

A background image showing a group of people, mostly young adults, with their hands raised in a gesture of participation or agreement. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent white rectangle containing text. The overall color scheme is dominated by red and white.

**Mobilizing Youth for Gender Inclusive Cities
TOPIC 3 – Deliberative Participation Among Youth**

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL TOOLKIT



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TOPIC 3: Digital Participation Among Youth

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL TOOLKIT

Supporting youth workers in establishing and managing youth advisory councils within local governments, organizations, and community groups. This toolkit offers guidance on council formation, recruitment processes, meeting facilitation, goal setting and empowering young people to serve as active participants in governance and decision-making processes at the grassroots level.

Tool 1. Youth Council Formation Guide: A step-by-step guide outlining the process of establishing a youth advisory council, including identifying stakeholders, defining objectives, and determining council structure and membership criteria.

Tool 2. Recruitment Strategy: For developing a recruitment strategy to attract diverse youth representatives to the advisory council. This includes outreach methods, application processes, and selection criteria to ensure broad representation.

Tool 3. Meeting Facilitation Plan: providing tips, techniques, and best practices for effectively facilitating council meetings, including agenda planning, discussion moderation, and decision-making processes.

Tool 4. Goal-Setting Worksheet: A worksheet to help council members set and prioritize goals and objectives for their advisory work. This tool assists in defining focus areas, establishing timelines, and tracking progress over time.

Tool 5. Reflection Worksheet: A framework for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the youth advisory council's activities and initiatives.

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL TOOLKIT

Tool 1. Youth Council Formation Guide

Tool 1. Youth Council Formation Guide

- **Introduction**

The aim of the activity is to empower young people to have a voice in their communities, which is crucial for fostering active citizenship. This guide aims to provide a step-by-step process to establish a Youth Advisory Council (YAC) within community groups. Following these steps, youth can create a structured platform for participation in decision-making processes.

- **Objectives**

The activity objectives are:

- **Empowering Youth Participation:** Equip young people and youth workers with the knowledge and tools to establish a Youth Advisory Council (YAC), providing them with a structured platform for active citizenship and participation in decision-making processes.
- **Fostering Sustainability:** Learn effective strategies to launch and maintain a successful YAC, ensuring its long-term impact within your community.

- **Stakeholders and Partners:**

Identifying Key Stakeholders and Decision-Makers:

- **Step 1 - Brainstorm a List:** Begin by gathering a group of young people interested in forming a YAC. Brainstorm a comprehensive list of individuals and groups who might be interested in, impacted by, or able to contribute to the YAC's success.

This could include:

- Government officials: School board members, city council members, or representatives from relevant government agencies.
- Youth-serving organizations: Existing youth groups, after-school programs, or community centres.

- Educational institutions: Schools, universities, or vocational training centres.
 - Parents' associations and faith-based organizations.
 - Local businesses and media outlets.
- **Step 2 - Categorize Stakeholders:** Once you have a comprehensive list, categorize stakeholders according to their potential level of influence (high, medium, low) and their interest in the YAC (high, medium, low). This will help you prioritize your outreach efforts.
- **Step 3 - Partner Identification:**
 - Research Existing Initiatives: Research existing youth initiatives and programs in your community. Contact these organizations to learn about their work, identify potential areas of collaboration, and explore the possibility of partnering with them.
 - Identify Potential Mentors: Look for adults in your community who are passionate about youth development and willing to offer guidance and support to the YAC. These mentors can be educators, community leaders, or professionals who share the YAC's goals.



- **Additional Tips:**

- Utilize online resources to find youth councils in other communities and learn from their experiences in stakeholder engagement.
- Consider attending community events or meetings to connect with potential stakeholders and partners.

Building Relationships with Local Governments, Organizations, and Community Groups – Strategies:

- Organize informational meetings or workshops to introduce the concept of a YAC and its potential benefits to local stakeholders
- Develop a clear communication strategy outlining the YAC's goals and how it can collaborate with existing initiatives
- Partner with local organizations or community groups that already work with youth to leverage their networks and expertise for recruitment and outreach.

