

EC2 Lena Zehne

Proposers:

Agenda item: 2. Candidates for Co-Spokesperson

Introduction

Dear friends,

I am Lena, a 26-year-old activist and local politician who is intentionally loud, quick to admit when I'm still learning but stubborn enough to never let that wear me down, and firmly convinced that our movement's strength lies in our ability to sustain one another.

I am running for Co-Spokes!

My application is a roadmap for how we can continue to turn FYEG into an unavoidable political force, which emphasizes unity and resilience. It is a collection of everything I have learned while navigating the messy, beautiful reality of our activism throughout my 11 years as a member of the Young Greens.

To set the mood for the road to the GA, I've curated [this playlist](#) to share a different side of my world. Let's get hyped!

Stay loud,

Your Lena (she/her)

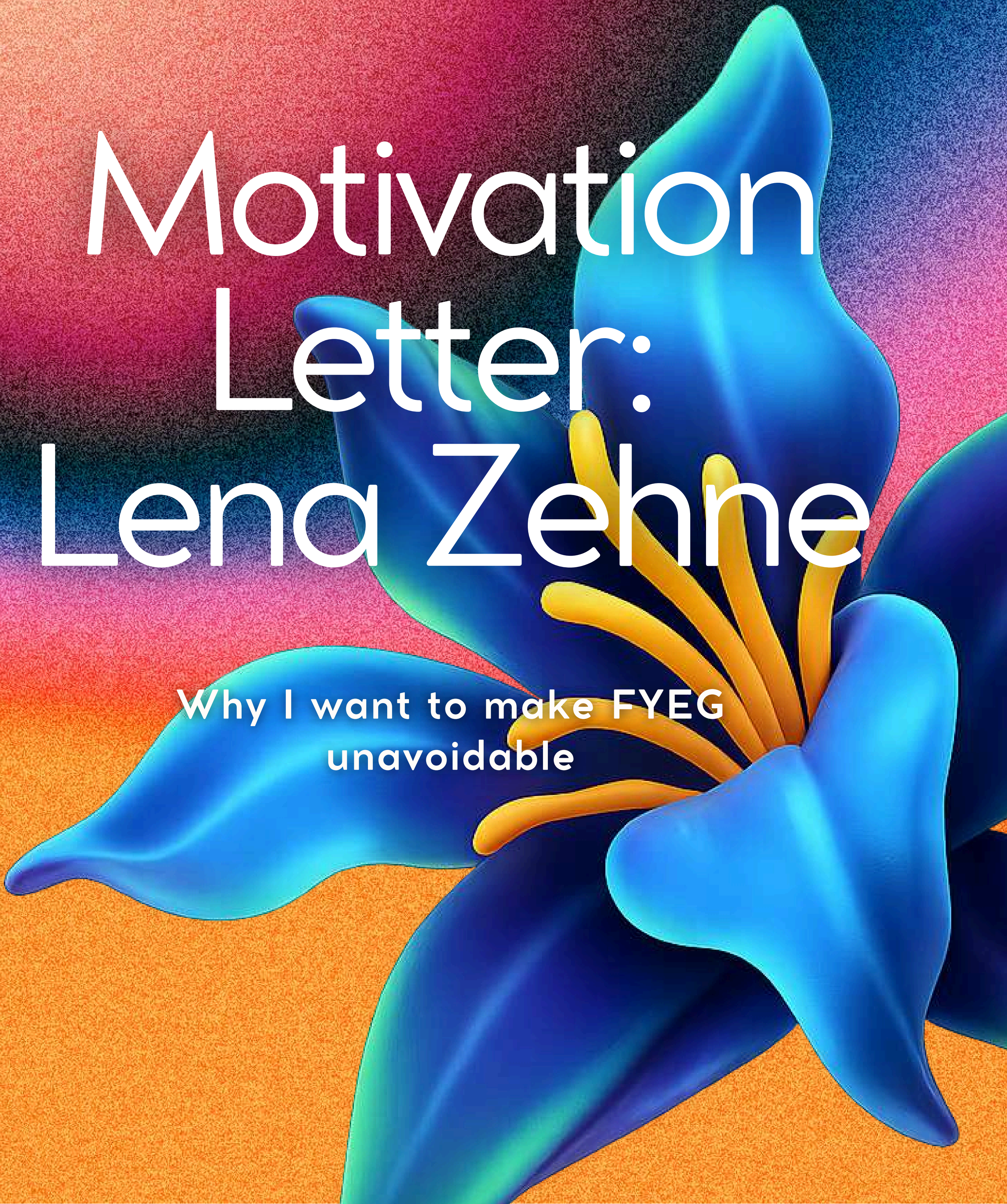


Member Organisation:
Grüne Jugend (Germany)

