

Motivation Letter for the Candidacy by Ilija Jerković – Treasurer

Dear LYMEC community,

I am entering this process mindful that we at PSG Mladi are a young organisation who recently joined the liberal family, but also confident that **the time to act is now**, with a drive to use the best space and contribute around topics where I believe my background, strong motivation and clear vision would be of service to the organisation. On a personal level, I bring **a decade of experience** in youth engagement activities, political and civic education, as well as project management in civil society. More relevantly, I have worked professionally as a **fundraiser** at an entirely third-party funded foundation and managed financial reporting of projects with grants of up to 500.000 EUR, including our EU operating grant. I ask for your support to be LYMEC Treasurer with a sense of **responsibility** for the structure that is in constant need of work and dedication in pursuit of financial stability. Furthermore, I am driven to collaboratively set strategic priorities, with **ambition** to find ways to fund them and build alliances with organisations who share our values or wish to support our positive social impact.

Four pillars guide my vision for the role and portfolio development. My determination to achieve that vision - in cooperation with other Bureau members - and shape LYMEC's future, is the **key source of my motivation** to serve the liberal network for two full years in this role.

Strategy is essential in financial management. We can only conduct successful fundraising storytelling, pitching and framing projects if we know where we are headed and what specific activities, tasks, products and stakeholders fit in that direction. Goals:

- Through a proposed **Plan of Action**, establish a **shared understanding** between the new Bureau and Secretariat about a set of activities that would be **LYMEC priority** for the mandate and ensure they are framed in concept notes when seeking new funding;
- Identify topics where the **likelihood of funding is higher** and map out potential new and adapted activity opportunities that should be pitched, in line with LYMEC needs;
- Develop **LYMEC Fundraising Strategy document** by the end of 2026 which outlines both **programmatic focuses** and scope of work, as well as important **internal know-how** and tips and tricks (difference between grants, sponsorships and donations, multiannual goals for income diversification, etc...)

Sustainability builds upon the understanding of how valuable the stable and solid existing structure is and awareness that big shifts (even if positive, such as a large new funding) require capacities to administer grants, projects and processes, especially financially. Last

years of the LYMEC financial management have offered good quality control and stable reporting allowing for key activities to run smoothly. Therefore, for me three key objectives here would be focused on:

- **anticipating** well and **planning** accordingly - mostly in light of a deteriorating state of public funding and philanthropy for civil society;
- **strengthening** existing **partnerships** and investing in **good stakeholder-management** of key funders that are essential for LYMEC;
- seeking **operational funding**, **multiannual** funding or other types of financial income that reduce the administrative burden of management and on staff level.

Growth outlines innovative actions for LYMEC finances as complementary to the overarching stability, but focused on a set of specific goals I would set with defined KPIs and budgetary lines where there is room for development and improvement. Still, those should never come at the expense of the stable and solid structure established around key LYMEC events and sound financial management of previous years.

- **Grants** focused on political excellence, anti-radicalisation and democratic participation (with cross-partisan focus and opportunity to cooperate with other groups) should be explored both through relationship-building and with a database of eligible funding and clear pursuit of a limited number of opportunities with a good match;
- **Corporate fundraising** is one point where I would first reassess our goal and ambition, perhaps decrease the estimated income slightly, but then push it as a goal to achieve that and hopefully surpass already within 2026. I would involve a small hackathon session at one of the Bureau meetings where a database for key stakeholders to engage would serve as a starting point;
- I would like to evaluate the success and setup of the anniversary fundraising campaign once it concludes towards the end of the year and propose an **issue-driven crowdfunding campaign** for 2027, aligned with the intersection of the LYMEC priority for the year and societal developments and needs.
- Finally, one of my key plans for 2026 is developing a short **two-year growth plan** outlining both our ambition to increase the LYMEC budget in a sustainable and grounded way, but also clearly calculating associated administrative costs and development of the staff needed for any of these scenarios.

Community is a high priority for me, both in a sense of opportunity **leveraging the large LYMEC network** for fundraising and partnership purposes, but also as a need to offer **capacity-building**. Finally, but most importantly, as a key responsibility of the portfolio, my priority will remain providing **reassurance and transparency to the LYMEC Congress** and follow clear statutory procedures, also in cooperation with the auditors, that financial management of the organisation is responsible and prudent.

- **Transparency of the workload** behind the treasurer role sometimes remains in the background of the more forward-driven and visible activities and efforts, which is in large part how it should be, but a few direct opportunities for engagement and conversations about trends and best practices could add value across network and demystify the role, making it even more accessible and attractive for future elections.
- **Mapping out** bigger (e.g. 30.000 EUR+) **cooperations of MOs** and respective foundations, corporations, donors and other stakeholders (besides the mother party, that financial relationship is unique in our setting and deserves a separate platform and discussion)
- **Quarterly Fundraising All Hands Meetings** for IOs and/or respective finances and fundraising responsible to attend upon their interest would be organised from Q3 2026 in effort to have an open space for discussion, collaborative brainstorming and dropping opportunities from bottoms-up. Please note that this would not be a space for elaborate budgetary discussions as official relevant documentation and reports will be reserved for statutory meetings in order to ensure both wide access, formality for such an important topic and abide by our internal regulation.

Finally, I wish to end this the way I started - throughout these and many more tasks, I will be primarily steered by a sense of **responsibility** and **respect** for the thousands of young people that will be engaged with LYMEC in those two years and, most importantly, Member Organisations' representatives who deserve transparency, space for constructive scrutiny of our budget and high level of effort. With this in mind, attitudes (which I believe are almost as important as knowledge and skills) I would prioritise as LYMEC Treasurer are: **ethical approach** to financial management and work generally, **responsiveness and availability** for MOs and secretariat on matters of financial transactions and reporting, and **target-orientation with common sense** when collaborative with other Bureau members. Treating each other with decency, professionalism and kindness is what volunteering settings with young people deserve and it is on the leadership to set the tone and lead by example.

If you made it to the end, I genuinely appreciate it! Thank you for your attention, I look forward to many curious questions, useful input and great exchange. Bis bald in Wien!