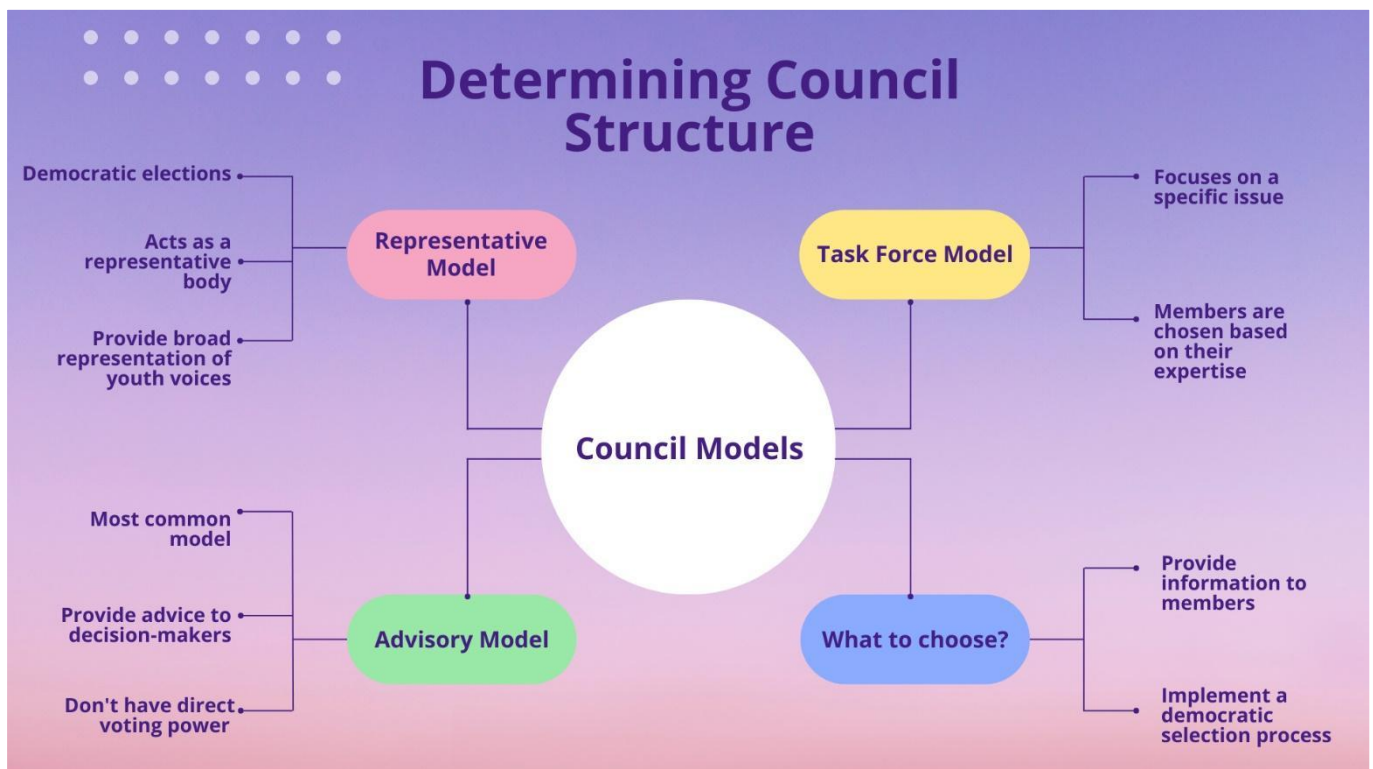
- **Council Structure and Membership Criteria**

Determining Council Structure and Membership Criteria:

- **Council Models:** The council model you choose will shape the structure and function of your YAC. It's important to select a model that aligns with your YAC's goals and the level of involvement you envision for its members. Here's an overview of some common YAC models:
- **Representative Model:** This model involves democratic elections to select council members who represent a specific constituency (e.g., schools, neighbourhoods). The council acts as a representative body, bringing the voices and concerns of their constituents to the decision-making table. This model is well-suited for YACs aiming to provide broad representation of youth voices on various community issues.
- **Task Force Model:** This model focuses on a specific issue or project and has a defined timeframe for its work. Members are chosen based on their expertise or experience related to the task force's focus. The Task Force Model is a good

choice for tackling a specific challenge or developing a concrete policy recommendation within a set timeframe.

- **Advisory Model:** This is the most common model. Advisory Councils typically provide advice and recommendations to decision-makers but don't have direct voting power. The Advisory Model offers flexibility and can be adapted to various YAC goals, from providing general youth input to focusing on specific areas like education or environmental policy.



- **Membership Eligibility and Selection Criteria:** Specify criteria such as age range, residency requirements, areas of interest, education, etc. Example: Youth between the ages of 16-25 who reside in [City Name] and are interested in gender equality issues.
- **Term Limits and Roles:** Establishing clear term limits and defining roles for council members helps ensure continuity, fosters leadership development, and distributes responsibilities effectively. Here are some considerations:
 - **Term Limits:** Set a term limit for council membership to allow for rotation and inclusion of new perspectives. Common term lengths are one or two

years, with the possibility of re-election. You can also specify a maximum number of consecutive terms a member can serve.

- **Council Structure and Roles:** The specific structure and roles within the YAC will depend on the size and needs of the council. Here's an example of a hierarchical structure with common roles:

Executive Committee:

Chairperson:

Leads council meetings, ensures adherence to bylaws, and represents the council to external stakeholders.

Vice-Chairperson:

Supports the Chairperson and assumes their duties in their absence.

Secretary:

Takes minutes during meetings, maintains council records, and distributes information to members.

Treasurer (Optional):

Oversees the council's budget (if applicable) and tracks expenses.

Committee Chairs (Optional):

If the council establishes standing committees to focus on specific areas (e.g., education, environment, social issues), each committee can have a designated chair to lead discussions and initiatives.

General Members:

all other council members actively participate in discussions, contribute to projects, and represent the voice of youth within the council.

