

05
July
2024

beeEFB Buzz

Dear members of the beeEFB community,

We are happy to inform you that the past few months were very active in our network. The 3rd edition of the beeEffect Programme was launched with a completely new programme team and slightly changed programme structure, but still deeply rooted in networks ability to attract its members to engage in sharing their knowledge and experience. In June we provided an opportunity for alumni to gather at a national meet up and at the beginning of July we will open a call for Joint Initiatives, which proved to be an efficient tool of bringing alumni together. We are also proud to present to you the two new board members that will steer the activities within the network in the upcoming period.

Trees of Friendship – Call for joint action!



This year our regional “Trees of Friendship” planting action is celebrating its 5th jubilee! We would like to invite you to join and help us to make it even better.

Besides our already well-established network of local partners, we would like to invite you as members of the beeEFB Network to get involved. You can engage either by joining the existing spots, by planting your own trees and including more people and organisations, or by adding your towns to the map of cities.

Some of you have already reached out to us and showed interest to provide local support. This would concretely mean that you organise the Trees of friendship by contacting different stakeholders, businesses and local authorities which may contribute to increasing the number of planted trees. With the inclusion of beeEFB we might make the Trees of friendship map even more dense. The “Trees of Friendship” planting takes place around November/December (exact date to be defined).

This is also the time when cities of our region are leading the global lists of most polluted cities in the world and the awareness that every tree can counterbalance at least a bit is there. Our aim stays constant - to repeatedly demonstrate that by taking individual responsibility, it is possible to make a difference at local and regional level. By recognising the seriousness of air pollution, decision makers might finally start protecting their citizens.

Planting a tree may be a symbolic gesture, but it shows that simple acts of care for the environment can make a change in the long run. Over the years our Trees of Friendship initiative grew into an authentic citizens' action and is already recognised as an amazing example of regional collaboration and joint efforts to raise awareness about air pollution as a direct cause for many diseases, health problems and thousands of premature deaths.

The concrete coordination of planting is starting from September 😊 Feel free to take the lead and get back to us with your ideas for potential local partnerships and additional sponsors. We all await your feedback, but primarily please address our Katarina at: katarina.tadic@balkanfund.org.



THE BEE
EFFECT
PROGRAMME
2024

The Third Cohort (2024 edition) of the beeEffect Programme

We are pleased to share the launch of the **third cohort of the alumni flagship program, the BeeEffect**. The open call for participants was published in June 2024 and we were delighted to receive over 120 applications, demonstrating the growing interest as well as need for such an activity in our region.

The BeeEffect Programme is designed to bring together and enable cross-learning from two distinct target groups:

- **Participants** - young professionals, impulse providers, and action takers in their own communities
- **beeEFB alumni** - senior and mid-career professionals coming from different sectors (government, business, development, academia, nonprofit), with diverse backgrounds and fields of expertise

The overarching theme of the programme is focused on the 'emerging future and looks to examine how positive impact in communities can be created, shaped, and supported in the most pressing issues of today and tomorrow, by looking at them through three distinct lenses of power, society and digital/tech.

The programme aims to:

- Enhance community building between its alumna and future members
- Support contribution to the development of future leaders in Western Balkans and increase their impact potential and- Shift power to the people, organizations, and institutions that are driving change in their own countries and communities.

Please stay tuned for the announcement of the selected candidates for this year and for the upcoming call for Mentors directed to you as Alumni members!



Call for proposals 2024

Joint Initiatives

(July – November 2024)

Background

beeEFB EFB Alumni Network brings together members of the EFB programs and initiatives to connect the network members with common interests but different backgrounds and to foster cross-sectoral exchange and regional collaborations. beeEFB Development Strategy 2021 – 2024 focuses on strengthening ties between existing members and enabling them to create a positive impact together, by convening them or providing resources for them to collaborate. One of the key ways for members to collaborate in joint initiatives and beeEFB is committed to opening at least one Call for proposals annually for this purpose. The call for 2024 is published in the 2nd quarter, to allow more time for initiatives to develop with implementation throughout the year. The deadline for implementation of joint initiatives is until November 2024, with final reporting by December 15th, 2024.

