

LEVEL Youth Policy Program FAQ

To help you decide if the Youth Policy Program is right for you, we have answered our most frequently asked questions. And, if you have more questions not answered below, please do not hesitate to email us at level@vancouverfoundation.ca.

1. What is the age range for 'youth'?

The LEVEL Youth Policy Program (YPP) is open to self-identified Indigenous and racialized immigrant and refugee youth and young adults between the ages of 19 to 29.

2. Do I need to have previous experience in policy or non-profit work?

No. The YPP is an opportunity to learn about the public policy process, gain new skills and deepen existing knowledge. Previous education, work or volunteer experience engaging in policy is not required.

3. What is the time commitment required?

The full program duration will be from February to September 2022. Depending on public health orders at the time, we hope to deliver YPP through a blend of gathering in person and online. We intend to hold in person gatherings for Module 4 in Victoria and Modules 1 and 6 in Vancouver.

In-person modules will take place between 8:30am to 4:30pm, two days a month. Online modules will take place between 8:30am to 4:30pm but will either be AM or PM sessions, four days a month.

Participants will also be matched with a faculty/mentor to be guided throughout the development of their projects. These scheduled phone calls and/or meetings with mentors will be mandatory. Participants will also have the opportunity to attend video calls with staff and facilitators in between Modules 5 and 6 as they develop their final projects.

4. I am interested in the program; however, I cannot attend all of the training modules. Should I still apply?

The YPP will prioritize those applicants who can commit to attending all the training modules. The tentative dates for the modules are:

- Module 1: Introduction to Public Policy and Each Other – February 17 & 18, 2022
- Module 2: Public Policy in BC – March 10 & 11 and 17 & 18, 2022
- Module 3: Stakeholder Analysis and Budget Cycles – April 14 & 15 and 21 & 22, 2022

- Module 4: Canadian Government and Indigenous Governance – May 19 & 20, 2022
- Module 5: Storytelling and New Narratives in Shaping Policy – June 16 & 17, 2022
- Module 6: Reflecting and Moving Forward – September 22 & 23, 2022

Please note that these dates are subject to change depending on public health orders but hopefully give you a sense of what the dates are to plan your schedules.

5. I am currently going to school full-time/working full-time. Will you provide a letter to my instructors/professors or employers to support my request for time off to attend the YPP?

We can provide letters to confirm your participation as one of the selected applicants and share the purpose of the program and the unique leadership opportunity it presents. Everything else in regard to making up assignments and exams for your courses or approved time off from work will have to be negotiated between you and your school and/or employer. We hope this letter is helpful when you ask your employer and/or professor(s) for time off ahead of time.

6. Will you require proof of COVID-19 vaccination?

As we follow BC public health orders, we hope to deliver YPP through a blend of gathering in person and online. And to ensure the safety of everyone including other participants, staff, faculty, and elders, we will require proof of COVID-19 vaccinations.

7. If I'm not comfortable meeting in person, is there an option to participate virtually?

Yes, if there are still public health orders in effect, we can accommodate virtual participation for in person gatherings if you do not feel comfortable attending. However, if the pandemic is over and public health orders are fully lifted, we ask that you participate in person.

8. Can you provide a general overview of the activities, assignments and learning?

Participants of the YPP will be part of a cohort/group of young leaders from across B.C. engaged in a supportive environment to strengthen their understanding of public policy. This will include individual and group-based assignments and activities. Examples include short readings, videos and other hands-on activities such as interviewing members of the local community to better understand an issue, learning about different advocacy campaigns or documenting personal learning reflections. Participants are expected to complete the assignments on time.

9. Will there be a final test or essay?

There is no test! Participants will each work on a policy project that supports their learning objectives. This includes producing a policy position paper or drafting a specific policy ask. Participants will be given a \$1,500 research stipend to support their projects. Vancouver Foundation will provide design, editing, high quality printing and other supports to produce a final project report that participants can be proud of. Participants will also be

matched with a faculty/mentor to get guidance and support throughout the development of their policy projects.

