Training for Youth Workers

STORY TELLING & ADVOCACY FOR PEACE

PEACE POWER



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 12-19 2026
NETHERLANDS

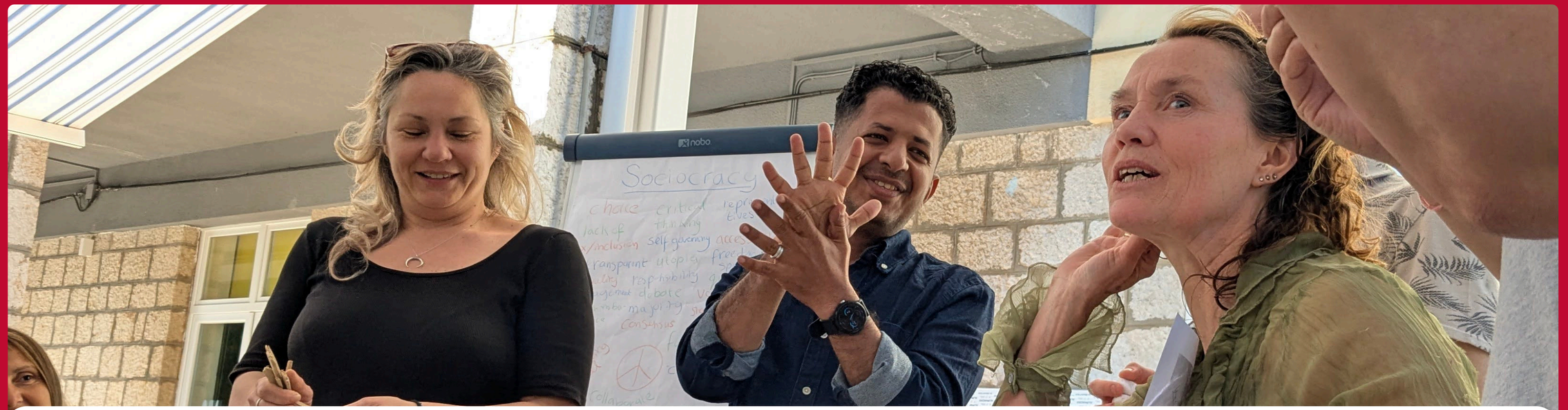
INFO PACK

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Across Europe and beyond, young people are growing up in a world increasingly shaped by war narratives, ecological breakdown, shrinking democratic space, and social fragmentation. News are dominated by fear, hostility, and a growing sense of inevitability of violence and collapse. Questioning such narratives is the first step to change reality.

We invite 20 courageous youth workers from The Netherlands, Italy, Spain and Turkey, to join us in the important quest to design and facilitate impactful stories that inspire young people to actively contribute to peace, so it becomes a practice, a choice, and a collective responsibility. Something that is active, courageous, and urgent in these times of crises.





THE NEED FOR PEACE NARRATIVES

Stories can normalize war or open up space for peace.
For youth workers, storytelling is a powerful tool for advocacy: it can humanize abstract issues, amplify marginalized voices, inspire empathy, and catalyse social change.

In times of increasing militarisation, social fragmentation, shrinking democratic space and climate chaos, resulting in feelings of fear and overwhelm, this training will give the tools to youth workers to let young people explore their agency and create peace-oriented narratives.

THE AIM OF THIS TRAINING

... is to empower youth workers with storytelling and advocacy skills that enable them to inspire, mobilize, and support young people to engage in peacebuilding and social change.



THE OBJECTIVES

... are that by the end of the training, participating youth workers will:

01 Be able to counter narratives contributing to division, fear, and a sense of powerlessness with stories, inspired by real-life examples, that encourage understanding and compassion and give a sense of agency and hope.

02 Learn the basic elements of designing an impactful story for social change, and develop skills to **craft peace-oriented narratives** that resonate with young people.

03 Gain practical methods to **facilitate storytelling processes** that promote peace with young people, across different cultures and national contexts. And improve their ability to use story-telling as an advocacy tool for peace, justice, and nonviolence.

04 Exchange best practices in story-telling and advocacy and strengthen each other's youth work by sharing and exploring future cooperation.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

The training will include quite some (improv) theater and role-play, as well as creative group work to craft stories. The program (still subject to some changes) looks like this:

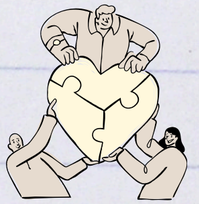
Day 1: Crossing the Threshold

1. Hopes & fears
2. Shared values
3. Peace Narratives



Day 2: Learning to Wage Peace

1. Conflict Styles
2. Nonviolent Communication
3. Nonviolent Action





Day 3: Step Into the Story

1. Hero's journey for peace
2. A Peaceful Future by force?
3. Peace Advocacy



Day 4:Metamorphosis

1. From victim to creator
2. Social Change Roles
3. The Allies



Day 5: Story Alchemy

1. Creating a Story Canvas
2. Practicing and performing the stories

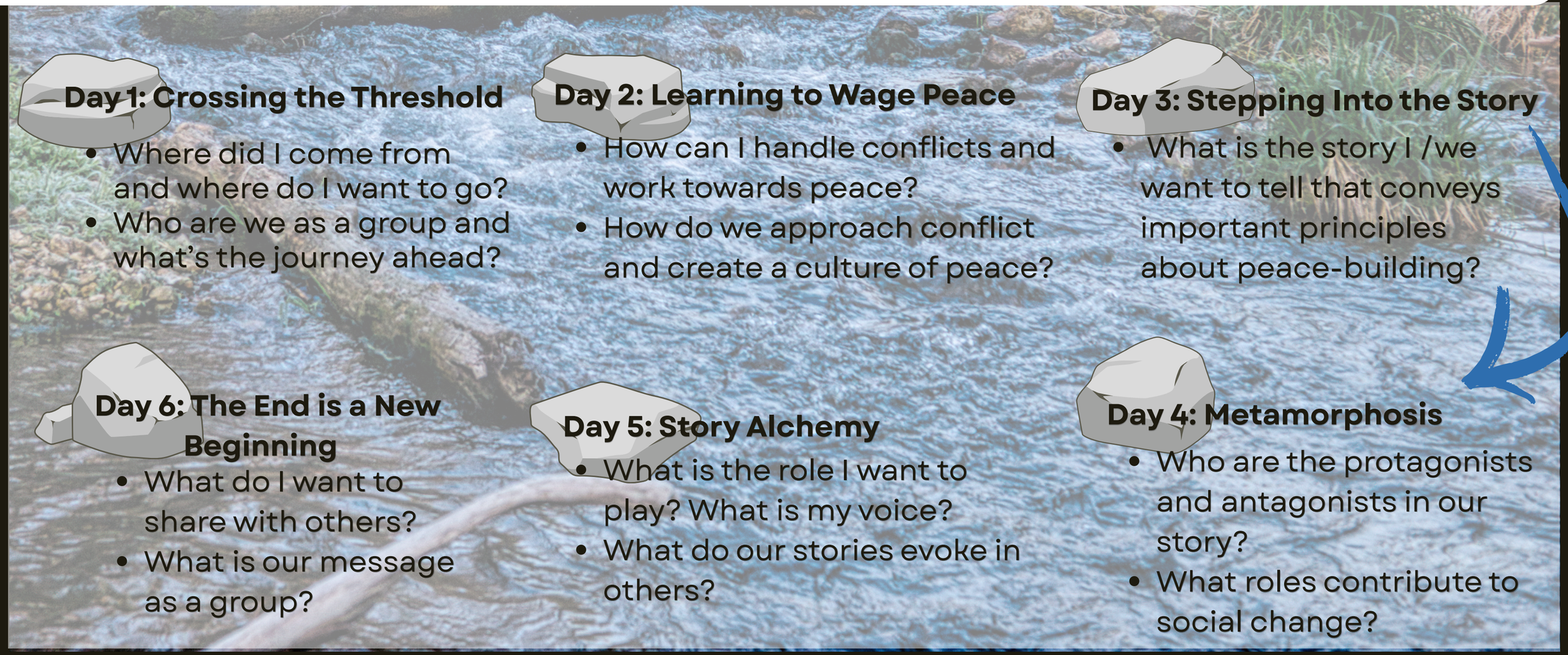


Day 6: The End is a New Beginning

1. Try this at home
2. Sharing with wider audience
3. Evaluation & closure.

THE PROGRAM'S STEPPING STONES

Below you can read a personal and group question that we will answer during the different days.



Day 1: Crossing the Threshold

- Where did I come from and where do I want to go?
- Who are we as a group and what's the journey ahead?

Day 2: Learning to Wage Peace

- How can I handle conflicts and work towards peace?
- How do we approach conflict and create a culture of peace?

Day 3: Stepping Into the Story

- What is the story I /we want to tell that conveys important principles about peace-building?

Day 4: Metamorphosis

- Who are the protagonists and antagonists in our story?
- What roles contribute to social change?

Day 5: Story Alchemy

- What is the role I want to play? What is my voice?
- What do our stories evoke in others?

Day 6: The End is a New Beginning

- What do I want to share with others?
- What is our message as a group?

BEFORE THE TRAINING

- Participate in a webinar
- Prepare for best practices sharing
- Fill out a skills self-assessment
- Arrange your travel & insurance





After the training there is a “peace week” in The Netherlands, with many peace related activities.





