

YOUTH INITIATIVE

RESOURCE GUIDE

19-24TH JAN, 2019 | WINTER TERM



WHAT IS YI?

YI is a non-partisan association that gives college-attending, working and out-of-college youth citizens, practical hands-on experience in policy research & review, deliberation and dialogue to awaken their socio-political consciousness and ultimately create a strong base of active citizenship.

AIM

To contribute to the development of a cohort of highly motivated and trained youth who are able to explore, critically examine and understand the policy landscape of Bhutan. By doing so, youth are empowered to become active, engaged and smart citizens.

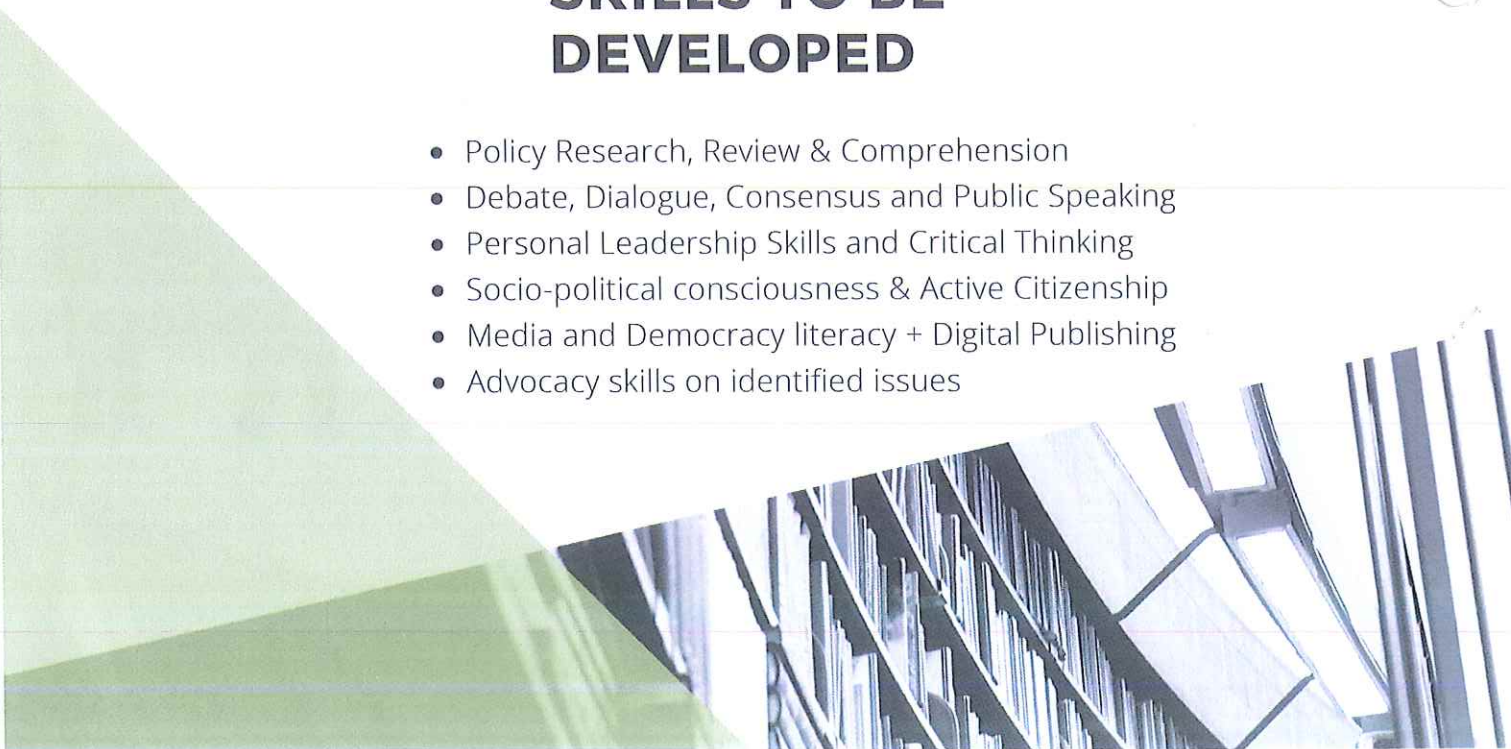
BACKGROUND

A product of concerned youths themselves, YI arose as the brainchild of Phub Dorji, who co-developed it with Manny Fassihi in 2012 as a response to combat boredom and more seriously, apathy towards the unfolding democratic process of Bhutan.

To this end, YI adopts the vision to create '*An engaged society rooted in youth inclusion in policy making*', where youths can realize their roles as 'stakeholders of national issues' and be both highly motivated and competently skilled to become active citizens striving for positive change.