GA26:
Co-Spokes
Application

Motivation Letter: Lena Zehne

Why I want to make FYEG
unavoidable





Dear friends,

I am running for Co-Spokes because I want to turn our federation into an unavoidable political force. My work as a Political Advisor and Parliamentary Assistant, alongside my candidacy for the Federal State Parliament in Saxony-Anhalt, has shown me exactly how young voices are sidelined. We are tired of being summoned only when the establishment needs a youth perspective, e.g., run-down school bathrooms. I am running to challenge the patronizing idea that young candidates should only represent "youth topics". Clean air, affordable train tickets, and proper education are fundamental pillars of our society. Those in power must realize that our demands ensure a functioning society for the generations to follow. A system that fails its youth today will have no one to sustain it tomorrow. The bottom line is this: Our generation and future generations **MUST** be able to lead a normal life without having to count every penny!

My academic and international background provide the necessary foundation to lead a pan-European movement. With a Master's degree in Environmental Science, Policy and Management and a Bachelor's in International Relations, I have the thematic depth to navigate European legislation. My experience living and working in multiple countries has prepared me to continue my work on the Executive Committee with a borderless perspective, bridging the gap between local struggles and European action.

My time in Lesvos and Lebanon, for example, fundamentally shaped my politics and made me the intersectional eco-feminist I am today. Working together with refugees in Moria and students in a region defined by the scars of occupation plus the bravery of feminist uprisings taught me that our struggles are deeply interconnected. Whether witnessing the consequences of the invasion of Lebanon, the ongoing suffering in Gaza, or the courageous resistance of women in Iran and the Kurdish struggle for self-determination, I learned that justice is indivisible. I want to address climate justice in a way that actually motivates people. Within the Green movement, we often talk about climate policy in an academic language that even experts struggle to follow. I understand the frustration of the youth who feel there is always something more "burning" to address. For me, climate justice is holistic, spanning everything from human rights and feminism to the fundamental need for affordable housing. FYEG must stay true to our distinguishing feature: we fight for our planet and for everyone who lives here. I want to make our climate communication sexy and accessible.

