



YMCA of Singapore



VOLUNTEERS' HANDBOOK 2021

Welcome Message from YMCA

Dear YMCA Volunteers,

Welcome to the YMCA family!

As an active champion of volunteerism, we are excited to have you join us in giving back to the community. Only when we come together can we make a greater impact and reach further.

Since 1902, YMCA has launched countless volunteer-driven initiatives that uplift the lives of those in need. Today, we continue to do more, and cultivate a community of like-minded volunteers that empower one another to do good.

Locally, we champion, challenge and train all youth – youth-at-risk, youth with special needs, and youth leaders to achieve their fullest potential. We do this through a variety of programmes that build their confidence and independence through social development, gainful employment, volunteerism and leadership, among others.

Internationally, our volunteers work tirelessly to improve lives around the region in sustainable ways. Working on infrastructure and long-term empowerment, our volunteers have created long-lasting impact through projects such as building schools, imparting literacy skills, and environmental conservation in regional countries.

At YMCA, we also value our volunteers' personal growth and development. We conduct orientations and training programmes that equip them with skills and knowledge that enhance their ability to carry out social service effectively.

In addition to volunteering, YMCA also serves the community through our social enterprises. YMCA @ One Orchard is our International House that serves as a home away from home for travellers. YMCA Education seeks to develop future generations of community leaders who see the importance in serving the community.

Thank you for joining us in our efforts to serve communities around us. We look forward to going on this lifelong adventure with you!

Sincerely,



Steve Loh
General Secretary & CEO
YMCA of Singapore

Introduction to YMCA Youth Programmes

Youth Outreach

YMCA Community Service Programmes

YMCA of Singapore champions, challenges and trains youth with special needs, youth-at-risk and youth leaders to be independent contributors in an inclusive society. Through a range of social development and employment training programmes, we build confidence, resilience and independence for youth with special needs so they can live independently and reach their full potential.

Y Dance

Dancing is a fun way to stay physically active while serving as a platform for creative self-expression, especially for non-verbal clients. Participants of the programme may also be invited to perform at various YMCA community service events, providing public exposure and building confidence.

Y Nature Hike

This programme provides a platform to explore Singapore's natural sights while building their physical fitness, mental health, confidence and resilience.

Y Bowling Club

YMCA encourages youth to lead an active and healthy lifestyle through bowling. Through regular interactions with volunteers and peers, this programme also provides opportunities for building social and communication skills through meaningful friendships.

Y Water Venture

Y Water Venture is among YMCA's efforts to engage youth with special needs through regular sports. Swimming equips participants with a useful life skill that opens doors to other water sports and activities.

Youth Empowerment

YMCA of Singapore aims to develop and empower youth to realise their full potential and emerge as responsible community champions who can positively impact the society.

YMCA Project Bridge

YMCA Project Bridge reaches out to out-of-school youth and youth-at-risk to integrate them back into society through the Vocational and Soft Skills Programme (VaSSP) and Y Explore programme.

University YMCA

YMCA has established University YMCA (Uni-Y) in tertiary education institutions in Singapore with the mission of nurturing and empowering youth to become servant leaders, who will impact our local and international communities. Uni-Y Singapore has student chapters in Nanyang Technological University (NTU), National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Management University (SMU), and Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD).

YMCA Youth For Causes

Funded by YMCA of Singapore, the programme promotes social entrepreneurship and community leadership development among youth. It provides youth aged 15 to 25 with a platform that includes seed funding, training and volunteer mentorship for executing self-initiated projects that raise public awareness and funds for Social Service Agencies (SSAs) of their choice through mobilising volunteers.

YMCA Speaking Awards

The Awards comprise of the YMCA Plain English Speaking Awards (PESA) and YMCA Mandarin Speaking Awards (MSA), which are national-level speaking competitions aimed at students to encourage thinking and communicating effectively.

YMCA Financial Assistance and Capability for Employment Scheme (FACES)

FACES extends short-term emergency financial aid to families in need and provides meaningful work training opportunities for individuals with special needs. YMCA works closely with various Family Service Centres which help to identify and refer families who require urgent financial assistance. We also launched the Uplift Fund, an emergency relief fund established under FACES, supported through the philanthropy of Park Hotel Group.

YMCA-Lim Kim San Volunteers Programme

Under the YMCA-Lim Kim San Volunteers Programme, YMCA introduced the YMCA–NUS Business School Volunteer Service Management Programme in 2007. Together with NUS Business School and its alumni, the programme upskills volunteers and social service staff with skills and knowledge to implement service projects successfully.

International Service Programmes

In efforts to promote good international relations, this programme organises overseas trips in collaboration with YMCA overseas partners. Community development initiatives focus on improving healthcare, education and capacity building.

YMCA Inclusive Climb

YMCA trains and sends a team of 10 persons with special needs, our YMCA Special Needs Ambassadors, to take on this challenge. The first-ever YMCA Inclusive Climb in 2019 saw the team challenging Japan's tallest mountain - Mt Fuji. The team overcame the difficulties of their various medical conditions including cerebral palsy, visual impairments, autism and bone cancer, as they underwent intensive physical training to scale 3,200 metres. The climb serves as an extraordinary journey of self-discovery. By achieving something they had not thought was possible, YMCA Inclusive Climb builds their resilience, confidence and self-esteem.