SKILLS TO BE DEVELOPED

- Policy Research, Review & Comprehension
- Debate, Dialogue, Consensus and Public Speaking
- Personal Leadership Skills and Critical Thinking
- Socio-political consciousness & Active Citizenship
- Media and Democracy literacy + Digital Publishing
- Advocacy skills on identified issues



STRUCTURE OF YI

The Youth Initiative for Debate, Deliberation and Dialogue (YI) is divided into four phases:

- YI Winter Term (coinciding w/ winter break)
- YI Spring Term
- YI Summer Term (coinciding w/ summer break)
- YI Autumn Term

PRE-PROGRAM

In order to enrich the outcomes of YI, the issue topics could be identified beforehand in consultation with relevant stakeholders. These stakeholders would include as diverse of perspectives as YI steering committee, public opinion surveys, Parliament, and extend all the way to current global hot-button topics. Considerations of topics that is unexplored and interesting such as psychological wellbeing, urban poverty, relationship counselling, etc.

1. YI WINTER TERM

1.A. POLICY RESEARCH & REVIEW

For the youth citizens to be included in policy making, they must first be competent and knowledgeable in the their interested/concerned issue area. This will not only raise their confidence when they approach other stakeholders later on but also empower their own selves to build policy research and review skills which will lay the foundation to tackle socio-political issues later on.

Here, the participants undergo Core Training sessions on different methodologies (case studies, surveys, literature review, etc.), research databases, ethical issues, data mining techniques and theoretical tools to gather fact-based information. Additionally the programme will have Speaker Series which will bring in experts and specialists from the pre-identified issue areas to give a lecture to the participants and Q&A session afterwards. Field Trips to significant social entrepreneur or research sites (Greener Way, iHub, CBS, GNHC) or the parliament could provide an immersive experience into the real world domain of research and review.

1.B. DELIBERATION, DISCOURSE AND DIALOGUE

Another important aim of the Winter YI, complementing with the policy research and review is the development of their communication skills. This would offer an opportunity for the participants to use their research materials to deliver a presentation of findings which would help realize not just how to develop some degree of expertise theoretically but also equip them with communication skills to advocate and educate. This would then help facilitate sub-group formations where participants would identify the issues they want to work towards and work in relevant teams to enrich their research and comprehension.

In teams, they would learn to self-organize and specialize in a specific area which they will all bring together to create a well-developed, fact based and innovating perspectives in a Position Paper. Leadership skills will be developed along with the value of teamwork. Working in smaller groups would help facilitate their public speaking skills and confidence, which would eventually help develop the ability to speak comfortably and competently to larger groups.

*****REFER TO THE POSITION PAPER GUIDE FOR PROPOSED FRAMEWORK*****

The efforts of the winter YI will culminate in a presentation of topics by YI members to the Steering Committee, who would then take a group of YI member under their wing (depending on interested issue area) and guide them through YI Spring Term. To encourage visibility of youth voice, media houses will be invited to record and report.

2. YI SPRING TERM

2.A REFINING POSITION PAPERS

Keeping in mind, the participants' commitment to their formal education and pertaining challenges experienced in the past, the spring YI will focus on maintaining the momentum by developing their position paper further, rather than introducing new materials here. The Youth Mentors and the programme coordinator will stress on doing a bulk of the work and finalizing their position papers a month before their examinations begin.

2.B MENTORSHIP

Here, the participants will be guided by assigned Youth Mentors (also members of the Steering Committee) who will have been with them throughout the YI Winter edition. This will not only provide them with a dedicated resource person but also strengthen the culture of mentoring within YI; additionally, the YI identity solidifies and with it, participants' commitment.

The Youth Mentors will also organize quarterly meetings with their respective groups to report on the progress as well as larger challenges faced by the participants. These challenges will then be discussed with the program coordinator and facilitators at BCMD during the first Steering Committee meeting to find solutions and strategies.

3. YI SUMMER TERM

3.A MULTI-MEDIA LITERACY

In our current world where information and interactions are increasingly inhabiting digital spaces and platforms, it has become paramount to be multimedia literate if we hope to effect any meaningful change on a societal level. It is with a recognition of this reality that the summer YI shifts gear to train participants to be technical and digital-savvy. It must be noted that this phase is not disjointed from the earlier phases but rather must be seen as building on the previous phases to develop necessary tools through which the participants can then act on their Position Papers developed over the previous two phases.

*****REFER TO THE MEDIA & DEMOCRACY LITERACY (MDL) GUIDEBOOK FOR SUPPLEMENTARY REFERENCE*****

Here, the participants not only learn how to be smart consumers of news with critical thinking skills that is imperative in this digital age but also pick up basic technical/creative knowledge in podcasting, photography, filmmaking and digital writing/publishing. By developing these basic skills, participants will be able to advocate on their interested issues since they will have a plethora of tools at their hand to utilize depending on the contexts and relevance.