- **Operating Procedures**

Implementing Operating Procedures:

- The Youth Advisory Council (YAC) will function effectively with a clearly defined set of bylaws that govern its operations. These bylaws should be developed

collaboratively with council members to foster ownership, transparency, and accountability. Here's a general process you can follow:

- **Establish a Bylaws Committee:** Select a small group of interested council members to spearhead the development of the bylaws. This committee can research existing bylaws of other youth councils or consult with advisors or mentors for guidance.
- **Brainstorming and Drafting:** Organize a brainstorming session with all council members to gather ideas and input on the key components of the bylaws. This may include topics like meeting attendance, voting procedures, officer roles and responsibilities, conflict resolution mechanisms, and amendment procedures. The Bylaws Committee will then draft a preliminary document based on the group discussion.
- **Review and Revision:** Circulate the draft bylaws among all council members for review and feedback. Schedule a follow-up meeting to discuss suggestions and revise the document accordingly.
- **Approval and Adoption:** Once a final draft is agreed upon by a majority of the council members, hold a vote for adoption of the bylaws. The bylaws can be reviewed and amended periodically as needed through a similar process.
- **Decision-Making Processes:** The YAC bylaws should also establish clear guidelines for how decisions will be made within the council. Here are some common decision-making models to consider:
 - **Simple Majority Vote:** This is the most common approach, where a majority of voting members present at a meeting is required to pass a motion.
 - **Consensus-Based Decision-Making:** This approach emphasizes reaching a collective agreement where all members feel heard and can support the final decision. It can be a time-consuming process but fosters inclusivity and ownership.
 - **Supermajority Vote:** This method requires a higher threshold than a simple majority, such as two-thirds of the voting

members, to pass a motion. This can be useful for critical decisions.

- **Bylaws Examples:** Here are some specific examples of bylaws clauses you can include:
 - **Meeting Attendance:** Define expectations for attendance at regular meetings and outline consequences for excessive absences.
 - **Voting Procedures:** Specify who is eligible to vote (voting members vs. observers) and establish procedures for proxy voting if a member cannot attend a meeting.
 - **Officer Roles and Responsibilities:** Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each council officer (e.g., Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer) to ensure smooth operation.
 - **Conflict Resolution Mechanisms:** Establish a process for addressing disagreements or conflicts that may arise within the council, promoting respectful communication and problem-solving.
 - **Amendment Procedures:** Outline the steps required to propose and amend the bylaws, ensuring a balance between stability and flexibility.
- **Additional Tips:** Consider including sample templates or resources to guide council members in drafting specific sections of the bylaws. Encourage the YAC to seek legal counsel to review the bylaws and ensure compliance with any relevant local regulations.

- **Evaluation and Feedback**

To evaluate the success of the YAC, facilitators can use a combination of methods, such as pre and post-surveys to assess knowledge and attitudes, meeting minutes to track progress on goals, and focus group discussions to gather feedback from council members.

- **Additional Resources**

UNICEF Guidelines for Adolescent Participation

This comprehensive resource from UNICEF offers guidance on creating an enabling environment for adolescent participation, including rights-based approaches, key strategies, and considerations for monitoring and evaluation. While the resource is designed for a broader context, it offers valuable insights for establishing and empowering Youth Advisory Councils.

<https://www.unicef.org/media/73296/file/ADAP-Guidelines-for-Participation.pdf>

Game Changers: Establishing a Youth Advisory Council

This toolkit from generationOn offers a comprehensive guide for planning, creating, and maintaining a Youth Advisory Council (YAC). It covers key concepts, provides planning tools, and outlines steps from the initial idea to selecting council members. While the guide is designed for generationOn programs, the general steps and resources can be applicable to various YACs.

https://www.youthpower.org/sites/default/files/YouthPower/resources/game_changers_yac_toolkit.pdf

Youth Council Toolkit - UMass Chan Medical School

This resource from UMass Chan Medical School's Transitions ACR program offers a toolkit for creating advisory boards specifically for young people with mental health conditions. While it might be tailored to their program, it can still be a valuable resource to explore for general ideas and steps in establishing a youth council focused on mental health.

<https://www.umassmed.edu/TransitionsACR/resources/youth-council-toolkit/>

Office of the UN Youth Envoy

Offers resources and information on youth participation in global decision-making.

<https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/>

European Youth Forum

A platform for youth organizations to engage with EU institutions.

<https://www.youthforum.org/>

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL TOOLKIT

Tool 2. Recruitment Strategy

Tool 2. Recruitment Strategy Template

- **Introduction**

The aim of this activity is to develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy to attract a diverse and representative group of young people to join your Youth Advisory Council (YAC). An inclusive YAC with a variety of perspectives and backgrounds fosters a richer discussion and ensures the council effectively represents the voices of your community's youth.

- **Objectives**

The activity objectives are:

- **Reaching a Broad Audience:** Develop a recruitment plan that effectively reaches a wide cross-section of young people in your target age group and geographic area.
- **Attracting Passionate Candidates:** Identify strategies to attract qualified candidates who are passionate about contributing to your YAC's goals and objectives.
- **Streamlining Accessibility:** Create a transparent and user-friendly application process that encourages youth participation in your YAC.