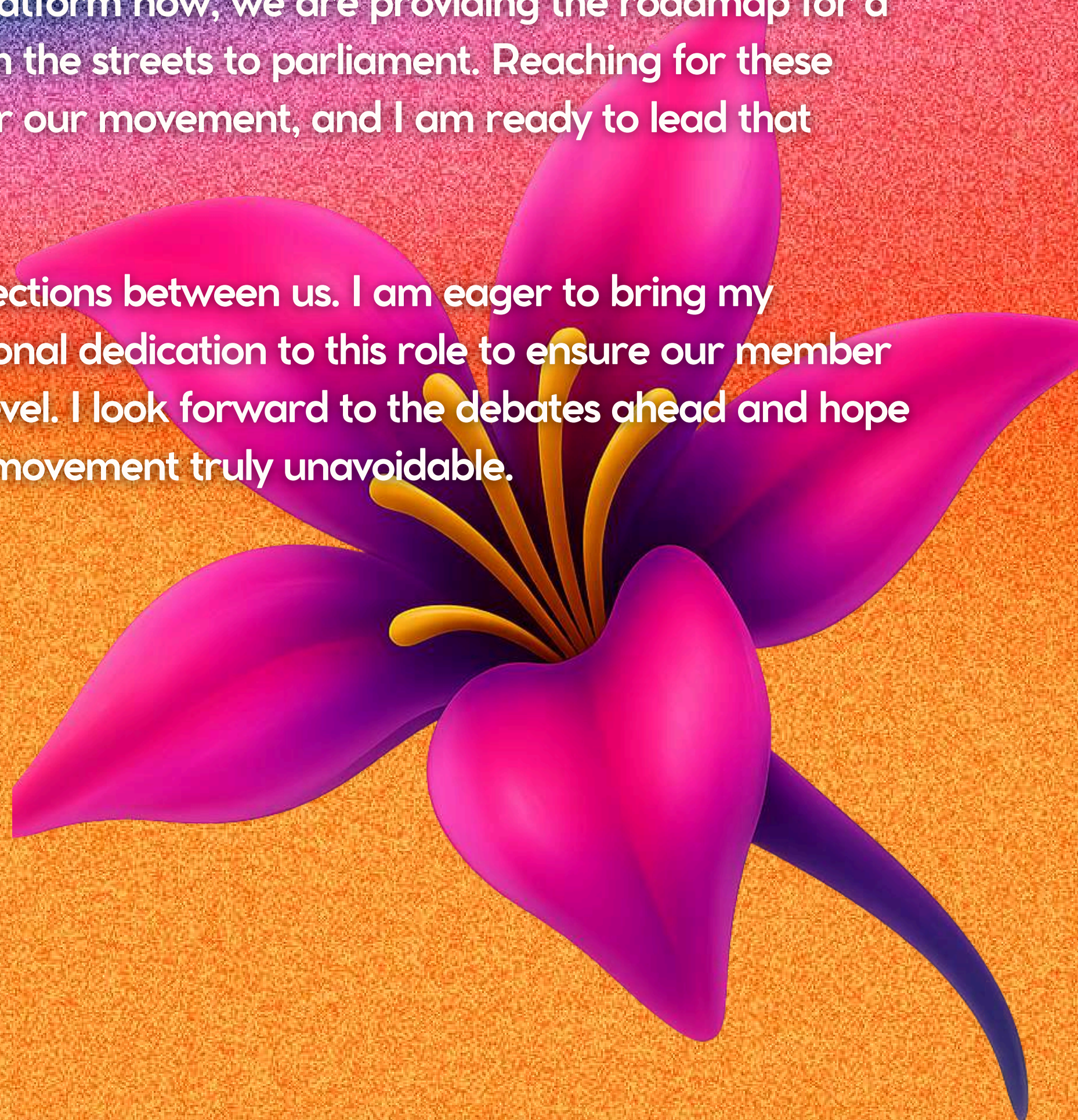
This past mandate in the Executive Committee (EC) has given me the structural oversight needed to lead. My responsibility for the East Region - supporting MOs in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, and Belarus - is a constant reminder that Green politics is a matter of physical safety and democratic survival. I have seen how our non-EU activists often navigate a completely different political reality, facing barriers that the rest of our federation must better understand and support. Managing Volunteer Management and the Green Base allowed me to see our internal barriers and how to better coordinate local action. Furthermore, coordinating the Beyond Growth Platform (BGP) and the Racial Justice Taskforce (RJTF) allowed me to anchor radical thematic work into the daily life of the federation. I feel very prepared to step into the role of Co-Spokes with a full understanding of the diverse needs of our Member Organisations (MOs) based on my past year in the EC.

The upcoming mandate is the decisive moment to build the foundation for the 2029 European elections. Young Greens are ready to grab power. I see the role of Co-Spokes as a vital platform to gain the visibility and experience necessary to lead our movement into the EU29 cycle. While a regular EC member focuses on internal management, the Co-Spokes role carries the political weight and external mandate required to represent our federation in the highest political arenas. Serving in this position will provide me with the specific tools and the political profile to run a successful European campaign for FYEG and to consider running for the European Parliament myself. By renewing our Political Platform now, we are providing the roadmap for a generation of activists to move from the streets to parliament. Reaching for these mandates is the logical next step for our movement, and I am ready to lead that transition.

FYEG is only as strong as the connections between us. I am eager to bring my grounded perspective and professional dedication to this role to ensure our member organizations are heard at every level. I look forward to the debates ahead and hope to earn your support to make our movement truly unavoidable.