Due to COVID-19, the YMCA Inclusive Challenge 2021 continues this spirit of championing special needs virtually. We invited members of the public to join our YMCA Special Needs Ambassadors in a challenge to conquer Mt Fuji virtually. Participants can choose to walk, run or cycle 125km, or climb 3,776m in elevation, to raise awareness and funds for youth with special needs.

YMCA Special Needs Hospitality Training Programme

YMCA Special Needs Hospitality Training Programme empowers and upskills individuals with special needs through hospitality-related vocational skills. Through leveraging on skills taught in special schools and providing tailored training in a real-life work environment, this programme builds their confidence and work capabilities, and supports them in independent living.

Volunteers' Journey

There are 6 key milestones to the YMCA's Volunteers' Journey.



Induction

Volunteers are highly encouraged to attend the Induction sessions that are held once a month. They inform potential, existing and new volunteers of YMCA's diverse structured programmes, volunteering roles and the volunteer pathway plans.

Screening

Screening is conducted to assess volunteers' readiness for specific programmes. To better prepare volunteers, they will be equipped with a better understanding of various volunteering programmes.

Connecting Volunteers

Programmes which align with a volunteer's values or that is related to a social cause they are passionate about will result in a stronger connection between them and the community they are serving. This is taken into careful consideration for volunteer placements.

Training & Development

As part of our volunteer development plans, we upskill volunteers with training that will aid them in their volunteering job scope. Training plans are closely aligned with volunteers' expectations and needs.

Recognition & Sharing

YMCA-Lim Kim San Volunteers Programme Awards was specially created to recognise volunteers who have made significant and outstanding contributions. The inaugural award is named after Singapore's first finance minister, Mr Lim Kim San, who was an honorary life member of the YMCA and a strong advocate for volunteerism.

Advocacy & Transformation

Through a holistic volunteering journey, volunteers develop a deeper understanding of the needs of our clients. Volunteers value-add to the experience of clients and are important in raising awareness. As they journey with our clients, we champion volunteers to build a sense of ownership and become YMCA Strong Ambassadors to help raise awareness and promote YMCA's causes.

Code of Conduct

These guiding principles will help to facilitate your journey as a volunteer with the YMCA.

Working in Tandem

1. Exercise duty of care for yourself and others.
2. Speak to fellow workers in truth.
3. Respect the cultures, beliefs, opinions and decisions of others although we may not always agree on the same point of view.
4. Treat Volunteer Relations Officers and your fellow volunteers with courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration and humility.
5. Be punctual for all programmes and activities.

Keeping Healthy Boundaries

1. Keep interactions with clients, fellow volunteers, and Volunteer Relations Officers professional during the period of service. Do not mislead anyone with behaviour that may lead to any misunderstandings.
2. Be a responsible individual by taking on your share of the work. Ask for help if necessary and look for ways to improve on current operational processes.
3. Take ownership of your volunteering work and be passionate about it.
4. Respect your clients' choices in decision-making.
5. Refrain from using profanities and/or obscenities. Be a good example and testimony to others.

Confidentiality / Copyright / Ownership Issues

1. Maintain the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which you are privy while serving as a volunteer, be it information pertaining to an individual or to YMCA of Singapore.
2. Materials produced by volunteers including graphics materials, web page designs, narratives, research, compilations and instructional texts etc., becomes the property of YMCA of Singapore upon submission. Volunteers' contributions will be acknowledged.

Representation of YMCA of Singapore

1. Do not contact organisations or individuals on behalf of YMCA of Singapore unless you are given explicit written permission to do so by the Volunteer Relations Officer. Consult and seek approval from the appropriate staff before taking any action or making any statements, which may affect or obligate the association.
2. Do not sign any documents on behalf of YMCA of Singapore.

Fundraising Matters

1. All initiatives related to fundraising will have to be reviewed and approved by YMCA of Singapore prior to commencement.
2. All financial matters and obligations should be handled by a staff of YMCA of Singapore.

Conflict of Interest

1. Put the best interest of the programme's objective above your personal desires. We are all here to serve the community.
2. Do not use your voluntary position for commercial gain. Do not carry out commercial transactions and/or attempt to sell your product(s) during the period of voluntary service or meetings with the clients, fellow volunteers and Volunteer Relations Officers. The focus should be on serving the targeted group of clients.

Communication Channel

1. Your Volunteer Relations Officer should be your point of contact.
2. Do inform your Volunteer Relations Officer in advance if you are unexpectedly unable to participate or attend any pre-arranged programme or activity.
3. All complaints of sexual harassment or misconduct, if any, should be brought up to the Volunteer Relations Officer.

Dress Code

1. Wear clothes that are appropriate for each occasion and in accordance with how you are briefed for each event/outing.
2. Dress modestly by refraining from low-cut blouses, plunging necklines, extremely low-cut jeans, or skirts/shorts that are too short.