AFTER THE TRAINING

- Offer a workshop session to youth inspired by the topics, methodologies, and theories covered by the training program
- Share your new knowledge and skills with colleagues & online
- Report back to the trainers during a webinar or in written form

OUTCOMES

Theatrical, story-telling & advocacy skills

Youth workers learn role-play and improvisation exercises, nonviolent communication, and how to develop and designing stories that inspire (social) action. which can be directly applied with youth.



Empathy, inter-cultural under-standing & respect

Youth workers learn to question narratives contributing to division, fear and powerlessness. And to create stories rooted in 'active hope' and real life examples.



Imagine futures beyond war & collapse

Youth workers gain skills that engage youth in meaning-making and ethical & social responsibility, inviting youth to actively shape changes they want to see.




PEACE
POWER
Do you dare to cross the treshold?

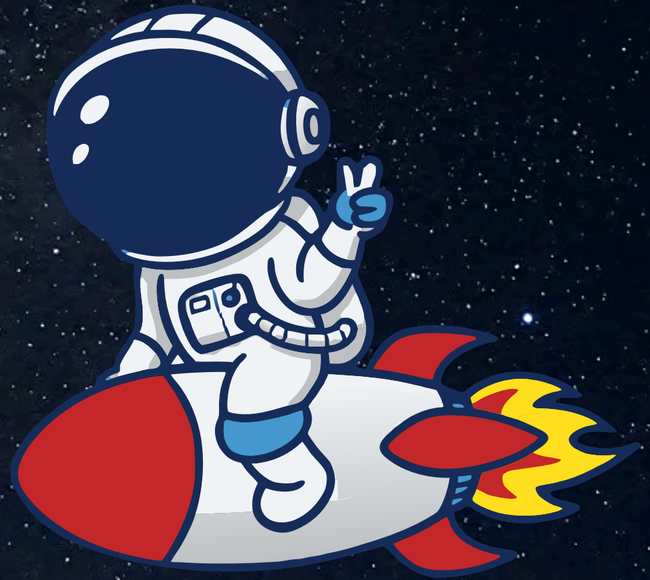
LOGISTICS













We are proposing some guidelines to you that will support us as a group:

- **Participation and presence:**
  - We strive to be on time for the workshop sessions, to make the most of our time together and ensuring there is enough time for learning.
  - To fully participate, we turn mobile phones, computers and other devices off and leave them in our bag or in our bedroom during the training sessions and reflection groups, unless there is a serious reason that requires access to the phone or internet (if this applies to you, please let the trainers know about it).
  - We agree not to use any mind altering substances which may affect our presence like alcohol, marihuana or psychedelics during or between the workshop sessions.
- **Confidentiality**: Any personal stories or experiences shared during the course will not be shared with others giving any personal details. Personal stories of others shared in smaller groups are only shared with the rest with permission, talking about how it impacted you.
- **Respecting differences**: We strive to appreciate and honor our differences. We will do our best to be sensitive to the use of power based on race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, money, or class. We hold everyone's needs as equally important.
- **Conflict Management**: We attempt to follow the suggestions set-out in the Conflict Management document that's sent out.
- **Caring for shared space**: We take responsibility for contributing to a space that is enjoyable to work and live in. We don't leave any personal items in the workshop room during lunch break and after the last session. We help setting-up and clearing up breakfast in the morning.

ACCOMMODATION



Meppel's Inn is a former youth hostel with two separate parts, of which we rent one. The rooms are for 3,4 or 6 people and there are five bathrooms. There is a dining room, with bar, and workshop room. The staff will make lunch and dinner for us. Our breakfast we organise ourselves. A good way to create community. You can visit their website for more information.

Meppel is a town with a train station, so it's easy to reach the accommodation. A 7 minutes walk from the station. In about 1h and 40 to 50 minutes you're there from Schiphol airport.
From Eindhoven airport it's longer: about 3.5 hours
The address is: Leonard Springerlaan 14, Meppel



Please keep in mind that the 12th is the arrival date and you can arrive after 14:00. Check-out on the 19th is at 10:00.

If you want, you can travel three days earlier or later. If you travel from another location, please contact Nina at contact.peacepower@gmail.com.

EXPENSES AND REIMBURSEMENT

This program receives financing from Erasmus+ which covers your accommodation and food. To join the training and reserve your place, please pay the **participation fee of 45 euros**. If we still did not receive this from you three weeks before the start, we will contact people on the waiting list.

Travel costs to and from your home to the venue (and no additional detours!) are reimbursed, up to the following maxima:

- Italy and Spain: €**309**
- Turkey: €**395** (+ visa€ 90)
- Netherlands: €28 for <100 km or €211 for more
  For Green travel (bus, train, carpooling) the rates are €56 and €285.

The travel expenses are reimbursed after the training course, based on your receipts. International bank transfers or currency transfers are to be paid by/on the costs of the participants.