With energy and solidarity,

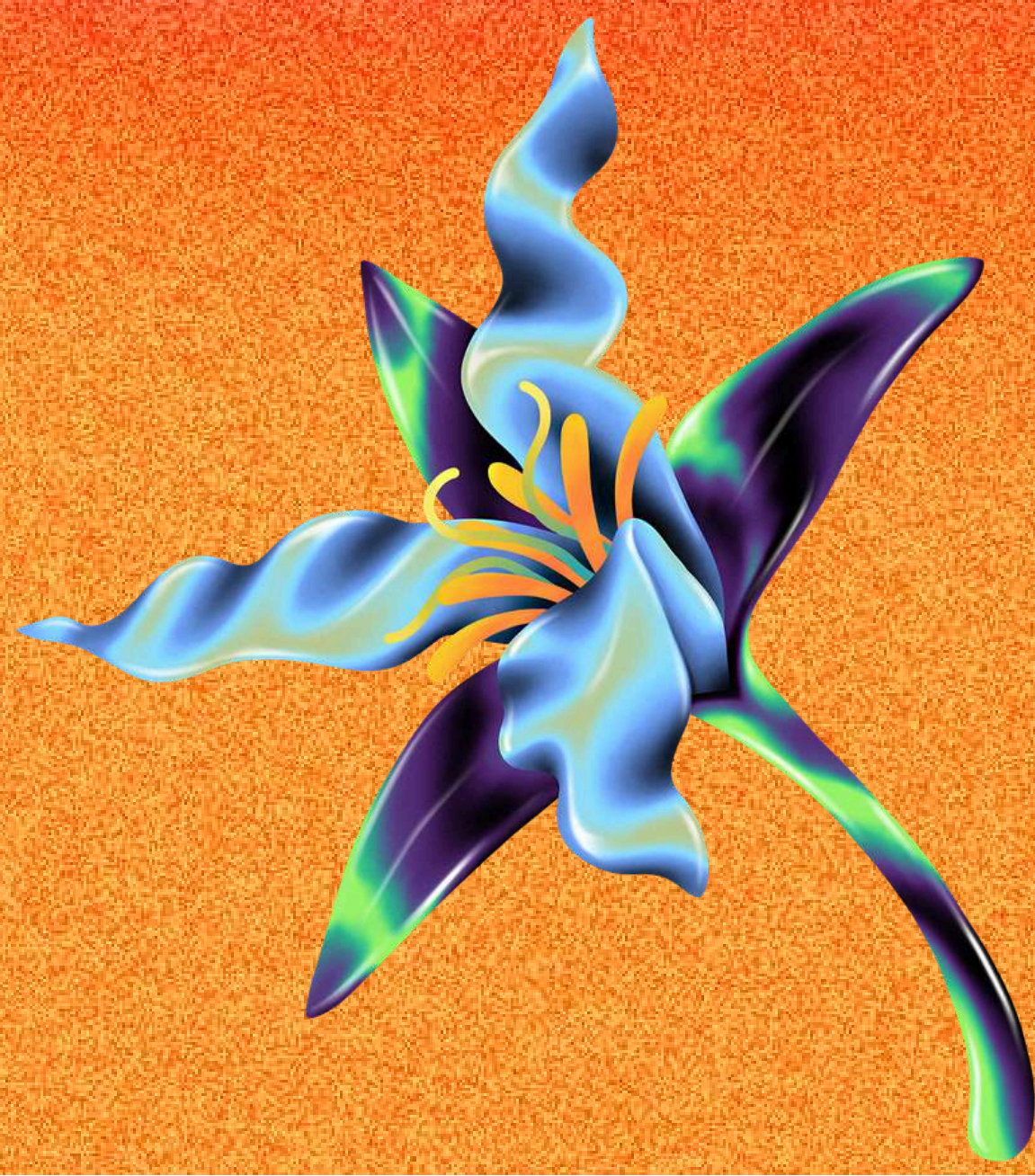
Your Lena (she/her)



GA26:
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Vision Statement: Lena Zehne

How I want to make FYEG
unavoidable



WHO THE F* IS FYEG?

Ever talked to friends at home about FYEG and got the response: "What is that?" Me too. I want to change that. Through provocative social media and sharp press releases, I want to create an unavoidable presence. Our existence is vital because we are the radical voice that the "old and rich" want to ignore. With my work experience, I became quite a fan of press releases and, hell yes, I want to see headlines like "Young European Greens push the European Parliament to stop ICE-like deportations in Europe". Only when we keep expanding our press and public engagement strategy will we have the platform to set the agenda. To be the loud ones, we must master the tools of the trade. I want to commit to scaling up our press operations and social media presence to ensure we are unavoidable in the European media landscape. I want to better utilize our internal multiplier effect so that no member is ever caught off guard when asked about who we are. I will ensure you are always equipped with the latest updates, giving you the confidence to spill the tea on our goals and invite others into our movement!

ANNOYING THOSE IN POWER

As your Co-Spokes, I will take my seat at the "important tables" to be the most persistent advocate in the room. This also means being the person who consistently challenges the status quo within the European Green Party (EGP). I will advocate for our MOs by demanding that FYEG's radical platform is a central driver of the Green agenda. Whether it is fighting for more financial resources, better representation for our Eastern partners, or ensuring our grassroots demands are reflected in high-level policy, I will remain uncomfortably persistent. Given our current financial situation, I intend to actively utilize my existing network to explore the resources we need; my goal is to reach out to Green politicians to identify potential donations and collaboration opportunities. Just as we spent this mandate knocking on doors in the European Parliament, I want to look for similar opportunities to engage, e.g., with the German Bundestag. I want to ensure that those in power feel the pressure of our movement's energy every single day. My goal is to make sure that the EGP and other party stakeholders treat FYEG as a powerful political partner that cannot be ignored or sidelined.

