

Shaping the Future of Youth Justice in Austria

Richtungswechsel (Change in Direction) is an Austrian NGO working to promote more human-centred correctional systems and innovative approaches to youth custody. As a member of RESCALED, the European movement advocating for small-scale, community-integrated detention houses as alternatives to large prison institutions, we are developing a concept for Austria's first youth-focused detention house. This project aims to combine legal, social, and policy research with international best practices to create a comprehensive concept paper that can inform future advocacy and programme development.

Your Involvement

We envision the involvement of Fellows in:

- Research: reviewing Austria's youth justice framework, international benchmarks, and policy developments.
- Concept Development: contributing to the drafting of sections of a 15–20 page concept paper (covering topics such as governance, programmes, staffing, or design).
- Outreach & Exchange: supporting engagement with stakeholders, practitioners, and partners across Europe.

Through this fellowship, students will **gain practical, impact-driven experience in shaping youth justice reform**, while contributing to a tangible outcome that supports the RESCALED vision of community-integrated, small-scale detention.

You are:

- Passionate about justice reform, youth rights, and evidence-based policymaking.
- Skilled in research and analytical writing, with the ability to synthesise complex information clearly and concisely.
- Interested in linking academic insight with practical social impact.
- A team player who enjoys collaboration, dialogue, and learning from diverse European contexts.
- German is required.

Time commitment: Around 10 hours per week (flexible depending on the availability of the fellow). Fewer hours are not an exclusion criterion – the exact workload will be agreed individually to ensure a good fit for all involved.



Knowledge Creation for Justice & Society

Richtungswechsel (Change in Direction) is an Austrian NGO working to transform public perceptions of justice and advocate for more human-centred correctional systems. We are part of RESCALED, the European movement for small-scale, community-integrated detention houses, and we aim to share best practices and innovations and make complex issues in justice, detention, and resocialisation accessible to the wider public. Through clear, engaging, and evidence-based communication, we seek to strengthen advocacy efforts and foster informed public debate on humane justice.

Your Involvement

We envision your support **as a Knowledge Creator**, helping to bridge research and public understanding. This includes:

- Conducting desk research on key topics (youth justice, small-scale detention, reintegration, restorative practices, public resistance).
- Translating findings into short, accessible knowledge posts (texts, infographics, visuals) for social media (Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.).
- Ensuring content is accurate, engaging, and aligned with our mission.
- Contributing to the development of a long-term knowledge platform for justice and society.

In addition, the fellows will be encouraged to develop creative ideas to promote our ongoing projects and bring them to life on social media. This means the fellow will be actively involved across all of our projects, ensuring that project results and activities are communicated to the wider public in the most effective and engaging way.

Additionally, the student will be part of our Champions Community initiative. The Champions Community is a project designed for prison middle managers. Over the course of one year, twelve participants (prison middle managers) from different countries will take part in an intensive development journey combining residential training, mentoring, and peer exchange.

The programme is structured around three one-week residentials, hosted in Germany, Malta, and the Czech Republic. Each residential offers a dedicated training curriculum tailored specifically to the challenges and responsibilities of prison middle management.

The project begins in November 2025 with the first residential in Bremen, Germany. Between the residentials, participants will receive regular one-to-one mentoring from experienced mentors, ensuring ongoing reflection, personal growth, and practical application in their home institutions.



By bringing together middle managers from across Europe, the Champions Community fosters professional development, mutual learning, and a supportive network that strengthens the role of prison staff as essential public servants.

The Fellow will help document their experiences and share stories with a wider audience, illustrating the human impact of the project and amplifying its reach internationally.

This volunteer role offers you ***practical experience in research, communication, social media and advocacy, insight into justice reform debates in Austria and Europe***, and the opportunity to shape how society perceives justice and reintegration.

In addition, the volunteer ***may gain valuable experience in the creative and organisational process of developing a documentary film project***. This includes idea generation, preparation, planning, coordination, and outreach, as we intend to apply for funding for a documentary focusing on the Champions Community and other training programmes across Europe. Through this, volunteers can actively contribute to showcasing best practices and innovative approaches in the field of justice reform.

You are:

- Interested in justice reform, human rights, and social change.
- A strong communicator who enjoys transforming complex ideas into accessible, engaging content.
- Confident in writing and/or visual storytelling (experience with Canva or similar tools is a plus).
- Fluent in English (German is an asset but not required).
- Proactive, open-minded, and eager to learn in a dynamic, international environment.

Time commitment: Around 5-10 hours per week (flexible depending on the availability of the fellow). Fewer hours are not an exclusion criterion, the exact workload will be agreed individually to ensure a good fit for all involved.



Event Coordination - Coordination Fellow

Richtungswechsel is an Austrian NGO (Change of Direction) committed to shaping more human-centred correctional systems and advancing the social (re)integration of incarcerated people. We are a member of RESCALED, a European movement advocating for small-scale, community-integrated detention houses as alternatives to large prison institutions. We are also a partner in RESIZE, an ambitious EU-funded project that:

- Empowers correctional workforce through training and upskilling.
- Fosters rehabilitation and reintegration by improving services for incarcerated people.
- Creates a European competency framework for correctional excellence.
- Strengthens collaboration across the sector via the LiberateSkills Pact.
- Promotes the RESCALED methodology of small-scale, differentiated, community-integrated detention houses.

In 2026, Richtungswechsel will host several cross-border workshops, inviting stakeholders from Austria and surrounding countries to explore how RESCALED and RESIZE objectives can be translated into practice.

Your Role - Coordination Fellow

As a Coordination Fellow, you will play a key role in the preparation and execution of this international workshop.

You will:

- Support the coordination of invitations and participant management.
- Liaise with international partners, practitioners, and students.
- Assist in preparing agendas, background materials, and communication.
- Ensure smooth workshop delivery by coordinating logistics and on-the-day operations.

Who You Are

- Organised, detail-oriented, and proactive.
- Interested in justice reform, youth detention, and European collaboration.
- Strong communication skills in English (German is a plus).

Why Join?

You will be directly involved in shaping the intellectual backbone of a unique European workshop, gain insights into European prison reform movements, and help translate theory into practice.

Time commitment:

Around 5-10 hours per week (flexible depending on the availability of the fellow). Fewer hours are not an exclusion criterion – the exact workload will be agreed individually to ensure a good fit for all involved.



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Your Role - Workshop Development and Research Fellow

As a Planning Fellow, you will support the conceptual and content-related preparation of this international workshop.

You will:

- Contribute to designing the workshop programme and structure.
- Research and prepare input on youth custody, small-scale detention models, and correctional workforce training.
- Support the drafting of discussion questions, breakout sessions, and documentation.
- Assist in aligning the workshop outcomes with the broader RESCALED and RESIZE objectives.

Who You Are

- Creative, analytical, and passionate about social innovation.
- Comfortable working in an international and interdisciplinary environment.
- Excellent English skills (German or another European language is an advantage).

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Time commitment:

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