Main objective

The objective of the Call is to contribute to a stronger, more connected, and more productive beeEFB, motivating more members to engage together and act on issues that matter to them and using those collaborations to create a positive impact in their fields of interest, the wider community and on a regional level. Joint initiatives aim at supporting cross-country/ cross-sector / cross-program activities organized by members for members (and open to external audiences).

This year, as a novelty, the EFB Alumni Board has decided to incorporate the main ideas discussed by the alumni during the Codesign Sessions at the annual event. This integration does not necessitate that the initiatives focus solely on these ideas, but it signifies a commitment to translate the insights shared during the annual event in Podgorica into actionable steps. It also offers an excellent opportunity for alumni who were not present at the event to collaborate with attendees, building upon several initiatives as well as their own ideas and initiatives.

Some of the ideas shared at the annual event include:

Collaboration and Partnership Development

- Initiate collaborations with external partners and industries to enhance future opportunities within the beeEFB Alumni Network. Focus on establishing ties with renowned organizations in the Balkans to amplify reach and engagement.
- Partner with diverse sectors for co-organizing thematic events, engaging in strategic public relations, and utilizing alumni expertise for targeted collaborations. This includes hosting events with themes like mobility, green initiatives, and democratization.

Digital Strategy and Engagement

- Boost digital interactions by leveraging existing partnerships, enhancing online presence, and creating impactful content. Emphasize the use of digital platforms for broader communication and to maintain connection with the alumni community, particularly when transitioning from in-person to online formats.

Training and Capacity Building

- Provide tailored trainings and workshops aimed at community cohesion and professional development. Topics might include emotional intelligence, cultural diplomacy, etc.
- Advocate for structured, topic-based, and intergenerational workshops to sustain engagement and motivation, including team-building exercises and high-level policy dialogues.

Mentorship and Knowledge Transfer

- Establish a structured platform for facilitating mentorship relationships within the alumni network. Utilize this to enable the transfer of knowledge and skills from experienced alumni to newer members or those seeking to advance in specific fields.

Event Organization and Sector-Specific Initiatives

- Host and co-host sector-specific events, ensuring relevance and impact by selecting alumni with expertise in each area.
- Conduct exercises to map potential partners and organize targeted public relations campaigns to showcase the community's value and boost engagement.
- Encourage co-hosts from the private sector to contribute to event-related expenses, allowing for larger and more frequent initiatives.

Eligibility

Joint initiatives support network members who want to engage other members from another city, country, region, or sector of work, thus fostering connections.

The initiative team must involve at least two (2) beeEFB members coming together to work on a joint initiative. Please note that none of the Board members are eligible to apply for joint initiatives to prevent a conflict of interest.

Project activities must target and involve at least ten (10) beeEFB members. beeEFB's Maximum budget for a proposal is **up to 7 500 EUR**.

The following criteria will be used in the evaluation of received project ideas:

- The initiative aligns with the vision, mission, and values of the beeEFB 2021-2024 Development Strategy, as well as the EFB Strategy;
- Incorporating one of the ideas discussed during the annual event in Podgorica would be considered an advantage.
- The initiative foresees encounters (online and/or offline) between members to build relationships, enhance capacities, and/or share knowledge;
- The initiative aims to create a positive impact in a chosen field - thematic or skills-oriented. The regional perspective is considered a plus.
- The initiative takes place between July 2024 and November 2024;
- The initiative is non-profit and non-partisan
- The members of the initiative are registered on the Bosch Alumni Platform

Submitting an application

An application must contain all relevant information showing that the applicant(s) and the proposed activities are eligible. All applications must be in the English language. To apply, you must ensure that as the receiver of the funds, you or your team members should have a registered CSO /legal entity.

Please use the attached application form when submitting your application.

The applications should be sent to efbalumni@gmail.com no later than 26 July 2024, with the following subject: Application for Joint Initiative 2024: Name of the initiative

The application form can be downloaded [here](#).