READY FOR EU29

The road to the EU29 campaign starts now. During the next mandate, we will undergo the vital process of renewing our Political Platform. This is our chance to redefine our radical vision for Europe. I want to co-lead a federation that uses this process to sharpen our collective voice, ensuring that when the EU29 campaign hits, our demands are unignorable and our digital infrastructure is battle-ready. Policy only carries weight when we have the people to back it up.....

We are the movement of the Green youth at the European level, but our heart beats in our cities, our regions, and our countries. FYEG lives through our individual MOs, yet we can only grow into our full potential if we bridge local action with borderless digital activities. I am running for Co-Spokes because I want to turn these four letters – FYEG – into a name that every young activist in Europe knows, and every person in power respects. And this is how I want to do it:

STRENGTHENING OUR DIGITAL COMMUNITY

We are stronger together. The success of our first-ever MO exchange in our Green Base proved it: we never stop learning from one another. While serving as the regional responsible for Ukraine, Belarus, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, I learned firsthand that FYEG's primary role is to make MOs feel heard and provide a platform without draining their limited capacities. This is why I want to utilize our digital hub as a space for genuine interaction. I want to create more space for digital engagement where we truly learn from one another. How can we adapt your MO's election campaign strategy? How can we make our digital tools a multiplier of solutions for your local struggles? My vision is a community where you can find a bed in Stockholm, learn about the elections in Spain, banter with international friends, and shape FYEG's social media all in one day. I want to show everyone how amazing our Green Base is and enable as many individuals as possible to become active. You shape FYEG, and you should be able to do that every single day.

