WORLD LEBANESE CULTURAL UNION
WORLD COUNCIL FOR YOUTH

WHO WE ARE

World Lebanese Cultural Union – WLCU
The World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU) is a civil institution, independent and non-governmental, non-political, non-sectarian, non-religious and non-profit making, established to ensure the preservation and propagation of pride in the Lebanese culture and its manifestation throughout the Diaspora. The WLCU stands as a Trans-Global Organization associated with the Department of Global Communications (DGC) and accredited to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations, and is autonomous and independent of any governmental institution either within the Republic of Lebanon or elsewhere in the world. Established in 1959, the WLCU holds its headquarters in the city of New York and currently has active chapters in 26 countries.

WLCU World Council for Youth – WLCUY
All member institutions formed from the youth descendants of Lebanese origin within the WLCU are together known as the World Council for Youth (WLCUY). As one of the constituent bodies of the WLCU, the WLCUY serves as a forum of meeting and discussion for the Youth of Lebanese origin spread around the world, without distinction of religion, political ideology and country of residence. The WLCUY is a great way to learn about the WLCU, and get other youth involved in understanding and sharing the Lebanese culture and heritage. It also provides fertile ground for youth empowerment, networking, and generating public opinion to support the mission statement of the WLCU to build a better organization for all Lebanese around the world.

The core aims of the WLCUY are to:

- Act as worldwide forum for young people of Lebanese descent to network and socialize;
- Educate the youth about Lebanon’s contribution to world civilization;
- Connect the youth to the mother country and to learn the Arabic language;
- Encourage young Lebanese descendants to visit and keep in contact with Lebanon;
- Serve as a link for new generations of Lebanese descendants to obtain the Lebanese citizenship;
- Empower the youth to get involved in WLCU affairs;
OUR TEAM

WLCUY Board
The WLCUY is led by a Board made up of six individuals that coordinate the affairs of the WLCUY and represent it both internally and externally.

President: Mr. Sergio de los Ríos Feghali, Bogotá, Colombia
Secretary General: Ms. Christina Salamy, Ottawa, Canada
Cultural Affairs Officer: Ms. María Laura García Roko, Sydney, Australia
Social Welfare Officer: Ms. Shadya Taleb, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Media Officer: Ms. Tatiana Azzi, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Treasurer: Mr. Yusif Kahwagi, Mexico City, Mexico

WLCU World Council for Youth
Currently, the World Council for Youth currently brings together 24 active local chapters present in 11 countries in Europe, Oceania, North America and South America.

Argentina: Juventud Unión Cultural Argentino Libanesa (JUCAL) – Mr. Gabriel Plaza
Australia: Australian Lebanese Youth Association (ALYA) – Ms. Pascale Esber
Bolivia: Juventud Unión Cultural Boliviana Libanesa (JUCBL) – Ms. Adriana Daher
Brazil: Juventude Libano Brasileira (JULIBRA) – Ms. Tatiana Azzi
Canada: Lebanese Cultural Club LCC – University of Ottawa – Ms. Alex Rahbani
Canada: WLCU Youth Canada – Interim Board
Chile: Jóvenes de Origen Libanés (JOL) – Ms. Daniela Martínez
Colombia: Juventud Colombo Libanesa (JUCOLI) – Ms. Yanin Kalil
Denmark: WLCU Youth Denmark – Ms. Mary Saliba
France: Jeunesse ULCM France – Ms. Claude Tannoury
USA: WLCU Youth USA – Mr. Anis Abdul Karim
Uruguay: Asociación de Jóvenes Uruguayo Libaneses (AJUL) – Mr. Fady Abisaab

The WLCUY currently has two internal working commissions, made up of active members from the member institutions. These are the WLCU Youth UN Commission, coordinated by Ms. Rima Cario (New Jersey, USA), and the #SHEis Commission, focused on women’s rights and gender equality, coordinated by Ms. Christina Salamy (Ottawa, Canada).
**WHAT WE DO**

The WLCUY member institutions act in their respective countries, taking part or organizing numerous initiatives for the community to strengthen local bonds, both within the community and with Lebanon. These initiatives range from social welfare gatherings, cultural campaigns and social celebrations, giving the opportunity for the young Lebanese diaspora to experience the livelihood but also to leave lasting impacts, both short and long term, on the community.

Through this global platform, awareness is raised, creativity and passion are expressed, and most importantly, the connection between our country of residence and our homeland is strengthened.

Capitalizing on their international network, the member institutions of the WLCUY work in unison to put together activities, projects and campaigns on a regional and global stage. All member institutions are highly encouraged to take part in the proposed initiatives to the best of their ability in order for the initiatives to have a greater impact on Lebanon, and serve as a bridge for more young Lebanese descendants to connect with the country of their ancestors. A brief overview of the most recent WLCUY global initiatives is shared below:

**AIESEC x WLCUY**

In April 2019 an agreement was reached with the AIESEC Lebanon branch, teaming up to present WLCU Youth members from across the globe a chance to win partial scholarships to participate in AIESEC summer opportunities offered in Lebanon. The opportunities are focused on empowering young people to make a progressive social impact through leadership development, cross-cultural internships, and global volunteer exchange experiences.