REFER TO THE BCMD MEDIA LAB FOR LOGISTICAL AND RESOURCE DETAILS**

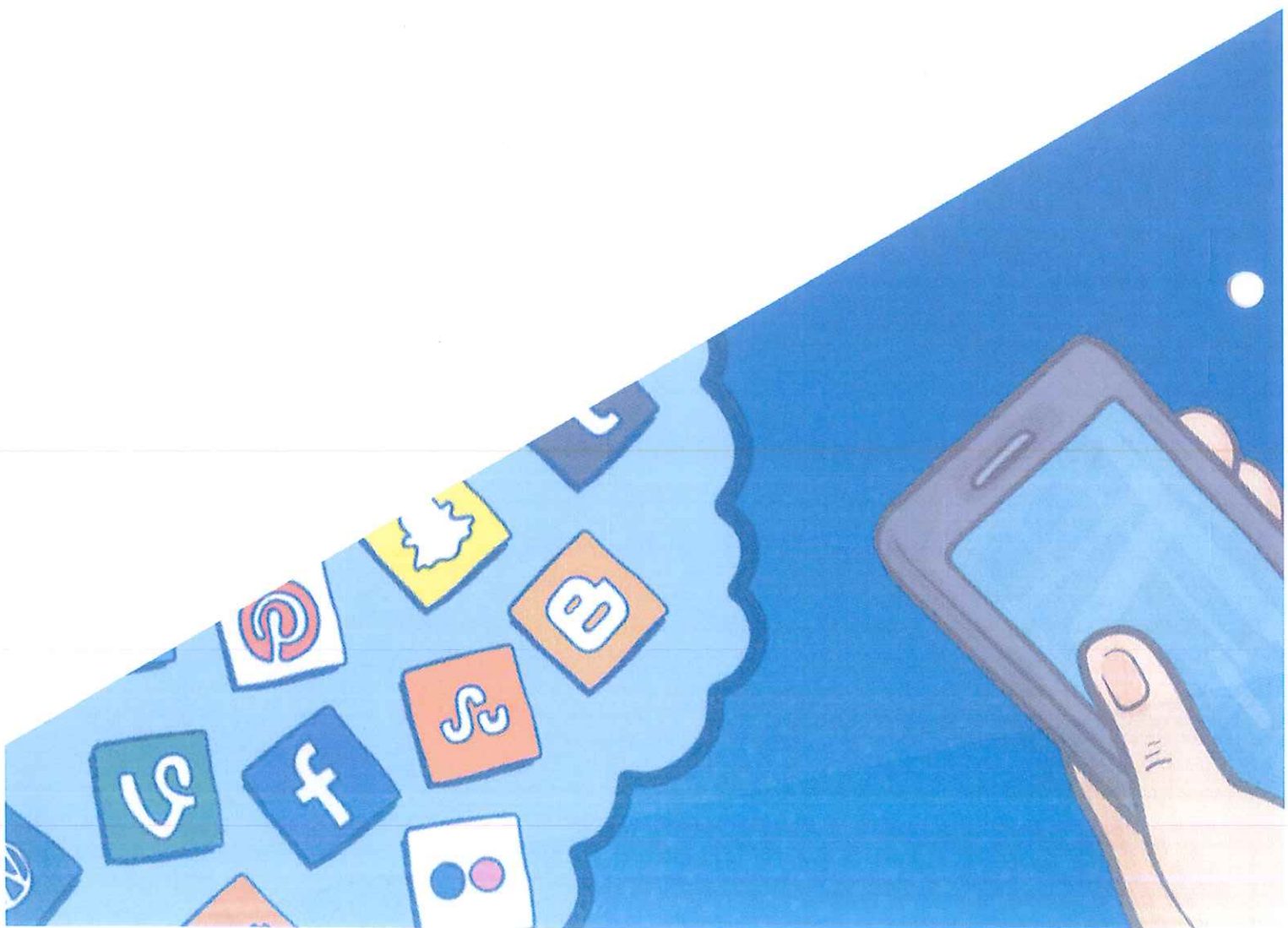
In addition, the YI website will be revived, which will eventually become the publishing platform for research findings, reviews of legislation and policies, recommendations, case studies, surveys, opinion pieces, reports and audio-visual products. This will help empower the youth in terms of recognizing their voice and the effort they put into their work towards building a vibrant socio-political environment.

4. YI AUTUMN TERM

4.A CONTENT CREATION & DIGITAL PUBLISHING

The final phase of the YI will tie together, the three previous phases by focusing on creating meaningful, usable content that are evidence-based on their issue area. This could take various forms (digital print, photography, podcasts, advocacy campaigns, etc.) depending on the participants' personal interests and expertise. The YI website has the potential to become THE digital platform for a high-quality reservoir of youth voice and perspective in Bhutan.