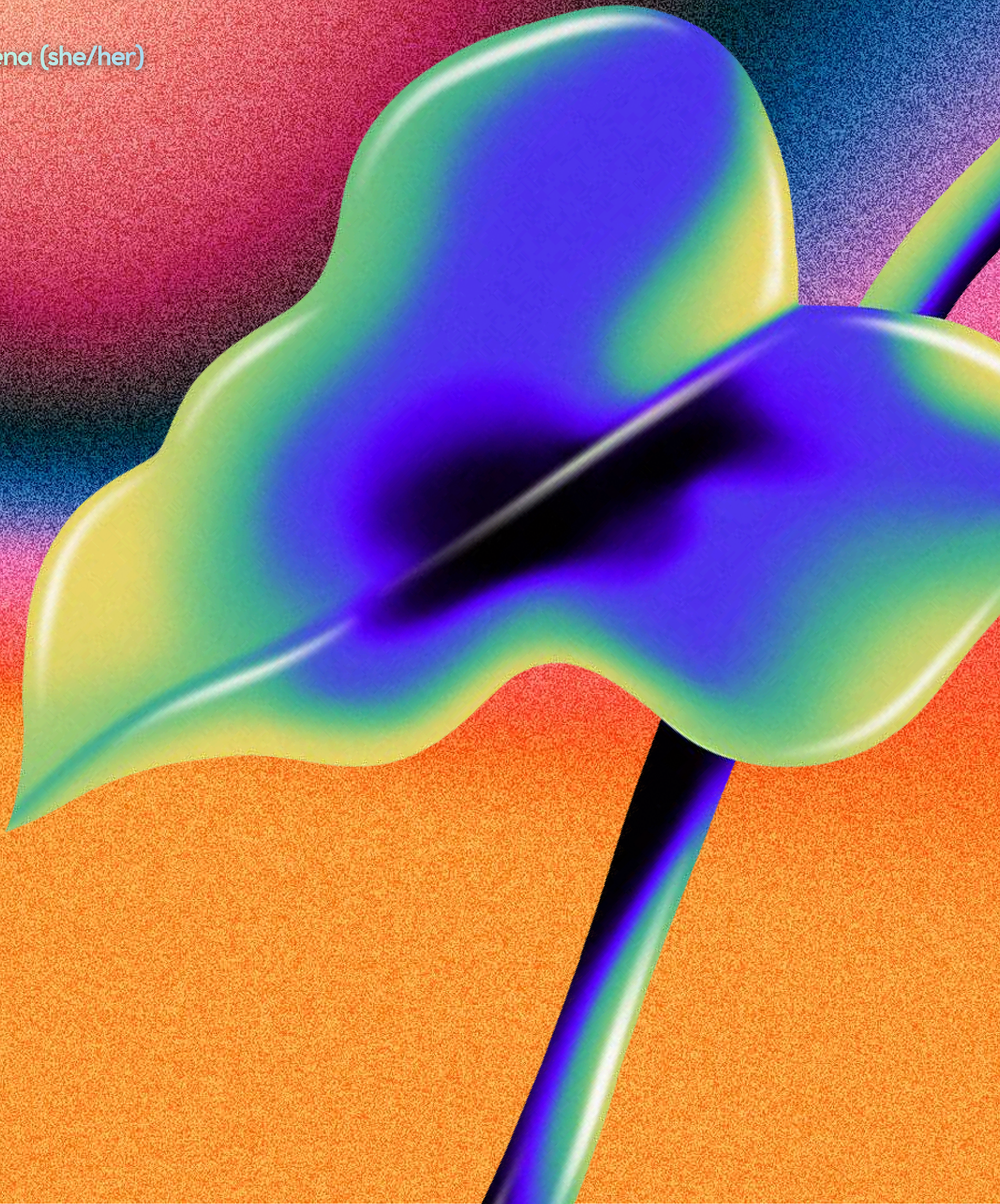
MENTAL HEALTH STAYS POLITICAL

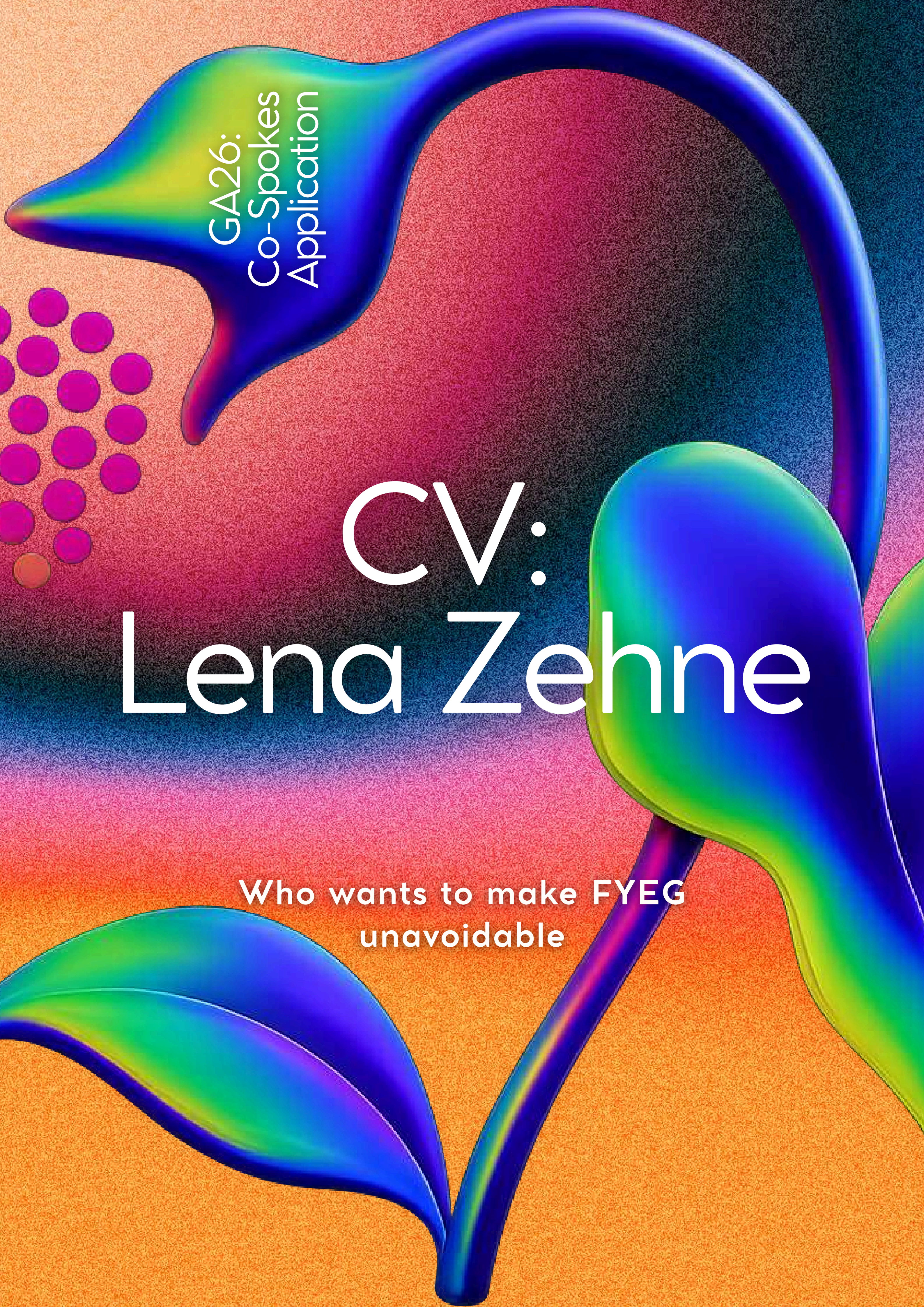
I have seen too many friends step back, overwhelmed because their immense passion for our planet collided with a system that refuses to respect its boundaries, not because they are weak. This cannot be the norm! Political work should be a source of inspiration and not a cause of exhaustion. We built and keep on building a movement that lasts because we actually care about each other and our planet. I want to lead an EC that prioritizes our collective joy as a radical act of resilience. Hence, mental health STAYS political. I will listen, and I will ensure that our activism fuels us instead of draining us. For that, I want to offer more learning opportunities, during which we can share our tips and tricks on how to deal with the stress of our political work. As Co-Spokes, I will lead by ensuring that sustainability is a structural reality. My leadership style will focus on setting a pace that respects our humanity, moving away from a constant crisis mode that leads to burnout. I intend to normalize the setting of boundaries within the Executive Committee and throughout our digital hub, facilitating peer-support networks and skill-sharing on how to handle the emotional toll of activism.

