



Youth4Entrepreneurship Gozo – 2022

Joseph Borg

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Honourable Minister, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us today. Let me conclude by saying a big thanks to our partners on this initiative Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, Bank of Valletta, and the Gozo Regional Development Authority. Their support was instrumental for the success of today's event. I would also like to thank the members of our evaluation panel: Mark Scicluna Bartoli, Matthew Caruana, Simon Schembri, and Mario Borg. They surely had a difficult task today! Let me also thank the staff at the Chamber: Jesmond, Joanne and Jan Luca for their support throughout, and for being patient with me in going through all the details.

This year we continued to develop this initiative. We decided to launch it earlier in May, and Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ did three sessions starting in Summer whereby interested youth were supported all along the way. A heartfelt thanks goes to Jennifer Cauchi, who throughout this process apart from the very well prepared sessions, also taught me an important lesson, and that is the need to be patient with youth! Sometimes when we reach adult age we tend to forget our past experience.

When as an organisation we decided to be further inclusive of youth, as we believe that they are the present and future of our society and economy, we also embarked on a learning process. We are happy to partner with organisations who enrich our learning experience. And I am happy to say that after this fourth edition, I sincerely believe that this is bearing fruit.

As indicated by the President of the Gozo Business Chamber in his initial address, it could not have come at a more eventful moment. As the COP27 is taking place in Egypt discussing ways we could mitigate the effects of climate change, this contest has provided a platform where our youth could propose important solutions.

Youth around the world have led many grassroots movements and groundbreaking initiatives. And they have played an increasingly prominent role in calling for action to address climate change. However, they are often faced with complex barriers in their work and activism, and have **very rarely been invited into the conversations of policy makers.**

The [Glasgow Climate Pact](#), agreed at COP26 in 2021 to give a more prominent role to youth. To this end it urged *“Parties and stakeholders to ensure meaningful youth participation and representation in multilateral, national and local decision-making processes, including under the Convention and the Paris Agreement”*. This year for the first time, **young people will be given their rightful place to contribute to the discussions at COP 27.** And I sincerely believe that their voice will be heard.

On a National level I was please to read in the National Strategy for the Environment 2050 consultation document that:

Children and youths will be given particular attention to ensure that their active involvement is sought to inform decisions and their voice is heard for the benefit of future generations.¹

Youth are our present, and future. I sincerely hope that this initiative has contributed in a small measure to engage them further. Thanks!

¹ National Strategy for the Environment 2050: A Draft for Public Consultation (p. 114)