- **Target Audience and Stakeholders**

Identifying Key Demographic Groups and Communities

- **Conduct research to identify the different youth demographics within your community** (e.g., age groups, ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientations, ability levels). Here are some methods to consider:

- **Review existing data:** Look for data from local government agencies, school districts, or community organizations that may have demographics on youth populations.
 - **Conduct online surveys:** Utilize social media platforms or online survey tools to gather data on the demographics of your target audience.
 - **Focus group discussions:** Organize focus groups with representatives from different youth demographics to gain insights into their needs, interests, and preferred communication channels.
 - **Community mapping:** Partner with local youth organizations or community leaders to create a map that identifies youth centres, after-school programs, and other spaces frequented by young people.
 - **Community network:** Partner with local youth organizations, schools, community centres, and faith-based groups to reach diverse audiences and leverage their existing networks. Consider offering them incentives or benefits for their collaboration, such as workshops or training sessions for their staff, or priority access to YAC programs or resources.
- **Defining the Desired Composition and Diversity Goals for the Advisory Council**

Determine the ideal size and composition of your YAC based on your goals and resources. Consider factors like:

 - **The scope of the council's work** (e.g., focusing on a specific issue area may require expertise in that area)
 - **The need for efficient and productive meetings** (a smaller council may allow for more focused discussions)
 - **The logistical capacity to manage a larger group** (including space for meetings, materials, and staff support)

Establish clear diversity goals to ensure the council reflects the demographics of your community. This may include setting quotas for representation based on factors like:

- **Age:** Consider setting an age range for council members to ensure youth perspectives are well-represented. Example: Aim for a council composition with 40% of members between 14-18 years old, 40% between 19-22 years old, and 20% between 23-25 years old.
- **Gender:** Strive for gender parity within the council.
- **Ethnicity:** Reflect the diversity of ethnicities present in your community. Example: If your community has a 30% Hispanic population, aim for at least 30% of council members to be Hispanic.
- **Socioeconomic Background:** Ensure representation from both low-income and high-income backgrounds.
- **Ability:** Include youth with disabilities and diverse neurotypes to bring valuable perspectives and experiences to the council.

Utilize tools and resources to assist with setting diversity goals:

- **Consult with local demographics data** to understand the youth population in your community.
- **Partner with diversity and inclusion experts** to develop a framework for setting achievable and measurable diversity goals.
- **Examples of Diversity Goals:**
 - A YAC focused on environmental issues in a suburban community with a large immigrant population may set a goal of having 50% female representation, 30% representation from low-income backgrounds, and 20% representation from immigrant families.
 - A YAC advising a city council on youth recreation programs may aim for a council with equal representation from all high schools within the city to ensure diverse perspectives on youth needs and interests.
- **Outreach Methods and Channels:**

Tailor outreach methods to specific demographics: Consider the preferred communication channels and online platforms most frequented by your target demographics. Example: Utilize Instagram and TikTok for younger audiences, while

Facebook and local newspapers might be more effective for reaching older youth or parents of youth.

Develop partnerships for targeted outreach: Partner with influencers or youth organizations that have strong connections with specific community groups. Example: Partner with a local LGBTQ+ youth centre to promote the YAC opportunity to their members and encourage applications.

- **Utilize creative outreach methods:** Think outside the box to grab attention and generate interest. Example: Organize a flash mob or public art project related to the YAC's focus area to raise awareness and spark conversation.
- **Develop a social media campaign:** Create engaging content (e.g., videos, infographics, Q&A sessions) to promote the YAC on social media platforms. Encourage potential applicants to share the campaign using a designated hashtag.
- **Offer incentives for application referrals:** Encourage current youth organization members or community leaders to refer potential candidates by offering them incentives like workshops or recognition for their contribution.
- **Track and analyse results:** Monitor the reach and engagement of your outreach efforts on different platforms. This will help you identify the most successful methods and adjust your strategy accordingly.

- **Creating Application Processes and Materials**

Design an application form that is clear, concise, and easy to complete online or in paper format.

Keep the application short and focused on relevant criteria such as applicant's age, area of interest, relevant skills and experiences, and motivation for joining the council.

Consider offering alternative application methods like video submissions or short essays to cater to different learning styles and preferences.

Example Application Sheet:

Youth Advisory Council (YAC) Application	Applicant Information
Name:	
Age:	
Grade Level (if applicable):	
School (if applicable):	
Email Address:	
Phone Number (optional):	
Why are you interested in joining the Youth Advisory Council?	
What skills or experiences do you bring to the YAC?	
What are you passionate about in your community?	
Please select the top 3 issues you are most interested in working on within the YAC: (Choose from a list provided by the YAC based on their focus areas)	
Additional Information	
Please submit your completed application by [Date] to [Email Address or Submission Method]	

Note: This is a simplified example, and the specific questions and format may vary depending on the YAC's needs and goals.

