



2026–2027 SYTA YOUTH FOUNDATION COMMITTEES

Draft Updated: September 2026

MISSION: *The SYTA Youth Foundation connects youth with the resources required for travel experiences that will inspire them to be confident, connected, and globally responsible citizens.*

SYTA Youth Foundation Committees, Subcommittees, and Task Forces, are the heart of our volunteer network. These groups bring members together to support the work of the Foundation. Whether you're new to SYTA or a long-time member, there's a place for you to get involved, grow your leadership experience, and make an impact.

Each volunteer group is supported by a Chair and a Staff Liaison. Most terms are one to two years.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall be composed of the Treasurer (serves as Chair), two trustees, and a minimum of two other committee members. The committee reviews the Foundation's financial health, guides budget planning, and ensures sound stewardship of Foundation assets.

The Finance Committee is responsible for:

- Reviewing the annual budget developed by SYTA staff with the Executive Committee, and making recommendations regarding the proposed annual budget for Board of Trustees approval.
- Reporting to the Board regarding the Foundation's financial performance relative to the annual budget, including regular review of financial statements and cash position.
- Overseeing the development and implementation of the Foundation's investment policy and the investment of the Foundation's assets.
- Monitoring reserves and ensuring the Foundation maintains adequate operating funds.

Governance Committee

The Governance Committee shall be composed of the Secretary (serves as Chair), two trustees, and a minimum of two other committee members. The committee ensures that the Foundation's governance documents are consistent, accurate, and up to date, and works directly with the Staff Liaison to create and revise policies as voted upon by the Board in alignment with SYTA's Bylaws.

The Governance Committee is responsible:

- Under the leadership of the Vice Chair, oversees the annual audit of the Foundation's finances and preparation of the Foundation's tax returns by an independent auditing firm.
- Ensuring the Foundation's compliance with its governance and other legal requirements.

- Reviewing the Bylaws and Policies of the Foundation and making recommendations for amendments. The committee works with staff to ensure Bylaws and Policies are executed with the intent of the Board of Trustees.
- Reviewing the SYF Awards, Trustee Assessment questions (prior to distribution, with authority to recommend additions or revisions to ensure alignment with SYF vision, mission, and strategic goals), Orientation process, and BOT Exit Survey criteria.
- Ensuring committee charters, chair qualifications, and committee formation policies are current and consistently applied.

Committee members are expected to be knowledgeable of the association's Bylaws and Policies and have a working knowledge of Roberts' Rules of Order. Committee members serve as a resource to the Board of Trustees for Bylaws and Policies.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall be composed of the Immediate Past Chair (serves as Chair), two trustees, and a minimum of two other members. Standing committee members need not be Trustees of the Foundation unless otherwise specified.

Committee Composition:

- Up to two Active member representatives and up to two Associate member representatives.
- Up to one member from the International/Canadian community when available.
- Members who have experience leading other committees within SYTA or SYF (or other travel trade associations), or other SYTA/SYF leadership roles.

The Nominating Committee is responsible for:

- Reaching out to candidates who have participated on committees within SYTA and/or SYF, other travel trade associations, or other leadership and volunteer roles inside or outside the industry.
- Contacting potential candidates to encourage nomination, explain the roles available, and share BOT job descriptions and the trustee agreement.
- Reviewing each application against established criteria, which may be updated each year based on current BOT composition and needs.
- Presenting a slate of recommended candidates to the Board of Trustees within the timeline established by the Chair.

Eligibility Restriction (Bylaws Art. VI Sec. 9): Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible to be nominated for, or appointed to, any Officer position, Trustee position, or Board vacancy during their service on the Committee.

Conference and Special Events Committee

The Conference and Special Events Committee plans and executes the Foundation's in-person fundraising events, with a focus on donor engagement, community building, and generating revenue that supports Foundation programs. Committee members serve as the hospitality team at these events, help recruit volunteers, and incorporate Foundation representation into the annual SYTA Summit.

The committee is responsible for:

- Provide input into Annual Conference messaging around the breakfasts, general sessions, auction area and evening events, as applicable.

- Annual Fundraising Events — Plans and hosts events at the annual conference, building awareness, attracting donors, and generating revenue for the Foundation.
- Managing the Silent Auction — actively soliciting item donations through direct outreach, coordinating logistics with staff, and promoting the auction to drive bid activity at the annual conference.
- Working with staff on Run/Walk/Slumber and other SYF conference events
- Work with staff to promote and produce the Golf Classic through active selling of sponsorships and foursomes, recruit volunteers.
- Other events as opportunities arise.

This committee focuses on in-person event execution. Annual giving campaigns, donor stewardship, and the online auction are managed by the Fundraising and Development Committee.

Fundraising and Development Committee

The Fundraising and Development Committee leads the Foundation's annual giving strategy, donor campaigns, and ongoing stewardship efforts. The committee works alongside staff and the Executive Committee to ensure a diversified, sustainable funding base that supports Foundation operations and programs.

The committee is responsible for:

- Developing and executing an annual fundraising plan, including campaign timelines, goal-setting, and progress tracking.
- Leading the Wingman Push and other annual giving campaigns, including outreach to current and lapsed donors.
- Supporting the Acorn repayment plan through targeted fundraising efforts.
- Continuing stewardship and recognition of donors through the Foundation website, SYF eNews, and other communications channels.

Programming and Scholarship Committee

The Programming and Scholarship Committee ensures that the Foundation's programs and scholarships fulfill the mission and demonstrate measurable impact. The committee evaluates existing offerings, explores new partnerships, and recommends improvements to the Board.

Current program offerings include: Road Scholarship, World is a Classroom Essay Contest, Global Citizens Challenge, DC Rite of Passage, and Students on Broadway.

Current Projects:

- Annually review the application process for the Road Scholarship and apply best practices to other programs including Silver Lining and DC Rite of Passage.
- Review current program offerings with a focus on diversity, equity, and program impact; establish an impact grid that maps the reach of each program.
- Define success metrics and a reporting framework so the committee can present program outcomes to the Board annually.

- Explore partnerships with like-minded organizations to maximize student reach with efficient use of Foundation resources.
- Identify opportunities to leverage industry tradeshow and conferences to raise Foundation awareness and expand the donor pipeline.

Communications & Research Committee

The Communications & Research Committee leverages research and data to strengthen the Foundation's case for support and guide strategic decisions. The committee works with staff and the SYTA Research Committee to interpret findings from the SYTA Travel Digest and other studies, and translates that data into tools that support donor development and program impact reporting.

The committee is responsible for:

- Interpreting research data to articulate the impact of travel on students, for use in donor communications and grant applications.
- Supplies content and ideas for the newsletters.
- Developing and implementing a process for measuring and reporting student impact across Foundation programs.
- Evaluating whether continued Foundation funding of the SYTA Travel Digest aligns with the Foundation's strategic priorities.
- Identifying research partnerships and studies that support the Foundation's programmatic work and external credibility.
- Sharing findings and recommendations with the Fundraising & Development Committee and Board to inform annual fundraising messaging.