

Youth Council Coalition of Canada
Coalition des conseils jeunesse du Canada
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THE HOUR FOR HOUR CHALLENGE

The Youth Council Coalition of Canada / Coalition des conseils jeunesse du Canada (YCC/CCJ) has launched a challenge to Canadian municipalities.

The "Hour for Hour Challenge" encourages municipalities to formally establish a mechanism to provide volunteer hour compensation for students who engage in civic activities in all forms: surveys, open houses/forums, town halls, viewing or participating in council meetings, and watching relevant webinars.

BACKGROUND

The YCC is a non-profit organization based in Ontario that supports the development, success and influence of Canadian youth councils. They are committed to providing tailored resources, professional development opportunities, and a peer networking platform specific to youth councils.

The YCC recognizes the looming retirements that municipalities are facing in the coming years, and the need for new talent to consider positions in the public sector. They also recognize that, due to COVID-19, many volunteer opportunities for youth who need 40 hours of community service to graduate have been cancelled.

This has created the perfect opportunity for municipalities and other organizations to leverage their social media platforms and ongoing activities to drive interest in the municipal sector and provide community service compensation for youth.

METHODOLOGY

Municipalities and elected officials have several ways that they can participate, all of which require little to no overhead spending and a low burden on your administrative and communication teams. This challenge is designed to be sustainable and to continue well past COVID-19.

Here are some of the options that you may want to consider:

- Dedicate a page on your website for upcoming opportunities for volunteer hours and choose a scheduled day of the week to publish opportunities on your social media pages (Pro Tip: Your organization should be on Instagram if you're looking to attract high school aged youth)
- Track participants for public open houses and stakeholder engagement and ask any participants wanting volunteer hours to please share their contact information
- Encourage youth to watch council meetings or pre-recorded videos that highlight work and initiatives in your community, then viewers can answer general questions related to the meeting/video via survey link

Ongoing maintenance:

- Survey links should be linked to a dedicated and easy-to-find page online and can ask questions such as what excited viewers during the meeting, what they didn't understand, or to relay 10 things that occurred during the meeting.
- Confirm participation and the number of hours gained by survey confirmation or email following the activity or event. Students should keep this for their records and present it for proof with their log sheets upon signing.
- Designate a location or individual who may sign off on log sheets. Be prepared to have this information readily available on your dedicated webpage so that students know where they can go and what they need to bring to confirm their active participation.

The YCC will support municipalities and organizations that join The Hour-for-Hour Challenge by:

- Offering bi-weekly webinars for coalition members* to support their youth education and engagement that begin in January 2021
- Offering a ready-made social media package for participating organizations to promote their participation
- Promoting participating organizations and independent opportunities on social media platforms and our website

* Coalition members are those organizations that formally join the Youth Council Coalition of Canada and pay the applicable membership dues.

Administrators are encouraged to visit yccofcanada.com for more information on the challenge and upcoming webinars.

QUOTES:

"The Hour-for-Hour Challenge provides youth with an opportunity to learn more about local government structures, practices and policies and provides local governments with an

opportunity to inform, engage and inspire young and future generations. The YCC recognizes that leveraging digital volunteer opportunities is the best way to adapt to COVID-19 and we hope that this provides a lasting impact on youth and the organizations that serve them.”

- Kelsey Santarossa, YCC Founder & President

“The Hour-for-Hour Challenge creates a space for Canadian youth to gain socio-political empowerment and see themselves represented in politics.” -Samantha C. Dalo, *Youth Civic Engagement Specialist*

MORE ABOUT YCC MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

The Government Membership provides one year of access to all protected resources and information on the website.

- Manage your organization’s profile and information highlighted on our member map
 - This includes your website, contact information, recruitment window, youth member policies and committee focus
- Connect with a peer audience working towards youth inclusion and engagement
- Discuss posts, pages and resources with coalition members
- Access resources and tools not yet available
- Receive insights on youth council trends, best practices and data through conducted member surveys
- Share your good news stories to be highlighted on the website and on social media
- Request custom supports to help you develop a youth engagement strategy specific to your community