- **Hosting Information Sessions, Workshops, or Q&A Sessions for Prospective Applicants**

Plan engaging and informative sessions:

- **Tailor the content** to the specific interests and needs of your target audience. Example: If your YAC focuses on environmental issues, the information session could feature a presentation from a local environmental organization or a panel discussion with young climate activists.

- **Consider incorporating interactive elements** like quizzes, polls, or group discussions to keep the audience engaged.
- **Provide clear and concise information** about the YAC's purpose, goals, application process, and selection criteria.

Promote the sessions effectively:

- **Utilize various outreach channels** (e.g., social media, school announcements, flyers) to reach your target audience and encourage participation.
- **Offer incentives for attendance**, such as refreshments, raffles, or priority consideration for the application process (if applicable).
- **Create a welcoming and inclusive environment:**
 - **Ensure the session space is accessible and comfortable** for all participants.
 - **Provide opportunities for questions and open discussion**, fostering a sense of dialogue and connection between potential applicants and YAC representatives.
 - **Utilize inclusive language and presentation styles** to cater to diverse learning preferences.
- **Offer alternative access options:**
 - **Record the information session** and make the recording available online for those who cannot attend in person.
 - **Provide transcripts or closed captions for recorded sessions** to ensure accessibility for individuals with hearing impairments.
 - **Offer additional Q&A sessions or one-on-one consultations** for those who may have further questions about the YAC or application process.
- **Evaluation and Feedback**

Track the effectiveness of your outreach methods: Monitor the reach and engagement of your outreach efforts on different platforms (e.g., number of website visits, social media impressions, applications received). This will help you identify the

most successful methods and adjust your strategy accordingly. Consider using website analytics tools or social media insights to track key metrics.

Gather feedback from applicants (both successful and unsuccessful):

- **Conduct surveys or short interviews** after the application deadline to gather feedback on the application process, outreach methods, and overall experience.
- **Ask specific questions** about the clarity of the application materials, ease of access to information, and perceived fairness of the selection process.
- **Offer an optional space for open-ended feedback** to gain valuable insights from applicants.

Analyse the data and make improvements:

- **Compile and analyse the data** collected from tracking and feedback mechanisms.
- **Identify areas for improvement** in your outreach strategy, application process, or overall recruitment efforts.
- **Use this information to refine your approach** for future YAC recruitment cycles.

- **Additional Resources**

Youth Forum Policy Library

Includes a guide for recruiting young people for decision-making bodies.

<https://tools.youthforum.org/policy-library/youth-participation/>

ACT for Youth: Recruitment and Retention Resources

The ACT for Youth Centre for Community Action (ACT) offers a collection of resources to help youth development programs improve participation. This toolkit includes tools for assessing current practices, developing strategies for recruitment and retention, and overcoming common obstacles.

<https://actforyouth.net/pyd/professionals/facilitation-tips.cfm>

Idealist Careers

Idealist is a platform that connects individuals with mission-driven organizations. This website can be a valuable tool for YACs to advertise their council positions and attract passionate young people.

<https://www.idealist.org/en>

YVote - Engaging Young People in Elections

YVote provides tips and strategies for engaging young people in elections, which can be adapted for recruiting young people to participate on a Youth Advisory Council.

<https://yvote.eu/>

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL TOOLKIT

Tool 3. Meeting Facilitation Plan

Tool 3. Meeting Facilitation Plan

- **Introduction**

The aim of the activity is to equip facilitators with the necessary skills and strategies to conduct effective and productive meetings for a Youth Advisory Council (YAC). Well-facilitated meetings ensure all council members feel heard, contribute meaningfully to discussions, and actively participate in decision-making processes. This fosters a sense of ownership and accountability among council members, leading to more impactful outcomes for the YAC.

- **Objectives**

The activity objectives are:

- **Fostering Inclusive Discussions:** Implement strategies to create a welcoming and engaging environment where all council members feel comfortable contributing their ideas.
- **Navigating Effective Facilitation:** Develop an understanding of key principles for facilitating productive YAC meetings, ensuring all voices are heard and decisions are made collaboratively.
- **Maintaining Transparency and Accountability:** Establish a clear process for documenting meeting minutes, action items, and communication with council members and stakeholders.

- **Preparing for Meetings**

Setting Clear Meeting Objectives and Goals

- At the beginning of each meeting cycle (e.g., monthly, quarterly), collaborate with council members to establish clear objectives and goals for upcoming meetings.
- These objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) and directly linked to the council's overall goals and priorities.

- Example Objective: "By the end of this meeting, the YAC will finalize its recommendations for the upcoming school board presentation on youth mental health initiatives."

Developing Meeting Agendas in Collaboration with Council Members

- Involve council members in shaping the meeting agenda.
- Solicit input on topics they'd like to discuss, presentations they'd like to see, and decisions that need to be made.
- Create a balanced agenda that includes time for updates, discussions, decision-making, and action planning.
- Circulate the draft agenda well in advance of the meeting to allow council members to prepare and submit any additional items they wish to discuss.