Absence

1. Any volunteer who absents himself without any valid reason on at least 3 consecutive leaves of absence will be re-assessed by his Volunteer Relations Officer, facing possible suspension.
2. A volunteer who is unable to attend any programme or activity may take leave of absence from his Volunteer Relations Officer. However, Volunteer Relations Officers may re-assess upon 4 or more counts of consecutive leaves of absence.

Volunteers' Roadmap

As YMCA volunteers, we provide volunteers with a progression pathway as they grow with us. Volunteers are encouraged to take up leadership positions and responsibilities. Opportunities are also given to allow volunteers to switch across different clusters within the YMCA.

For volunteers who are new to the volunteering scene, we have established a buddy support system to bring onboard new volunteers. Volunteers start by being a Y Volunteer, rising to a Y Core Volunteer or to a Y Volunteer Leader, and then to a Core Volunteer Group (CVG).

Y Volunteer

A Y Volunteer must volunteer in a structured and sustained YMCA programme for a minimum of 15 hours per year.

Y Core Volunteer

A Y Core Volunteer must volunteer in one or two structured and sustained YMCA Programmes at least 24 hours a year.

Y Volunteer Leader

A Y Volunteer Leader must serve in a leadership role for at least 24 hours a year. Volunteer Leaders are engaged in organising committees to help in planning and facilitating the programmes and leading other volunteers during the programmes' implementation.

1. Y Volunteer Leaders are involved in leading structured and sustained YMCA programmes and assisting Volunteer Relations Officers (VRO) to plan and execute activities.
2. A Y Volunteer Leader must have at least one account of taking charge of a group of 8 or more volunteers.
3. Having acquired the rich experience and knowledge from serving as a leadership role, a Y Volunteer Leader must also be able and willing to share their experiences with other volunteers. This allows them to build meaningful and professional skills.

Core Volunteer Group (CVG)

A volunteer in the Core Volunteer Group (CVG) must volunteer in a leadership role in one or two structured and sustained YMCA programme(s), usually for at least 24 hours a year.

A volunteer in the Core Volunteer Group (CVG) will brainstorm, plan and organise to develop and facilitate a YMCA Programme with YMCA staff.

Summary of Volunteers Pathway and Engagement



Volunteer Pathway

To provide multiple options for volunteers to continue their support with YMCA locally or internationally.



Training & Development

To provide volunteers with opportunities to develop their talents and potential.



Volunteer Engagement

To create a sense of belonging within YMCA and to keep volunteers motivated throughout their volunteering journey.



Programme Activity

To ensure volunteers feel that they have created an impact.

At YMCA, we emphasise developing outstanding volunteers and providing valuable volunteering experiences. Various touchpoints between volunteers and YMCA staff provide a two-way dialogue for sharing of ideas and constructive feedback for an enhanced volunteering experience and to encourage greater participation.

Overview of YMCA of Singapore

The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) movement was started in 1844 in London by Mr George Williams and a group of like-minded concerned Christians. It is one of the oldest and largest Movements for youth in the world and now operates in 119 countries, reaching 58 million people. YMCA works to bring social justice and peace to young people and their communities, regardless of religion, race, gender or culture.

YMCA of Singapore is a member of the World Alliance of YMCAs, and Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs. Delegates from Singapore participate in global YMCA events and work with overseas counterparts to develop best practices and serve the community.

YMCA of Singapore also serves the community through our social enterprises. YMCA @ One Orchard is our International House that serves as a home away from home for travellers. Through our Child Development Centres, Kindergarten Care Centres and Student Care Centres, YMCA Education seeks to develop future generations of community leaders who see the importance in serving the community.

Vision

The Young Men's Christian Association seeks to unite those young men who, regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour, according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be his disciples in their faith and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of his Kingdom amongst young men.

Mission

YMCA of Singapore is a volunteer-based Christian organisation that seeks to serve and impact all members of the community, regardless of race, language or religion, through programmes, services and enterprises to develop the body, mind and spirit.

YMCA Core Values

Compassion

To recognise the needs of others especially the last, the lost and the least, then take action to help.

Servant leadership

To desire to serve first, then to make the conscious choice to take the lead to act.

Honesty

To speak and embody the truth, to act and to be worthy of trust, and to have integrity in making sure our choices (decisions and actions) are in line with our Christian values.

Accountability

To be accountable for our behavior and our actions in meeting our obligations.

Respect

To treat others as we would have them treat us and to value the worth of every person.

Excellence

To strive for best practices.

Community Resources

For more information about specific programmes, please visit www.ymca.org.sg

If you have further queries, please contact the respective departments regarding the different programmes.

YMCA Community Service Programmes

 volunteer@ymca.org.sg

International Service Programmes

 chenyin@ymca.org.sg

Youth Development Programme – Youth For Causes

 yfc@ymca.org.sg

Youth Development Programme – University YMCA

 youthdev@ymca.org.sg

Youth Development Programme – Project Bridge

 projectbridge@ymca.org.sg

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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/YMCAofSingapore>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/young-men-christian-association/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/YMCAofSingapore>

TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@ymcaofsingapore>

Giving.sg: <https://www.giving.sg/ymcasg>

