



GROWTH AND INNOVATION GRANTS

GROWING YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT IN RURAL MN

GET PAID FOR CIVICALLY ENGAGING YOUR STUDENTS!

YMCA Youth in Government (YIG) is a proven civic youth development program that brings students of all backgrounds, opinions and regions of the state together to learn and grow, to discuss and debate social issues and policy solutions, to experience first-hand how government functions, and to use their voice to respectfully advocate for issues that are important to them. Specific details of the program can be found at www.ymcayouthvoice.org.

Research shows that youth civic engagement leads to increased academic performance and improved social-emotional well-being, helping young people build skills and networks valued in the workplace and that support economic mobility.

As we build back program participation to pre-pandemic levels, we are focusing delegation development efforts on young people from historically under-represented areas, including rural Minnesota. Non-metro voices do not always feel represented in Minnesota government and policy making. At the YMCA, we value what everyone brings to the table. We know that as the number and diversity of program participants grows, so does the opportunity for sharing different perspectives, richer conversations and debate, and a deeper, more meaningful experience for ALL program participants.

Our programs are open to any student in Minnesota and we offer need-based scholarships to help defray conference registration costs. **YMCA Growth and Innovation Grants** are available for NEW school-based delegations in Greater Minnesota to help with other costs that assure a successful, positive experience for students.

ymcayouthvoice.org



DELEGATION START-UP GRANTS

If your school qualifies for a **YMCA Growth and Innovation Grant**, first-year benefits include:

- A \$2,000 stipend for the delegation director (preferably a licensed educator) who is required to:
 - Recruit at least five students to create a delegation that prepares for and attends the Youth in Government conference in January 2023.
 - Hold weekly delegation meetings in the three months prior to the conference.
 - Attend the multi-day conference with their delegates and arrange for additional chaperones if needed.
 - Participate in a cohort of first-year delegation directors to learn strategies for running -- and sustaining -- a successful delegation at your school.
 - Provide written feedback to the YMCA Center for Youth voice detailing delegation challenges and successes.
- \$250 stipend for delegation meeting expenses and/or apparel for delegates.

Grant recipients may also be eligible for reimbursement of approved conference transportation expenses.

On an ongoing basis, every student whose family qualifies for free- and reduced-price lunch will receive a 65% reduction in program fees and a \$50 VISA gift card to spend at the conference. After the first year, delegation directors will receive an annual financial stipend based on the number of delegates who attend the conference.

For information about starting a new YIG delegation at your school, please contact Michael Wall, YMCA Center for Youth Voice Outreach Manager at michael.wall@ymcanorth.org or 612-263-9893.