Selection process

All applications received by the deadline will be evaluated by a selection committee composed of the beeEFB Board of Directors and EFB representatives. Applications will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria listed below.

The results of the selection process will first be communicated to the successful applicants. The Selection Committee will provide a written response to all applicants who aren't awarded a grant, with a brief explanation and a short period to resolve any complaints or grievances before finalizing the results. Once the results are determined, the list of awarded initiatives will be disseminated through beeEFB communication channels.

Evaluation criteria for submitted proposals:

- aligned with general eligibility criteria
 - relevant to the Network's work, and the scope of work is realistic
 - creates new value and a positive impact on the region
 - potential for initiative to reflect the ideas shared during the annual event.
 - the members of the initiative registered on the Bosch Alumni Platform
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National Meet-Ups

The beeEFB Board has announced a call for national and regional meet-ups to be organized during the summer season. This year introduces a new approach, with the meet-ups coordinated by national representatives. In June 2024, the beeEFB Alumni Board received two expressions of interest from national coordinators in Kosovo and Podgorica, namely **Drilon Shala** and **Bojana Laković**.

Unfortunately, the planned meet-up in Podgorica was canceled due to low participation levels. Despite this, the alumni showed a strong commitment to connect, although it was ultimately not possible due to their busy schedules and other commitments.

Conversely, the Kosovo meet-up was successfully organized in the last week of June, with 10 alumni from Kosovo participating. During this gathering, alumni discussed their individual engagements in network initiatives, the last annual event, and explored potential collaborations!



Looking forward, the next call for national and regional meet-ups is scheduled for the latter half of the year. This initiative aims to continue fostering connections and collaborations among alumni, enhancing their impact within and beyond the network.

Meet the new Board members

Being a member of the beeEFB Board that serves to our community, made of more than 500 members, is not only a responsibility and dedication, but also an opportunity to meet, collaborate and eventually become a friend with people from the region of wider Balkans.

Firstly, we would like to express our truly gratitude to our former Board members: **Rudina Nallbani Hoxha**, **Hatidža Jahić** and **Ivan Jovetić**. Their professionalism, dedication, commitment and supportive friendship always provided solutions even to the most challenging issues and have shaped the achievements of the Board's work.

We are happy to present you two new Board members **Sinem Bağçe** and **Sofjan Jaupaj** that will together with current Board members Armela Maxhelaku, Konstantina Karydi, Meg Kalthi Karaj and Armin Šepić steer the Board and our alumni network in next months.



Sinem Bağçe

She is a recent alumni who just completed the beeEffect Programme this year. She is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics at Yeditepe University, Istanbul. She has previously been a Visiting Researcher at the University of Helsinki. Her academic interests focus on policies for inclusive economic development. Her professional career includes roles in the development and management of large-scale EU projects, collaborating with a variety of international institutions. She would like to contribute to the EFB Alumni Network by sharing her expertise and actively engaging in collaborative projects.



Sofjan Jaupaj

EFB Alumni since 2013 (LDP – SEE & EU 2012-2013, 7th Edition). He graduated in Law in 2013 from Tirana Law Faculty and he pursued LLM and specific studies in Intellectual Property Law in Italy, Switzerland, and US. Sofjan has held various high positions in the public sector in Albania in the last 10 years such as Chief of Staff of the Chief-Negotiator for EU Integration of Albania, Director of Integration and High Coordinator for EU priority legal norms at Prime Minister Office and Ministry of Culture and currently for the last 3 years he is General Director at the Ministry of Tourism and Environment. From 2021 he is

the Albanian National Designated Authority for Green Climate Fund and Global Environmental Facility. Sofjan has held several national and international conferences with reference to the updating legislation on culture, tourism, the environment and EU Acquis. He used to be a professor of customs and arbitration law 2019-2021. Mr. Jaupaj working languages are Albanian, English, and Italian.

For your ideas, questions, comments - email us at efbalumni@gmail.com.

May the hive Bee with you