Ensuring Accessibility and Accommodations for All Participants

- Consider the diverse needs of council members when planning meetings.
- Offer materials in accessible formats (e.g., large print, Braille, audio recordings).
- Provide assistive technologies if needed (e.g., headphones, microphones).
- Schedule meetings in accessible locations with features like ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms.
- Offer remote participation options for members who cannot attend in person due to disability or other circumstances.

- **Implementing Meetings**

Facilitating Inclusive Discussions

- Employ techniques to ensure all council members have an opportunity to contribute:
 - Use icebreaker activities or prompts at the beginning of meetings to encourage participation.
 - Implement speaking rounds or hand signals to ensure everyone gets a chance to voice their opinions.

- Actively listen to all perspectives and acknowledge contributions from all members.
- Maintain a respectful and inclusive environment, addressing any disruptive behaviour or discriminatory language.

Productive Decision-Making

- **Utilize decision-making methods that are appropriate for the situation:**

- For routine matters, consider consensus-based approaches.
- For more complex issues, implement voting procedures while ensuring clear understanding of the voting process and potential outcomes.
- Facilitate discussions to reach common ground and arrive at solutions that represent the collective voice of the council.

Documenting Meeting Proceedings

- Assign a dedicated notetaker or utilize a collaborative note-taking tool to document key points of discussion, decisions made, and action items.
- Develop a clear and consistent template for meeting minutes that captures essential information.
- Share meeting minutes with council members and relevant stakeholders following each meeting.

- **Follow-up on Meetings**

- **Communicating Action Items:**

- Clearly define action items at the end of each meeting, including who is responsible for each task and the timeframe for completion.
- Utilize project management tools or online platforms to track progress on action items and ensure accountability.

- **Monitoring Progress and Accountability**

- Dedicate a portion of future meetings to reviewing progress on action items and addressing any challenges faced by council members.
- Celebrate completed tasks and accomplishments of the council.

- **Evaluation and Feedback**

- Gather feedback from council members after each meeting to assess the effectiveness of the facilitation and overall meeting experience.
- Utilize anonymous surveys or short reflection exercises to encourage honest feedback.
- Ask specific questions about the meeting agenda, facilitation techniques, and opportunities for participation.
- Analyse the feedback and use it to continuously improve your facilitation skills and meeting structure.

- **Additional Resources**

The Art of Facilitation

Provides a wealth of information on facilitation techniques, group dynamics, and creating effective meetings. It includes articles, templates, and interactive exercises.

<https://www.artoffacilitation.net/>

CT for Youth: Facilitation Tips and Activities

The ACT for Youth Centre for Community Action (ACT) offers a variety of resources to support effective facilitation of youth group meetings. This includes tips for preparing the space, engaging participants with different learning styles, managing group dynamics, and using presentations effectively. ACT also provides a collection of icebreakers, energizers, and group activities.

<https://actforyouth.net/pyd/professionals/facilitation-tips.cfm>

FACE Facilitation Training Resources

This resource developed in an Erasmus+ program transnational collaboration offers a comprehensive guide on facilitation skills for youth workers. While the program is designed for youth workers, the materials including videos, simulations, games, and exercises can be valuable for anyone who facilitates youth group meetings. The focus is on practical tools for effective communication, problem-solving, and workshop design

https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox_tool_download-file-1672/Booklet%20FACE%20TC.pdf

MEETING FACILITATION PLAN

DATE _____

NAME _____

AGENDA

ANALYSIS

IDENTIFY IMPACT AREAS

WHAT EVIDENCE DO YOU HAVE TO SUPPORT THE YAC'S IMPACT?

BUILDING ON THESE SUCCESSES, HOW CAN THE YAC MAKE AN EVEN GREATER IMPACT IN THE FUTURE?

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL TOOLKIT

Tool 4. Goal-Setting Worksheet

Tool 4. Goal-Setting Worksheet

- **Introduction**

The aim of this activity is to guide Youth Advisory Council (YAC) members through a collaborative goal-setting process. This worksheet will help the council define clear, achievable goals for their work, establish timelines for completion, and develop strategies to track progress and ensure accountability. By working together to set SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound), the YAC can ensure their efforts are focused, impactful, and aligned with their overall mission.

- **Objectives**

The activity objectives are:

- **Aligning Your Vision:** Develop a shared understanding of the goal-setting process and its importance for your YAC's work.
- **Setting SMART Goals:** Identify key focus areas and establish Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound goals to ensure your YAC's efforts are impactful and aligned with your mission.
- **Tracking Progress and Achieve Success:** Create a timeline for achieving your goals and develop strategies to monitor progress and hold yourselves accountable.

- **Goal-Setting Activities**

Defining Focus Areas and Goals:

- Brainstorm a comprehensive list of potential focus areas for the YAC. Consider the council's mission, the needs of your community, and any current youth priorities.
- Prioritize these areas through group discussion and voting to identify 2-3 key focus areas for the YAC to address during the upcoming cycle (e.g., mental health awareness, environmental sustainability, youth employment opportunities).

- For each focus area, develop specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goals.
- Example Goal: "Increase youth voter registration by 15% in our community by the next local election."

