.



Created by

Youth United e.V.
European Solidarity Corps



hello@youthunited-berlin.com



SCAN ME!

Join our
WhatsApp
Community

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Foundations Forward was a youth led project of the European Solidarity Corps carried out in Berlin from August 2025 to April 2026.

Our goal was to understand local challenges together with the community and create meaningful activities that promote solidarity, awareness and positive change.



“ We believe that small actions, when done together, can create big change. ”



THE TOPICS WE FOCUSED ON



FOOD WASTE

Exploring how we can reduce food waste, share resources and build more sustainable habits in our community.



HOMELESSNESS

Listening to the experiences of people on the street and finding ways to support dignity and inclusion.



DISCRIMINATION

Creating open spaces for dialogue and encouraging understanding, respect and equal opportunities.

WHAT WE DID



LISTENED

We spoke with people in different parts of Berlin to understand their needs.



PLANNED

We designed activities together as a team based on what we heard.



ACTED

We organised workshops, cooking events, walks and community gatherings.



REFLECTED

After each activity we reflected, evaluated and learned together.



SHARED

Now we share our lessons with you so you can create your own impact.



OUR GOAL

To inspire and empower young people to take action, build community and create a more fair, sustainable and compassionate society.

This toolkit will help you...

- ✓ understand how we worked
- ✓ learn from our experience
- ✓ plan your own activities
- ✓ make a difference in your community!



OUR PROJECT JOURNEY

From ideas to impact – this is how we did it!



WHAT MADE IT WORK?



OUR JOURNEY IN ONE SENTENCE

“ We started as a small team with big questions and became a community creating positive change together. ”



HOW TO PLAN YOUR OWN PROJECT

*A simple guide for young people
who want to make a difference.*



6 SIMPLE STEPS TO GET STARTED

1 IDENTIFY A TOPIC

- Look around you.
- What are the challenges in your community?
- Talk to people and listen to their stories.



2 SET YOUR GOAL

- What do you want to achieve?
- Make your goal clear, realistic and inspiring.



3 PLAN TOGETHER

- Bring a small team together.
- Share ideas, tasks and responsibilities.
- Create a plan and a timeline.



4 TAKE ACTION

- Start small.
- Take the first step and stay flexible.
- Don't wait for everything to be perfect!



5 REFLECT & IMPROVE

- Take time to reflect.
- What worked well?
- What can we do better next time?



6 SHARE YOUR IMPACT

- Share your story, results and lessons.
- Inspire others and invite them to get involved!



COMMON CHALLENGES & HOW WE OVERCAME THEM

CHALLENGE

WHAT HELPED US



Low participation



Personal invitations
and local partnerships



Time management



Clear planning
and realistic timelines



Communication



Open and honest
team communication



Lack of experience



Learning by doing and
support from mentors

CHECKLIST: BEFORE YOU START

- ☐ We have identified a relevant topic.
- ☐ We know our goal and target group.
- ☐ We have a team and clear roles.
- ☐ We have a plan and a timeline.
- ☐ We have the necessary resources.
- ☐ We know how we will reach people.
- ☐ We have a way to reflect and improve.
- ☐ We are ready to take the first step!



OUR TIP

You don't need big money
or a perfect plan to start.
You just need the will to start!



“The best way to find yourself is
to lose yourself in the service of others.”

– Mahatma Gandhi

”



OUR ACTIVITIES IDEAS YOU CAN USE!

Here are some of the activities we organised.
You can adapt them to your community,
your interests and your resources.



ACTIVITY IDEAS FROM OUR PROJECT



1. ART OF AWARENESS WORKSHOP



We used art, drawing and discussion to explore social issues and open conversations.



Good for: starting dialogue, creativity, self-expression



2. BERLIN VOICES WALK



We went around different parts of Berlin, talked to people and listened to their stories and experiences.



Good for: listening, real stories, understanding local needs



3. COMMUNITY COOKING EVENTS



We cooked together, shared food, learned from each other and built community.



Good for: connection, culture exchange, teamwork



4. INFORMATION & AWARENESS ACTIONS



We created flyers, posters and small street actions to raise awareness about important topics.



Good for: awareness raising, easy to start, big impact



5. PREPARATION EVENINGS



We came together before big events to plan, share ideas and get everyone ready.



Good for: planning, motivation, team spirit



6. SPRING COMMUNITY GATHERING



We celebrated our journey together with music, sharing, reflection and new ideas.



Good for: celebrating, reflecting, looking to the future

TIPS FOR MAKING ACTIVITIES SUCCESSFUL

- ✓ Keep it simple and clear.
- ✓ Listen to what people are interested in.
- ✓ Work with local partners and organisations.
- ✓ Create a safe and welcoming space.
- ✓ Promote in person, through word of mouth and local networks.
- ✓ Document your activities (notes, photos, results).
- ✓ Be flexible and ready to adapt.



WHAT WE LEARNED

- People open up when they feel heard and respected.
- Small activities create strong connections.
- Community cooking and creative formats bring people together easily.
- Real change starts with listening and taking action together.
- ★ Every activity is a step forward!