....My goal is to use our educational activities and digital network to empower you to grab power yourself. You or the people you believe in should leave every FYEG event with new ideas and the skills and confidence to run for office. We are the candidates of today, and our movement is the training ground for the leaders Europe actually needs. When we are educated, connected, and empowered, we become the very future the establishment fears. Never let anyone tell you that you cannot change the system from the inside out!

For our collective joy and resilience,

Your Lena (she/her)





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CV: Lena Zehne

Who wants to make FYEG
unavoidable

WORK EXPERIENCE

Political Advisor / Federal State Office of Bündnis 90/Die Grünen Saxony-Anhalt (Magdeburg, Germany) | Jan 2026 – Apr 2026

- Responsible for coordinating the drafting process of the election program for the 2026 federal state elections
- Managed press and public relations, and coordinated communication with the parliamentary group and key stakeholders
- Developed policy questionnaires, prepared thematic content, and managed scheduling

Parliamentary Assistant / Leon Eckert, Member of the German Bundestag (Berlin & Freising, Germany) | Jun 2024 – Jun 2025

- Responsible for constituency management, press, and public relations.
- Managed internal and external communication with party, non-party, governmental, and non-governmental stakeholders
- Provided thematic support in the areas of environment, agriculture, mobility, and civil protection

Student Research Assistant / American University of Beirut (AUB) (Beirut & Beqaa, Lebanon) | Jul 2023 – Aug 2023

- Contributed to an EU-funded study on nutrition and food security risks in relation to environmental factors

Volunteer / Refugee African Dance (RAD) Music International (Lesvos, Greece) | Apr 2023 – Jun 2023

- Co-coordinated German language classes for refugees

Intern / Leon Eckert, Member of the German Bundestag (Berlin, Germany) | May 2022 – Aug 2022

- Responsible for setting schedules and providing thematic research for the Member of Parliament

Intern / Union Internationale des Cinémas (UNIC) (Brussels, Belgium) | Jan 2022 – Apr 2022

- Managed event organization and external communication with member organizations
- Provided thematic research on European (cinema) culture, EU law, and legislation

Intern / Minister for Science, Energy, Climate Protection and Environment of Saxony-Anhalt (Halle & Magdeburg, Germany) | Apr 2021 – Jun 2021

- Provided thematic support and managed schedules for the minister
- Served as campaign manager at the state office of Bündnis 90/Die Grünen for the State and Federal elections

Intern / Anna Cavazzini, Member of the European Parliament (Brussels, Belgium) | Oct 2020 – Dec 2020

- Responsible for scheduling and thematic research for the MEP

EDUCATION

Erasmus Mundus M.Sc. Environmental Science, Policy & Management (MESPOM) / Central European University (Vienna), Lund University (Sweden), University of the Aegean (Greece) | Sep 2022 – Jun 2024

- Master's Thesis: „Prosperity in Transition: Unravelling the Synergies of the EU's Post-growth Policies for Socio-Environmental Harmony”
- Award: Recipient of the Boroli Award (LSE, Hertie School, Sciences Po, Bocconi, CEU)