Establishing Timelines

- Break down each goal into smaller, more manageable tasks. For each task, determine a realistic timeframe for completion.
- Utilize a calendar or project management tool to visualize the timeline and track deadlines.

Tracking Progress

- Identify key indicators or metrics to measure progress towards each goal. Example: For the voter registration goal, the metric could be the number of new youth voters registered each month.
- Schedule regular check-ins (e.g., monthly meetings) to review progress, discuss challenges, and adjust strategies as needed.

- **Accountability**

Establish a clear system for accountability

- Assign specific tasks and responsibilities to council members for each goal.
- Encourage peer-to-peer accountability by having members report on their progress during meetings.
- Consider involving a dedicated YAC advisor or mentor to provide additional support and guidance.

- **Evaluation and Feedback**

- At the end of the goal-setting period, evaluate the success of the YAC's goals.
- Analyse whether the goals were achieved, identify any challenges encountered, and celebrate accomplishments.
- Gather feedback from council members on the goal-setting process itself.
- Ask for suggestions on how to improve clarity, efficiency, and overall effectiveness for future goal-setting cycles.

- **Additional Resources**

SMART Goals Guide

This website offers a comprehensive guide to setting SMART goals, with practical tips and examples to help define clear, achievable goals for collaborative projects.

<https://www.mindtools.com/a4wo118/smart-goals>

Smartsheet - Project Management Templates

Smartsheet offers a collection of free, editable project management templates that can be adapted for YAC use. These templates can help YACs improve transparency, efficiency, collaboration, and overall project execution. In addition to templates, Smartsheet provides a comprehensive list of articles with templates in other platforms, covering various aspects of project planning.

<https://www.smartsheet.com/content-center/best-practices/project-management-guide/templates-project-management-b>

Kanban Boards for Visualizing Tasks

Several online tools allow for creating visual Kanban boards to track tasks, deadlines, and progress. This can be a helpful tool for YACs to promote transparency and accountability within the council.

<https://trello.com/>

<https://asana.com/>

<https://www.airtable.com/>

<https://monday.com/>



GOAL-SETTING WORKSHEET

DATE _____

PERSON RESPONSIBLE _____

FOCUS AREA 1

FOCUS AREA 2

FOCUS AREA 3

SMART OBJECTIVE

SMART OBJECTIVE

SMART OBJECTIVE

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME

RESOURCES

TASKS

TIMELINE

NOTES

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL TOOLKIT

Tool 5. Reflection Worksheet

Tool 5. Reflection Worksheet

- **Introduction**

The aim of this activity is to provide Youth Advisory Council (YAC) members with a dedicated space for self-reflection on their experiences, contributions, and growth within the council. Regular reflection allows young people to develop their critical thinking skills, identify areas for improvement, and celebrate their accomplishments. This structured reflection worksheet guides YAC members through a series of questions designed to foster self-awareness and enhance their overall YAC experience.

- **Objectives**

The activity objectives are:

- **Reflecting on Your Journey:** Explore your experiences and contributions within the YAC, fostering a deeper sense of self-awareness.
- **Sharpening Your Critical Thinking:** Analyse your experiences and contributions, enhancing your critical thinking skills.
- **Celebrating Success and Identify Areas for Growth:** Reflect on both accomplishments and areas for improvement, fostering ownership and accountability for your individual and collective YAC achievements.

- **Self-Reflection Question 1 - What are the most valuable skills or knowledge you have gained through your participation in the YAC?**

Prompts for Self-Reflection

- List the specific skills or knowledge you have acquired. (e.g., public speaking, teamwork, project management, research skills)

- Describe how you have developed these skills through your YAC experiences. (e.g., presenting recommendations to a city council meeting, collaborating on a community service project)
- Reflect on how these skills will be beneficial to you in the future. (e.g., college applications, future career paths, personal leadership development)

Answer Analysis

- **Compile and Quantify Skills:** Create a list of all the skills identified by YAC members in their responses. Use a table or chart to tally the frequency of each skill mentioned.
 - **Analyse Skill Distribution:** Identify the skills that were most frequently mentioned (highly identified) and those that were mentioned less frequently (least identified).
 - **Facilitate Discussion - Skill Development:** Lead a group discussion centred on the skills identified as "least identified." Prompt: "How can we, as a YAC, create more opportunities to develop these skills?"
 - **Brainstorm:** Encourage YAC members to suggest ideas for workshops, training sessions, or mentorship programs that could address these skill gaps.
 - **Facilitate Discussion - Skill Utilization:** Shift the discussion to focus on the "highly identified" skills. Prompt: "How can we leverage these strengths to further the YAC's goals?"
 - **Brainstorm:** Encourage YAC members to brainstorm ways to utilize these skills more effectively within the council's projects and initiatives.
- **Self-Reflection Question 2 - Describe a situation where you faced a challenge as a YAC member. How did you overcome this challenge, and what did you learn from the experience?**

Prompts for Self-Reflection

- Clearly identify the challenge you encountered. (e.g., difficulty reaching consensus on a proposal, public speaking anxiety, managing time commitments)

