

Youth Communication's mission is to elevate teen voices to create real change. Through the power of true stories, written by youth who have been systemically marginalized, we create more supportive and successful learning communities. Our vision is to create a more empathic and respectful world for and with our young people, so they feel represented, heard, and supported to achieve their dreams.

WHAT WE DO

Since 1980, Youth Communication has worked with youth facing systemic challenges –including youth of color, LGBTQ+ youth, and youth who are recent immigrants, living in foster care, unhoused, and economically struggling– to tell stories that support their peers and help adult professionals provide more equitable and effective services.

We run an award-winning writing program, in which NYC teens work one-on-one with professional editors to write true stories about their lives for the benefit of helping other young people navigate similar challenges.

We leverage the stories of young people to create change through our education program, providing teachers, after-school workers, and other youth-serving adults with culturally responsive, social and emotional learning programs. By centering youth voice, these programs engage students, inspire their confidence and feelings of self-worth, and show teachers and other adults who's in their classrooms.

WHO WE SERVE

With more than 1 million students, YC serves the largest public school district in the nation - New York City. NYC has a diverse student population with significant needs (10% unhoused; 73% economically disadvantaged; 14/1% English language learners; 21% with IEPs). Over 85% of youth participating in our NYC writing program identify as black or brown and come from under-resourced neighborhoods. Our professional development workshops and curricular resources are especially effective in communities committed to supporting youth of color, as well as youth in foster care, youth living in poverty, and LGBTQIA+ youth.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Young people often know exactly what they need. Adults just need the tools to listen.

Real stories can create real change. YC elevates youth voices to create that change.

Our young people are not being supported to succeed. Our institutions—schools, after-school programs, child welfare and juvenile justice systems—are struggling to engage and support our kids. Our stories provide staff with the tools they need to understand and meet their young people's needs.

The experts are already in the room. Our education partners have the opportunity to be an influential and affirming adult in a young person's life. We give them the youth perspective and expertise they need to do so.

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BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

LENGTH OF TERM

Board members are elected for three-year terms. There is no limit to the number of terms that a member may serve. Board members may be added at any time. The three-year term begins at the date of the annual meeting at which the member is elected, or the first annual meeting following the member's election. (Thus, the three-year term of a member elected in October begins at the following annual meeting in June.)

MEETINGS AND TIME COMMITMENT

- Attend and participate in four board meetings annually, usually at Youth Communication's midtown facilities. Board meetings are typically held from 5:30-7:00 PM.
- YC Board committees meet or conference call four to six times per year, depending on their respective work agendas. The Development and Finance committees may meet bi-weekly leading up to important events and campaigns, such as our annual spring benefit.
- Board members are expected to attend and invite their network to at least two special events per year: friend-raisers, webinars, open-mic nights, writer workshop visits, etc.

THE BOARD SUPPORTS THE WORK OF YC AND PROVIDES MISSION-BASED LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE. SPECIFIC BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Serve as an ambassador for YC's mission, purpose and goals
- Support and participate in the fund and friend raising activities of the organization (e.g. year end appeal; spring appeal; growth campaign; events; etc.)
- Support and evaluate the Executive Director
- Succession planning for senior leadership
- Participate in and oversee execution of strategic plan
- Monitor and strengthen programs and services
- Ensure adequate financial resources and provide financial oversight
- Build and develop a competent board
- Ensure legal and ethical integrity
- Enhance the YC's reputation and public profile
- Attend quarterly meetings and serve on at least one board committee

FUNDRAISING: BOARD GIVING POLICY

1. Every member should make a direct gift in an amount they can (a personally significant amount). We have an aspiration for at least \$5,000 per person.
2. Every member should "get" gifts and promote the organization as much as they can. It's a separate effort from making a personal donation. We would like everyone to have an aspiration of raising \$25,000 (this could include event sponsorships and foundation grants).
3. Every member is asked to support the annual benefit through a donation and "get" for it whatever they can. However, the board gift is the priority.
4. Every member is asked to support special fundraising initiatives, such as our growth capital campaign, which culminates in 2025 and "get" for it whatever they can from their networks.

YOUTH COMMUNICATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please complete both sides of this application, attach a copy of your resume, and return it to:
Lori Rose Benson <lbenson@youthcomm.org>.

Your application will be presented to and reviewed by the Board Governance Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE NO.: _____ TITLE: _____

COMPANY/OCCUPATION: _____

1. How did you hear about YOUTH COMMUNICATION?

2. Have you ever attended a YOUTH COMMUNICATION event? Volunteered at YOUTH COMMUNICATION or advised the YC staff? Served on a YC Board committee? If so, please explain.

3. Why do you wish to serve on YOUTH COMMUNICATION's Board and what do you hope to contribute?

4. Do you have any past work or volunteer experience with nonprofit agencies, or any organizations focused on issues related to youth development, education, mental health, and/or child welfare?

5. Please describe any past or current board service, including positions you held and committees that you have served on, as well as dates of service:

6. Please describe your past and current participation in civic, community, and/or religious groups, including dates of participation:

7. Please share any background on yourself or any skills or connections to YOUTH COMMUNICATION that you would like to add:

8. If someone recommended that you become a member of our organization's Board of Directors, please explain your relationship:

9. With respect to board meetings and/or committee calls, are any days or times preferable?

10. Other comments:

Board Applicant's Signature

Date

PLEASE NOTE: No person who has served as a member of the Board of Directors for YOUTH COMMUNICATION may apply for employment at YOUTH COMMUNICATION or its affiliates within a period of six (6) months after the termination of such service. No person who has served as an employee of YOUTH COMMUNICATION or its affiliates may apply for membership to the Board of Directors of YOUTH COMMUNICATION within a period of one (1) year after the termination of such employment.

