

Financing Youth Innovations for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth"

A Side Event at the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development (FFD) and Fourth Session of the Preparatory Committee for FFD4

Date: Tuesday, April 29, 2025

Time: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM (EST / New York Time)

Venue: 40 Wall St., New York, NY 10005

Organized by: Green Mentoring and Solutions Private Limited

Participation Link : <https://forms.gle/iEFv8DHYqHzivTKm6>

Event Overview

This official side event explores innovative financing mechanisms and inclusive models that enable youth to lead sustainable development initiatives across sectors.

Aligned with the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4), the session will focus on mobilizing cross-sectoral support through public-private partnerships, blended finance, and targeted policy reform to accelerate youth-led solutions that promote inclusive growth, decent work, and climate action.

Background and Rationale

In an era of escalating global challenges—climate change, economic inequality, youth unemployment—young people are stepping up as leaders and solution-creators.

Their innovative mindset and entrepreneurial spirit are critical to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet, a significant financing gap persists that limits the scaling of youth-led innovations.

This session responds to that gap by convening stakeholders from across sectors to explore how we can build financing systems that are inclusive, responsive, and accountable to youth.

It also aims to align with the broader objectives of the ECOSOC FFD Forum and FFD4 by focusing on strategies that unlock capital for youth entrepreneurship, green jobs, and equitable growth.

Guiding Questions

1. What innovative financing models can support youth-led solutions for sustainable development and inclusive economic growth?

2. How can public-private partnerships and development finance institutions more effectively invest in youth entrepreneurship?
3. What are the most pressing financing barriers for youth-led projects, and how can they be addressed through policy and practice?
4. How can youth from marginalized communities gain greater access to capital, networks, and mentorship to scale their impact?
5. What role can youth themselves play in reshaping financing systems for future generations?

PROPOSED AGENDA

11:30 AM – 11:35 AM | Opening Remarks

Dr. Virendra Rawat, Founder & Director, Green Mentors

Welcoming participants and setting the stage for youth-centered financing solutions within the FFD4 framework.

11:35 AM – 11:45 AM | Keynote Address

Topic: *Reimagining Financing for Future Generations: A Youth-Inclusive Approach to the FFD Agenda*

Speaker: Navroop K. Sahdev, CEO, The Digital Economist

11:45 AM – 12:15 PM | High-Level Panel Discussion

Sub-Theme: *Building Resilient Youth-Centered Economies: Financing Mechanisms for the SDGs*

Sub-Topics Include:

- **Innovative Financing Tools for Youth Ventures:** Exploring green bonds, blended finance, digital finance, and climate funds.
- **Public-Private Partnerships for Youth Empowerment:** Strengthening collaboration with governments, DFIs, and the private sector.
- **Financing Skills for the Future:** Supporting sustainable education, green jobs, and the digital economy.
- **Youth-Led Solutions to Close the Finance Gap:** Grassroots perspectives and scalable success models.

Moderator: Radhika Iyengar, Ph.D, Director of Education, Center for Sustainable Development, The Earth Institute, Columbia University

Panelists

1. Usha Mohan, The Green School Bangalore India
2. Shiv Nadar School , Faridabad, India
3. Ambriel, Pouncy, Social Innovator, New York
4. Krishna Tiwari, CEO, Green Mentors

12:15 PM – 12:40 PM | Youth Innovation Spotlight: Voices from the Field

Rapid-fire insights from youth leaders on:

- Overcoming capital and technical access barriers
- Proven (and failed) financing models
- The finance–education–climate innovation nexus
- Youth perspectives on the FFD4 agenda

Moderator: Aashtha Goswami, Youth Leader, Green Mentors

Featured Participants:

- Steven Pait Seeds of Change Youth delegate San Francisco
- Nivedita Pant , Student ,David Tvidiani Medical University , Tbilisi Georgia
- Pratham Singh Rawat, Student, Anant National University Ahmedabad, India

12:40 PM – 12:55 PM | Interactive Dialogue & Youth Recommendations to FFD4

An open floor for attendees to share insights, priorities, and questions. Outcomes will inform a youth-generated submission to the **FFD4 Secretariat**.

12:55 PM – 1:00 PM | Closing Reflections

Speaker: Aashtha Goswami, Youth Representative, Green Mentors

Summarizing key takeaways and presenting a call to action for youth engagement in financing the future.

Expected Outcomes

This side event aims to deliver the following key outcomes:

1. Youth-Informed Recommendations to FFD4

A summary of key insights and recommendations will be synthesized from the session and submitted to the **FFD4 Secretariat**, contributing to the broader Financing for Development agenda through the lens of youth.

2. Elevated Youth Leadership in Financing Discussions

The event will highlight youth as essential stakeholders in financing frameworks and emphasize the role of young innovators in co-creating inclusive and sustainable economic systems.

3. Identification of Inclusive Financing Models

Showcase practical, youth-accessible financial instruments—such as green bonds, blended finance, and educational investments—that enable innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainable livelihoods.

4. Strengthened Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

Promote stronger collaboration between youth, governments, development finance institutions, philanthropic actors, and the private sector to mobilize and align funding with youth priorities.

5. Showcase of Scalable Youth-Led Solutions

Present real-world case studies and success stories of youth-led projects that offer replicable models for financing innovation in climate action, education, digital inclusion, and gender equity.

6. Inspiration and Engagement for Continued Action

Empower youth participants and attendees to engage further in the FFD4 process, SDG implementation, and national-level financing dialogues through networks like Green Mentors