- Explain the strategies you used to address the challenge. (e.g., facilitated brainstorming activities, practiced presentations in advance, sought support from peers or mentors)
- Reflect on the learnings and insights you gained from overcoming this challenge. (e.g., importance of effective communication, value of collaboration, personal resilience)

Answer Analysis

- Identify Common Challenges: After individual reflection, facilitate a group discussion to identify common challenges faced by YAC members.
 - Facilitate Discussion - Overcoming Challenges: Prompt: "What strategies did members find most helpful in overcoming these challenges?"
 - Facilitate knowledge sharing: Encourage members to share successful strategies with each other.
 - Facilitate Discussion - Learning Application: Prompt: "How can we apply these learnings to future challenges, either within the YAC or in other areas of your life?"
 - Brainstorm: Encourage YAC members to suggest ways to incorporate these learnings into YAC structures or processes to better support future members.
- **Self-Reflection Question 3 - In what ways do you believe your participation in the YAC has made a positive impact on your community?**

Prompts for Self-Reflection

- Identify specific YAC projects or initiatives that contributed to positive community change. (e.g., organizing a youth voter registration drive, advocating for improved youth mental health resources)
- Describe the intended outcomes of these projects and the impact they have had on the community. (e.g., increased youth voter turnout, increased access to mental health support services)
- Reflect on your personal role in contributing to these positive outcomes. (e.g., spreading awareness, leading project teams, fundraising efforts)

Answer Analysis

- Identify Impact Areas: After individual reflection, facilitate a group discussion to identify the various ways YAC activities have contributed to positive community change.
 - Evidence Gathering: Prompt: "What evidence do you have to support the YAC's impact?" This could include news articles, data on project outcomes, or testimonials from community members.
 - Facilitate Discussion - Future Impact: Prompt: "Building on these successes, how can the YAC make an even greater impact in the future?"
 - Brainstorm: Encourage YAC members to brainstorm ideas for new projects or initiatives that address identified community needs.
- **Evaluation and Feedback**
 - Facilitate a group discussion following the individual reflection exercise.
 - Encourage council members to share their key takeaways and insights from their reflections.
 - Create a supportive environment where members can learn from each other's experiences.
 - Consider utilizing anonymous surveys to gather feedback on the reflection worksheet and its effectiveness in promoting self-growth.

- **Additional Resources**

Reflective Journal Guide

This guide provides prompts and tips for journaling, which can be an ongoing method for YAC members to engage in self-reflection beyond the structured worksheet. Journaling allows YAC members to document their experiences, thoughts, and feelings throughout their time on the council, fostering deeper self-reflection and personal growth.

<https://journey.cloud/reflective-journal>

Mindful.org

Mindful.org is a reputable website offering resources on mindfulness and self-compassion. Self-compassion is a crucial aspect of self-reflection, allowing YAC members to approach their reflections with kindness and understanding. This website offers exercises to cultivate self-compassion, promoting a positive and supportive reflection process.

<https://www.mindful.org/a-love-letter-to-yourself-self-compassion-practice/>

Reflection Toolkit – NYLC.org

The National Youth Leadership Council Reflection Toolkit provides a comprehensive overview of reflection in the context of service learning. It highlights the benefits of reflection, including increased meaning-making, improved service delivery, and personal growth. The guide offers various prompts and strategies for facilitating individual and group reflection, making it a valuable resource for YAC members to deepen their understanding of their experiences within the council. The resource acknowledges different learning styles and provides activities adaptable to various situations.

https://nylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/ReflectionToolkit_subm-byBjorn.pdf

REFLECTION WORKSHEET 1

DATE _____

NAME _____

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE SKILLS OR KNOWLEDGE YOU HAVE GAINED THROUGH YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE YAC?

ANALYSIS

HIGHLY IDENTIFIED

LEAST IDENTIFIED

HOW CAN WE, AS A YAC, CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP THESE SKILLS?

HOW CAN WE LEVERAGE THESE STRENGTHS TO FURTHER THE YAC'S GOALS?

NOTES

REFLECTION WORKSHEET 2

DATE _____

NAME _____

DESCRIBE A SITUATION WHERE YOU FACED A CHALLENGE AS A YAC MEMBER. HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THIS CHALLENGE, AND WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE?

ANALYSIS

IDENTIFY COMMON CHALLENGES

WHAT STRATEGIES DID MEMBERS FIND MOST HELPFUL IN OVERCOMING THESE CHALLENGES?

HOW CAN WE APPLY THESE LEARNINGS TO FUTURE CHALLENGES, EITHER WITHIN THE YAC OR IN OTHER AREAS OF YOUR LIFE?

REFLECTION WORKSHEET 3

DATE _____

NAME _____

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE YAC HAS MADE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON YOUR COMMUNITY?

ANALYSIS

IDENTIFY IMPACT AREAS

WHAT EVIDENCE DO YOU HAVE TO SUPPORT THE YAC'S IMPACT?

BUILDING ON THESE SUCCESSES, HOW CAN THE YAC MAKE AN EVEN GREATER IMPACT IN THE FUTURE?