B.Sc. International Relations & Organizations / Leiden University The Hague (The Netherlands) | Aug 2018 – Jan 2022

- Honours Degree
- Founder of the 'Studentenvereniging van Duitse Studenten Den Haag' (German Student Association)
- Vice-Chair of the European Union Study Association (EUSA)
- Volunteer for WWF The Hague
- Founder of the Greenpeace Student Branch
- Member of the Fundraising and PR team for Amnesty International Students The Hague

Abitur / Hans-Dietrich-Genscher-Gymnasium Halle (Saale) (Germany) | Aug 2010 – Jun 2018

FURTHER QUALIFICATIONS

- Languages: German (C2/Native), English (C2), Dutch (B1)
- Software: Proficient in MS Office, Canva, Google Workspace, GIS, and SPSS
- Expertise: Ad-hoc speaker on Post-Growth at the German Economic Institute

VOLUNTARY ENGAGEMENT & POLITICAL ACTIVISM

- Member of Grüne Jugend since 2015
- Direct and list candidate for the Saxony-Anhalt federal state election 2026
- Member of the Executive Committee of FYEG since 2025; here responsible for the East Region (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus), the Beyond Growth Platform (BGP), the Racial Justice Taskforce (RJTF), Volunteer Management, and the Green Base
- Executive Committee Member of the federal state board of Grüne Jugend Saxony-Anhalt (2025)
- Candidate for the Halle municipal elections (2024)
- Co-Spokes for the working group on Europe, International Affairs, and Peace for B90/DG Saxony-Anhalt (2024-25)
- EC member of Grüne Jugend Saxony-Anhalt (2025)
- Delegate to EGP (extended) Congresses, national party conferences, national working groups, and federal state conferences

Dear delegates to the General Assembly 2026 of FYEG,
On behalf of Grüne Jugend (GJ) Germany, I am writing to express our full and enthusiastic support for Lena Zehne's candidacy as Co-Spokes of the FYEG Executive Committee for the 2026/2027 mandate. We take great pride in highlighting both her professional expertise and her deep-rooted commitment to our movement, shaped by over 11 years of dedicated involvement in our Green family. Since last year she has been a member of the Executive Committee of FYEG and was able to bring a European spirit to our GJ. She inspired stages at our national General Assembly, federal state congresses, regional conventions, and protests with her insights from the Young European Greens and raised awareness for international aspects. We are more than convinced that she is a true speaker and, hence, a worthy Co-Spokes.

Her leadership qualities remained evident throughout her 2025 campaign as a lead candidate for the city council in her hometown Halle (Saale). Building on this experience in 2026, she is now standing as a candidate for the state parliament on the Saxony-Anhalt federal state list while simultaneously contesting a direct seat in her own constituency. Lena has remained a constant and active presence in the GJ of Saxony-Anhalt, which is located in East Germany. In this region, the political landscape is defined by the significant strength of the far-right, creating a challenging environment for young Green activists that differs substantially from the political experience in many Western strongholds. She consistently led efforts to maintain a visible Green presence in spaces where our members often face intense opposition and social pressure. By organizing in Saxony-Anhalt, she proved she has the resilience to stay active when the surroundings work to marginalize progressive voices, performing the essential grassroots work in a territory where every Green event requires immense courage and persistence.

Her identity is rooted in this specific reality of East Germany, a region marked by historical and structural differences that continue to shape its political culture today. She understands that the German experience is not a monolith and that the struggle for democracy in Saxony-Anhalt requires a level of grit and strategic patience that offers a valuable perspective within FYEG. By bringing this background to the Executive Committee, she helps ensure a more nuanced understanding of the diverse political climates across the continent. She acts as a crucial bridge, carrying the lived experience of a region where the fight for Green values is a daily necessity, making her uniquely capable of advocating for true regional diversity within our federation.

Her ability to communicate complex European issues while staying grounded in local struggles is exactly what FYEG needs to mobilize young people across the continent. We fully stand behind her candidacy, convinced that she is the right person to represent our shared values and to drive a progressive, inclusive agenda for the future of Europe. Given her extensive skills, personal qualities, and the network she has built within the international Green movement, we are certain that she is the ideal candidate for this role. Based on her proven track record and deep experience with FYEG, the GJ wholeheartedly supports Lena's application to serve as Co-Spokes.

Melsa Yildirim International Secretary of Grüne
Jugend (Germany)



**GRÜNE
JUGEND**