Throughout this phase, the Youth Mentors will still continue to be resource persons for their own groups who will also be in communication with BCMD program persons to ensure continuous monitoring and evaluation. By so doing, it will be a platform for enacting their active citizenship as well as sustaining a vibrant, engaged network of youth citizens in conversation with citizens.



YI MEMBERSHIP

I. RECRUITMENT

- Invitation for expression of interest in joining YI will be made through any channel that maximizes the reach to intended participants such as but not limited to the BCMD facebook page, BBS/Kuensel ads, word of mouth, Friends of BCMD, etc.
- Participation by the interested youths will be confirmed at the time of recruitment

Recruitment procedure will be jointly decided by the Steering Committee and BCMD

II. COMPOSITION

- Number of participants will be determined by the Steering Committee and BCMD before recruitment
- Age between 18-25 years old
- Representation from all youth groups
- At least 40% of the members should be women
- The tenure of a YI member will be one year
- The YI may be divided into groups based on the diversity of the participants and their interests

III. SEPARATION AND TERMINATION

- If a member wishes to resign from YI, he or she shall submit a resignation in written form to their respective Youth Mentor as well as BCMD program coordinator.
- A member shall be terminated if he or she fails to meet 2 quarterly targets consecutively
- The termination of member will be initiated by the Youth Mentor in discussion with the BCMD program coordinator.

IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Mandatorily attend both winter YI and summer YI
- Be in constant communication with their respective Youth Mentors
- Plan, propose and set their targets to prepare their position papers on time
- Submit monthly activities report to their youth mentors
- Submit and settle all financial bills within a week after each quarter at the latest
- Participate in dialogues, seminars and forums
- Initiate discussions on current affairs to make necessary recommendations to concerned authorities

ANNEX 1: POSITION PAPER

Who is an active citizen?

An active citizen is one who cares about his/her community and the country. An active citizen stays engaged with issues in the society by reading news papers and volunteering in activities that benefit the community, and holding concerned authorities or agencies accountable. An active citizen knows his/her rights and exercises the right to voice and influence decision through votes and sharing of views and concerns in public forums or by writing to the editor.

One way to exercise your voice and influence decision is through studying issues in the society and developing your position on it. Youth Initiative is one such program that will prepare you with the knowledge and skills of reviewing and researching issues and developing a position paper on an issue/policy of your interest. It provides an opportunity for your voices and views to be heard by individuals and agencies as you will present your position paper to decision-makers.

What is a position paper?

A position paper is a compilation of varying views on a policy that presents arguable positions based on research, review and dialogue with relevant stakeholders of the concerned policy.

The purpose of a position paper is to generate support on an issue. It describes a position on a policy and the rationale for that position. The position paper is based on stories, statistics and theories that provide a solid foundation for your stance.

Writing a position paper on an issue or a policy will help you gain deeper insights into the policy with a rich pool of data (facts, figures, pictures, videos, testimonies, experiences, articles, research, etc.). A position paper based on sound research and review can help you present convincing arguments on an issue.



POSITION PAPER

How will you start?

- Pick a policy statement that you are interested in or is relevant to you.
- Read existing reports or literature or differing views expressed by people or you have heard. Study what are the major arguments or incidents that gave birth to the policy. These information form your background information (context) to the position paper.

Here are some question you could bear in mind as you look at the policy

- Is the policy consistent with core values and principles, national goals and strategic plan of the country?
- Is the policy realistic and relevant to current scenario?
- Are there unclear statements, concepts or contradictions in the policy statement?
- Does the policy comply with collective agreements among stakeholders?
- What are the positive and negative consequences of the policy?
- Are there any loopholes with the policy?

For example, Bhutan policy on States (insert the policy statement here.....). But, do you see people smoking or selling? Are there reports or claims from health sector on number of Bhutanese dying due to smoking? If so, this is clearly a "gap" between policy and practise, and you might want to explore why this gap exists.

Next question to ask is, who should you talk to who can help you with useful information on the gap you want to study?

Following the above example, you might identify trade officials as they monitor the imports, police as they enforce the policy, shop keepers as they might import and sell, and youth and others who (may or may not smoke) as potential clients.

You approach the identified groups of people with important questions that will help you understand the "gap" and assist you in formulating a position.

POSITION PAPER

Here is a sample outline to your position paper

Introduction (Provide background on your topic/policy, briefly explain its importance, and state your position on it.)

Counter arguments (Begin with counterclaims by speculating what someone who disagrees with your position might say about each of your points and refute the counterclaims with evidence and sound argument)

Your arguments (State each of your claim one at a time, make sound arguments and provide evidence to support)

Conclusion (Summarise and restate your claims and make recommendations)

THE YOUTH INITIATIVE FOR
DEBATE, DELIBERATION
& DIALOGUE