10. What training materials will participants receive?

Each participant will receive a workbook that contains all the learning objectives for each module, readings, assignments, guiding questions, links to short videos and other resources as needed. The workbook materials and resources will also be available online on the LEVEL website for program participants. If any of the participants are facing barriers related to internet or computer access, we will explore ways to support program needs and ensure ongoing access to training and learning materials.

11. How is Indigenous knowledge woven into the development of the program and how will it manifest throughout the program?

YPP will work from and within Indigenous people's worldviews, which can vary from person to person or nation to nation. An important premise of this training is to centre and focus on the fact that work to embed Indigenous knowledge has gone into developing this training. The training itself will primarily take place in Vancouver or online (depending on public health orders at the time) on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish peoples and seek to follow local protocols. Participants will be encouraged to reflect what it means to do policy and advocacy work on unceded Indigenous territories and to weave these learnings throughout the development of their policy projects. For example, the faculty will be comprised of Indigenous and diverse leaders, speakers, and trainers who will help ground the policy conversations by introducing participants to concepts of Indigenous governance.

12. Is there a cost to participate in YPP?

No. There is no financial cost or registration fee to participate in the program. If public health orders allow us to meet in person and if you live outside of the Metro Vancouver region, you may be eligible to have travel and accommodation costs covered (please see the question below). We do ask for your commitment of time in attending all the training modules.

13. Are travel, accommodation costs and meals provided?

If public health orders allow us to gather in person, all travel, accommodation, and meals costs will be covered by Vancouver Foundation for participants who live outside of the Metro Vancouver region. For participants living within the Metro Vancouver region, transit tickets will be made available. Refreshments and meals will be provided for all participants during the in-person modules. We will try to accommodate everyone's dietary restrictions as much as possible.

14. Do you provide multilingual supports and translations?

The program will be delivered in English as it is the common language used between Indigenous and immigrant and refugee youth. While we value language diversity and see this as an asset, the program currently does not have capacity to provide multilingual translations or interpretation for each module or to translate the policy projects but we do

celebrate if participants decide to incorporate different languages in their policy projects. Fluency in spoken English and at least basic proficiency in reading and writing English is a requirement to be part of this program.

15. Do you provide childcare support?

Yes. We can accommodate childcare support as needed for participants with young children if we're able to meet in person.

16. Will this program offer post-secondary credits?

No. Vancouver Foundation is unable to provide credits because we are not an academic/post-secondary institution. Vancouver Foundation is a community foundation with the vision to create healthy, livable, vibrant communities in British Columbia. We want to support and enable young people to create meaningful change.

17. Will participants receive an honorarium for being part of this program?

We are not providing an honorarium for participation at the end of each in-person training module; however, a research/project stipend of \$1,500 will be provided to participants to support the completion of their individual policy projects.

18. Is immigration status or Indigenous status required?

No, it is not required. You just need to self-identify as Indigenous or as a racialized immigrant or refugee young person, and currently residing in B.C.

19. Can international students apply?

We recognize that international students have unique experiences and challenges that are also different to the experiences and challenges of refugee or immigrant youth that have experienced the journey of migration. The LEVEL YPP program will prioritize racialized immigrant and refugee young people that have had the experience of migration, including students that came to Canada through the WUSC refugee program, as live-in care givers or the temporary foreign workers program.

20. Can trans, non-binary, and two-spirited young people apply?

Yes. We are committed to creating a shared learning environment where your gender identity is respected and affirmed, and the appropriate supports are provided for all participants to feel safe, welcomed, and able to fully participate.

21. What is the selection process?

This program is part of the overall LEVEL initiative at Vancouver Foundation. The LEVEL advisory committee, made up of volunteer community leaders both youth and adults as well as some members of YPP alumni from previous cohorts will review the applications for this program and provide recommendations to staff.

22. When will decisions be made?

We are aiming to communicate decisions via e-mail to everyone who applies by December 2021. If this timeline changes, we will notify all applicants.

23. Will I be able to apply next year if I don't get accepted this time?

This will be the last year Vancouver Foundation is hosting YPP. We are committed to partnering with another organization to deliver the program instead and encourage you to apply through them. We'll provide more details on where YPP will be offered once we're able to. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

THANK YOU!

We look forward to receiving your application and if you still have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at level@vancouverfoundation.ca.