Please transfer your participation fee to:
Stichting voor Actieve Geweldloosheid
IBAN: NL41 TRIO 0320 6350 31
Triodos Bank, Zeist, Netherlands.
BIC/SWIFT: TRIONL2U

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Please deliver the reimbursement file as follows:

- Scan all your receipts
- Make a word file and write your name, bank account and the total amount of your travel
- Put all the receipts (and boardingpasses) in the file and create a PDF
- Name the document: Travel reimbursement *your name*.
- For Green Travel: In case you car-pool, please indicate the km from your place of departure to the accommodation and your petrol consumption. You keep the receipts of the petrol station, but we calculate the amount based on the kilometers. At the training you sign a Green travel declaration. (Green Travel also includes traveling by bus or train).



TRAINERS



Nina Koevoets has been a trainer in peacebuilding and nonviolence since 2015. She's the author of *The Peace Compass* (2024), a children's book (2023), and co-author of a *Study Guide on nonviolence* (2019). She has a bachelor in psychology (major) and anthropology (minor) and two master degrees: Conflict Resolution and Governance and Global Studies.

Her training in conflict resolution is extensive, including a 10 week long training programme in Nonviolence in the USA, several Erasmus+ projects about this topic, one that she co-organised during an internships at the United Network of Young Peacebuilders. She did other internships at Save the Children (Netherlands, 2007), Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy (Israel-Palestine, 2009), and a European Voluntary Service in Israel- Palestine with the Holy Land Trust (2010-11), and in India at the Center for Conflict Resolution and Human Security (2010). Nina has been a workshop facilitator for Oikos, a Dutch NGO that informed people about development aid issues, and Critical Mass, working with creative ways to discuss conflict, identity and related topics. A few additional courses she has done are: Training for Trainers, Theater of the Oppressed training for facilitators, Dialogue for Peaceful Change training, several Nonviolent Communication trainings (short+long term) and several Work that Reconnects workshops. She was born in The Netherlands and lives in Greece with her husband and daughter.



TRAINERS

Maike Koolhaas Maike Koolhaas is a theatre maker, storyteller, trainer and facilitator working at the intersection of theatre, dialogue and social change. She studied Dramatherapy and later continued training in Theatre of the Oppressed, Playback Theatre, Voice Dialogue and Storytelling.
For over 16 years she was connected to Critical Mass, a Dutch organisation that develops experiences, installations and workshops to discuss complex social issues, as a trainer, theatre maker, facilitator, actor and co-creator of educational and artistic projects around social justice, diversity, exclusion, polarisation and dialogue. She led a theater group with people who experienced homelessness and psychiatry, witnessing how sharing stories can transform pain into recognition, agency and collective imagination. Alongside this work, she created installations, performances and participatory experiences that invite people into conversation and embodied reflection.
Today, Maike combines storytelling, theatre, dialogue and seasonal rituals in her work. She creates intimate performances and immersive gatherings, often together with musicians and cooks, exploring themes such as nature, cyclical living, human connection and collective creativity. In all her work, she is guided by the belief that everyone carries knowledge and that stories can help us remember our shared humanity, widen our sense of possibility and reconnect us to each other.

ORGANISATIONS

NETHERLANDS

The Foundation for Active Nonviolence (Stichting voor Actieve Geweldloosheid - SVAG) was founded in 1966, with the purpose to contribute to nonviolence in all its forms. The organisation focuses on peace education and has two pillars: creating and translating educational materials and training. Training courses were on pause from the mid-nineties and re-started by Nina in 2015. Hence two names and two websites: information about the international training courses ore here: **peace-power.org**, everything else is on the Dutch website geweldlozekracht.nl

ITALY

Coconut Italia's overall objective is to give young people (18-30) the opportunity to engage in their personal development, by supporting their active participation. It works with youth and community organisations to help provide quality training and learning opportunities for young people. The organisaton's work is in Liguria, Italy, the EU and the Euro-Mediterranean area, as intercultural learning is one of the core values on which the work of Coconut Italia is based. 'Coconut Italia' is an NGO, part of the pan-European network 'Coconutwork'.

SPAIN

Deixant Empremta was founded in 2019 with the mission of promoting rural areas through storytelling, entrepreneurship, and peace education. Since then, we have been involved in both local and international initiatives aimed at creating better opportunities, increasing the visibility of rural communities, and fostering a culture of non-violence among young people. Non-formal education is the main pillar of our organisation.

TURKEY

AHENK Collective is an informal group founded by five young women. The group provides meaningful learning opportunities for young people, particularly from disadvantaged and underrepresented communities. "AHENK" means harmony in Turkish and reflects a focus on social justice and global citizenship and fostering development through collaboration, diversity, and mutual understanding. Using participatory workshop, and storytelling approaches, AHENK aims to strengthen active citizenship, and intercultural awareness.

Become a Peace Warrior

