

Frequently Asked Questions

- How was SHL established and how does the Foundation work?

1992, a group of students from Bad Kreuznach transported relief supplies in private cars to refugee camps along the war-torn Croatian coast. Today, SHL is the largest high school student organization in Germany, which operates various projects in the countries of the Western Balkans. Non-profit, politically and religiously neutral, the Foundation operates under a volunteer Council and a volunteer Board of Trustees, which consists of personalities from politics and civil society. The offices of the Foundation SHL are located in Berlin and Sarajevo.

- What are the goals of SHL?

SHL is committed to equal educational opportunities, peaceful coexistence, poverty reduction and human rights, especially for young people in the countries of the Western Balkans. The Foundation is dedicated to the idea, that especially children and young people have the right to grow up carefree regardless of their origin, nationality, culture, religion, sexual orientation and other forms of social discrimination. They should not suffer from war, its consequences or from other disadvantages.

- Where does the money come from for the projects of SHL?

The key instrument of SHL is the annual Social Day, on which more than 100,000 high school students work one day and donate their earnings to SHL. Prior to that, delegates of the participating schools during the Project Selection Conference determine in a democratic election process, which new project will be funded with the means of the Social Day.

- What is the funding philosophy of SHL?

SHL understands each project funding as a partnership and expects an honest, open and transparent approach regarding the project activities. Each project will be managed continuously and intensively. This includes not only administrative aspects, but rather an intense assistance of the project team in carrying out the activities. This includes regular visits by the Foundation and a frequent exchange about project progress via email and telephone. Together with the project partner SHL strives to define specific development goals and to tailor possible solutions to them.

- How to apply for project funding?

Once a year, a Call for Proposals is published prior to the Social Day for non-profit organizations from the Western Balkan countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. (Current Call for Proposals at www.callforproposals.de). Furthermore, SHL Sarajevo offers a small project funding programme called Fond za omladinske projekte (FOP) (more information at www.shl.ba).

- What should be considered when applying?

A good presentation of the project idea is very important in the application because it is the only way for the selection committee to understand the project design. When completing the application form, make sure you portray your idea as precisely as possible and you focus on the main aspects. Too long and incomprehensible statements complicate the assessment of an application.

With regard to the content, it is important to ensure that the project, particularly the objectives, actions and expected results are clearly formulated, consistent and realistic. The application should demonstrate that the applicant organization has enough experience and expertise to implement the project.

Make sure that a successful implementation of the project activities within the funding period of two years is realistic.

- How does the ideal project partner for SHL look like?

There is no ideal candidate for SHL. However, we are particularly interested in organizations in which young people play a major role in the project design and implementation.

A funding by SHL means entering into a project partnership, in which both parties show commitment for the realization of the project goal. The Foundation SHL remains open and willing to learn and is only as good as its partners.

- What projects will be funded?

In principle, any project idea that supports children and young people in their personal, social and legal development can be funded. This can be e.g. youth centers with cultural and vocational offerings, projects for the empowerment of minorities and other disadvantaged groups, programmes to fight youth unemployment or to support social engagement of young people.

The project can either be the continuation of established activities, or a new idea.

Currently funded projects at <http://www.schueler-helfen-leben.de/de/home/stiftung.html>

- What types of organizations are eligible?

Non-profit organizations can apply for funding. There are no restrictions regarding the nature and profile of the organization. However, an organization applying for funding must have worked professionally for several years and must be able to demonstrate this with documents such as statutes, vision / mission and strategy, financial statements, etc. Experience with similar projects and networking with local partners is an advantage when applying.

- How many projects are funded through a tender process?

Each year, one or two new projects are selected for funding. It is determined following 2 preselection rounds and a final selection by a jury of high school students. Following this decision the Social Day is organized, on which German high school students work for the new funding and current project activities.

- Which costs can be requested?

Within the project all sorts of costs may be requested. The costs should always be comprehensive and appropriate. The budget will be specified in the Call for Proposals. Own resources and third party funding are desirable, but not a requirement.

We usually cover the payment of staff-members on the level of average local NGO wages.

- Is a repeated application possible?

In principle it is possible to re-apply, despite an earlier refusal. However, in case of repeated denials the applicant should consider whether a new application is reasonable and preliminary contact the Foundation SHL. It will be decided jointly whether a new application makes sense or not.

- Is it possible to continue the support after the initial funding?

The continuation of the support of funded projects is not possible. All project activities must be completed within the funding period of two years.

- What are the steps of the selection process and who is in the selection committee of SHL?

The selection process is divided into three phases. Upon submission of all application, a 1st pre-selection of all project proposals takes place. About 10-15 candidates will receive invitations to submit a long application.

Upon receipt of the long applications the 2nd pre-selection will be organized. As a result about 4-8 projects will be informed about their final selection. The selection committee which is involved in the first two phases is comprised of employees of the Foundation, members of the Council, current volunteers and possibly external experts. This committee is annually composed.

The 3rd stage in the selection process concludes the decision on the final project. This decision is democratically reached by a jury of high school students during the Project Selection Conference. The available funding stems from the Social Day.

- Which information of the applicants is made available to the selection committee?

For the 1st pre-selection, the committee receives all short applications, which are formally valid and have been submitted within the deadline. For the 2nd pre-selection, the committee receives all submitted long applications. This includes a detailed description of the project idea and a budget. Other documents, such as the applicant's articles of association, partnership agreements, etc. will be assessed only by the Foundation.

- What information do the applicants receive during the selection process?

After the application deadline, each applicant will get a confirmation of receipt via email. All other notifications after the 2nd pre-selections will also be sent by email. The dates of the pre-selections will be announced with the Call for Proposals.