**Feel Lebanon**

Feel Lebanon is a 3-day campaign held annually in November, consisting of events organized by each of the WLCUY member institutions. The purpose of this campaign is to share Lebanese culture and traditions through events uniting Lebanese and non-Lebanese communities in order to celebrate, educate, and commemorate the Lebanon on the month it celebrates its independence.

**Lebanese American University – LAU**

On October 2019, the WLCUY and the Lebanese American University (LAU) signed a memorandum of understanding to discuss issues of common interest and to coordinate work programs and support mutual efforts, with a focus primarily on programs and workshops related to the Arabic language and the Lebanese dialect. The relationship has materialized through the LAU Byblos Campus hosting the WLCUY World Congress in July 2019, the WLCUY’s participation at UNESCO’s World Arabic Day event “The Arabic Language: Roots, Forms and Globalization”, and partial scholarships for summer Arabic courses for WLCUY members.
LEBolution
Every two years the WLCUY holds its World Youth Congress “LEBolution”, a unique journey designed to strengthen the Diaspora’s connection to Lebanon by bringing together the youth of Lebanese origin from around the world and exploring all corners of the country, while taking part in a variety of activities: cultural events, social work, meeting outstanding figures of the country, holding forums to exchange visions about the present and future of Lebanon, among many more.
Each LEBolution edition connects 200 youth between the ages of 18 and 30, from over 17 different countries. Previous LEBolution activities have included blood donation campaigns, cedar reforestation initiatives, forums with local youth organizations, recreational activities with the children of the martyrs of the Lebanese Army, the program’s traditional hand-painted Wall for Peace, participation in the ONE LEBANON festival, and an international symposium on Lebanon’s crises hosted at LAU. Tourism, of course, is a big part of the program, and it has been an honour and privilege to meet with notable personalities such as the Prime Minister of Lebanon, the Governor of Banque du Liban, the Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces, and the Maronite Patriarch, His Beatitude Bechara Al Raii, as well as visit locations of great national significance such as the Lebanese Parliament and the Grand Serail.

SHEis Campaign
In honor and commemoration of International Women’s Day on March 8th and Lebanese Mother’s Day on March 21st, the WLCUY coordinates the #SHEis campaign throughout the month of March. Through this campaign, the WLCUY platforms acknowledge strong and accomplished Lebanese women across the globe, raise awareness on gender equality in Lebanon and its diaspora, and promote women empowerment within our communities and throughout the WLCU.
The WLCU Youth has actively undertaken initiatives regarding the Lebanese woman, women’s rights in Lebanon, and gender equality, most notably through the 2014 campaign for Lebanese Emigrant Women’s Rights and the 2019 and 2020 editions of the #SHEis campaign. With the aim of further sparking interest and promoting active involvement of the WLCU Youth in topics of relevance, the WLCUY intends to structure the SHEis Commission as a continuous, WLCU Youth internal working commission to focus on initiatives related to the Lebanese woman, both in Lebanon and in the diaspora, on relevant social, economic, demographic, political, historical, levels, and other topics of interest.

WLCU Youth UN Commission
On June 2020, as a way to further strengthen the ties that connect the WLCU Youth, and to encourage the active participation of the Lebanese youth from around the world in United Nations-related initiatives focused on Lebanon, the formation of a WLCU Youth UN Commission was approved as an internal working commission for the WLCUY.
Initiatives to be undertaken are currently under evaluation by the recently-formed Commission. These initiatives include DGC Civil Society Youth Programmes, ECOSOC Youth Forums, UNDP Youth initiatives,
UNICEF initiatives, and collaboration with various NGOs located in Lebanon and abroad to provide both immediate relief and long-term aid to the country.

**WLCU Youth Community Talks**

Born out of the need to adapt during the COVID-19 pandemic, the WLCU Youth Community Talks initiative aimed to bring Lebanon and its diaspora closer together through online conferences, with guest speakers from all corners of the world sharing their experiences and knowledge on a variety of subjects related to Lebanon. Over the course of four months, online conferences were held in various languages, focusing on arts, cultural heritage, diaspora migration, gastronomy, geopolitics, history, the Phoenicians and their negotiation skills, and the situation in Lebanon after the August 4th explosion in Beirut.

**CONTACT**

For more details on anything stated in this document, projects, campaigns, or if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to youth.presidency@wlcu.world or youth.secretariat@wlcu.world.

The WLCU Youth is also present online and on various social media platforms:

- Website  
  [https://wlcu.world/ng/youth/](https://wlcu.world/ng/youth/)
- Facebook  
  World Lebanese Cultural Union Youth – WLCUY (@WLCUY)
- Instagram  
  WLCU Youth (@wlcuyouth)
- Twitter  
  WLCU Youth (@wlcu)