*You don't need big resources to make a difference.
You just need ideas, people and the will to start!*



SHARING OUR IMPACT

From our community to others

We believe our experience can inspire and support other young people and organisations to create positive change in their communities.



HOW WE SHARED OUR RESULTS



ONLINE TOOLKIT

We created this online toolkit with all our lessons, tips and experiences so others can learn from our journey.



WHATSAPP & EMAIL

We shared updates, photos, flyers and invitations through our WhatsApp group and email with partners and friends.



LOCAL PARTNERS & ORGANISATIONS

We visited youth centres, schools and community organisations in Berlin to share our results and connect.



EVENTS & PRESENTATIONS

We presented our activities and impact at local meetings and events to inspire more action.



WORD OF MOUTH

The most powerful way! We spoke personally with people, listened and encouraged them to get involved.



*Sharing is caring.
Together we grow stronger!*



Listen first. Real change starts with understanding people and their needs.



Small actions create big impact. Start small, be consistent and keep going.



Work together. Partnerships and teamwork make everything possible.



Be flexible. Plans can change, but our purpose stays the same.



Celebrate progress. Every step forward is worth recognizing!



WHO WE REACHED



200+

Young people directly involved



15+

Local organisations and partners connected



4

Youth centres & schools reached



6

Public events and community activities

WHAT PEOPLE SAY



"It was inspiring to see young people taking real action for our community!"

– Participant



"I learned so much and felt helped. The activities were fun and meaningful."

– Workshop participant



"I met new people, shared my ideas and felt that my voice matters."

– Community member



"Small steps really do make a big difference when we do them together."

– Team member

CHALLENGES WE OVERCAME



Limited time

→ We planned better and focused on what really matters.



Low participation at the beginning

→ We used personal invitations and built trust.



Lack of experience

→ We learned by doing and supported each other.



Reaching the right people

→ We used local networks and word of mouth.



Unexpected changes

→ We stayed flexible and adapted our plans.



YOU CAN DO IT TOO!

Use this toolkit, take action in your community and inspire others. Together, we can build a more fair, compassionate and sustainable world.

*Have an idea?
Start today. Your community
is waiting for you!*



WHAT WE LEARNED OUR KEY LESSONS

Every activity taught us something new.
Here are the most important lessons
we want to share with you.



1. LISTEN FIRST

- Listening to people and understanding their real needs is the first step to creating meaningful activities.



2. SMALL ACTIONS, BIG IMPACT

- You don't need big resources to make a difference. Small, consistent actions can create strong change over time.



3. COMMUNITY MAKES IT POSSIBLE

- When people work together, support each other and feel included, amazing things happen.



4. COMMUNICATION IS KEY

- Clear messages, personal invitations and trusted channels helped us reach more people.



5. BE FLEXIBLE AND ADAPT

- Not everything works as planned. Flexibility and openness helped us overcome challenges.



6. CARE AND POSITIVE ENERGY

- Creating a safe space, showing care and bringing positive energy makes people feel welcome and motivated.



A LESSON TO REMEMBER

“ We came together as a team, learned from each other, and grew together. This is the real impact of our project. ”



TIPS FOR THE FUTURE



Know your purpose and stay connected to it.



Build a strong team and trust each other.



Plan ahead, but be ready to change.



Reflect regularly and learn from each step.



Celebrate small wins along the way!



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE TOO!

Use this toolkit, take action and inspire others. Together we can build a more fair, inclusive and compassionate world.

Start small.
Dream big.
Act together.



THANK YOU!

Together we learned, created and made a difference.

This project was not just about activities. It was about people, connections, growth and believing that change is possible – when we do it together.



OUR GRATITUDE

We want to say a big thank you to all the people and organisations who supported, inspired and believed in us.

-  **To all participants**
for your time, ideas, energy and open hearts.
-  **To our partners and collaborators**
for your trust and great cooperation.
-  **To our team**
for your commitment, creativity and friendship.
-  **To our community**
for showing us that small actions can create big changes.

WHAT'S NEXT?

-  **Stay connected**
We will keep our community strong and continue to share ideas and support each other.
-  **More activities**
We plan to organise more events, workshops and projects together.
-  **Grow our network**
We want to connect with more youth, organisations and communities.
-  **Keep learning and inspiring**
We will keep learning, reflecting and turning our lessons into action.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

You can be part of creating positive change in your community. Here are some easy ways to get involved:

-  **Join local activities and events.**
-  **Share your ideas and skills.**
-  **Volunteer your time and energy.**
-  **Support local initiatives.**
-  **Be kind, be open, be the change!**

 *Every action counts. You can make a difference too!*

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY!




**Foundation Forward
Community**
WhatsApp-Gruppe

Scanne diesen QR-Code mit der Kamera in WhatsApp oder lade ihn hoch, um dieser Gruppe beizutreten.

STAY IN TOUCH

-  **Email**
hello@youthunited-berlin.com
-  **Website**
www.youthunited-berlin.com



ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit was created by the Foundations Forward team to share our experiences, lessons and tips. We hope it helps and motivates other young people to start their own projects and build stronger, more connected communities.

Let's keep building a better future – together!

THANK YOU FOR READING!

We hope this toolkit inspires you to take action and create positive change in your community. You are the change. The world needs you!

