

CONSTITUTION
of the
Toronto Youth Cabinet

Interpretations

- A. “City of Toronto” or “City” shall refer to the government of the City of Toronto, unless otherwise stated.
- B. “Toronto Youth Cabinet” or “TYC” is the official youth advocacy body of the City of Toronto and shall refer to the organization as a whole.
- C. “Cabinet” shall refer to the highest guiding body of the organization, made up of all members and that meets monthly.
- D. “Executive” or “Executive Committee” shall refer collectively to the members assigned Director roles and who are tasked with the day-to-day management of the organization.
- E. “Leadership Team” shall refer collectively to all members of the Executive Committee, all Working Group Leads, and such appointed positions as deemed necessary by the Executive Committee
- F. “Coordinator” shall refer to the City staff assigned to assist the TYC.
- G. “Constitution” shall refer to this document and any amendments.
- H. “Quorum” shall refer to the minimum number of voting members required to be present in order to conduct the business of a deliberative body.

ARTICLE 1: MISSION STATEMENT

The Toronto Youth Cabinet is a nonpartisan advocacy organization that strives to improve the quality of life for Toronto’s youth. In working together with City Councillors and through fostering partnerships amongst various organizations, the Cabinet is dedicated to providing young people with a forum in which they are able to build an equitable, accessible, and youth-friendly Toronto.

ARTICLE 2: TYC COMPOSITION

2.1 The Membership shall:

- A. Be between the ages of 13 and 24 and either live, work, or play in the City of Toronto.
- B. Be composed of youth that are reflective of Toronto’s youth population, in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, geography, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, ability, and economic status.
- C. Play an advocacy and lobbying role on behalf of the TYC (i.e. deputations, speaking to committees, meetings with Councillors, etc.) with the explicit written direction from a relevant Executive or Lead
- D. Represent the TYC publicly and speak on behalf of the TYC with the understanding that public comments should be based on positions approved by the Cabinet, and with the explicit written direction from a relevant Executive or Lead
- E. Participate in a TYC Orientation/Anti–Oppression training session to become eligible to represent the TYC and vote
- F. Evaluate the work of all TYC initiatives

2.2 The Executive shall:

- A. Ensure that the overall direction given from the Cabinet is in line with the TYC’s mission statement, long-term vision and anti-oppressive framework.

- B. Collectively lead the development of an annual work plan for the TYC directed by the membership (i.e. identify issues and then take action on them)
- C. Play an advocacy and lobbying role on behalf of the TYC (i.e. deputations, speaking to committees, meetings with Councillors, etc.) and inspire other youth to do the same.
- D. Remain up-to-date on all TYC-related initiatives and provide support
- E. Keep members informed and involved.
- F. Consistently attend all Cabinet meetings
- G. Represent the TYC publicly and speak on behalf of the TYC with the understanding that public comments should be based on positions approved by the Cabinet.
- H. Ensure that the positions taken on by the TYC are consistent within the executive and the entire organization through ongoing communication with all members of the TYC.
- I. Ensure that all approved TYC initiatives are adequately resourced.
- J. Support and Working Groups, as interest may arise.
- K. Make decisions on time-sensitive issues while still ensuring that they are respectful of the mission statement.
- L. Miss no more than two (2) meetings without prior notice and reason to the Executive Director
- M. Notify the other Executives in writing with 2 weeks notice prior to resigning. Upon resignation of a member of the Executive, it shall be at the discretion of the Executive Committee whether or not a to fill the vacant position.

TYC Executive Committee Positions

2.2.1 Executive Director

- A. Shall be responsible for setting the TYC annual work plan with collaboration from Executive.
- B. Shall oversee the actions and management of the Executive.
- C. Shall be responsible for responding to external requests.
- D. Will ensure that the TYC work plan is executed.
- E. Shall chair every Executive and Leadership meeting, or appoint a designate.
- F. Shall work with the Director of Internal Affairs to ensure that the TYC is present in any and all relevant committees, organization, and coalitions that the TYC promotes.
- G. Shall ensure that the overall direction given from the membership and the Executive Committee is in line with the TYC mission statement long-term vision and anti-oppression framework.
- H. Shall ensure TYC initiatives are properly resourced and funded.
- I. Shall be responsible for the drafting, presenting, and implementing of the operating budget of the Cabinet.
- J. Shall account for and maintain an understanding and records of the internal TYC Budget.
- K. Shall be responsible for delivering monthly updates to the Cabinet
- L. Shall research new sources of funding for the TYC, including grants and additional city funds.

2.2.2 Director of Internal Affairs

- A. Shall act as the deputy to the Executive Director in the Cabinet and Executive Committee.
- B. Conducting, with the assistance of the Executive Director, all business related to hiring and management of human resources, including internal conflict resolution and team cohesion.

- C. Developing and implementing policies and procedures for the effective day-to-day function of the Cabinet.
- D. Ensuring that responsibilities are appropriately distributed throughout the Cabinet.
- E. Responsible for the TYC office and internal infrastructure (including email, computer access, room bookings, etc.), in collaboration with the Coordinator.
- F. Shall ensure that all minutes, agenda items, board reports, and agenda items are collected and distributed to the Cabinet in a timely manner before each meeting.
- G. Shall be responsible for membership liaisons.
- H. Shall maintain an updated list of all members and contact information.
- I. Shall track the progress and attendance of TYC members.

2.2.3 Director of Stakeholder Engagement

- A. Ensure that any initiatives being led by the Executive are in accordance to the short-term and long-term goals outlined in the strategy.
- B. Shall promote the TYC across the city (i.e. presentations, organizational representation)
- C. Shall ensure the TYC is represented on any relevant/committees/group, lobby coalitions that are supported by TYC.
- D. Shall research and engage potential stakeholders and partners for the TYC to support.
- E. Shall support community engagement and partnership initiatives within Working Groups.
- F. Shall support the function and work of the Advisory Board.

2.2.4 Director of Council Relations

- A. Shall maintain a positive working relationship between the TYC and Toronto City Council.
- B. Shall promote the TYC among City Councillors.
- C. Shall support Working Groups in any work with Councillors.
- D. Shall monitor the work of the Toronto City Council and report to TYC regarding actions and policies of Toronto City Council on a monthly basis or as necessary.
- E. Shall coordinate all TYC lobbying efforts and aid other members in this. Members are required to inform the Director of Council Relations and Executive Director if they want to meet with their city council and/or mayor.

2.2.5 Director of Public Relations

- A. Shall be responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of all TYC related social media.
- B. Shall assist in the development and coordination of a media strategy.
- C. Shall promote the TYC across the city (i.e. presentations, special events) in collaboration with the Director of Stakeholder Engagement.
- D. Coordinate media conferences, including the writing of press releases, producing media kits, logistical support, and contacting media prior to media conferences or events.
- E. Shall be responsible for the development and maintenance of promotional materials, and any other TYC outreach materials.
- F. Shall oversee the maintenance of the TYC website with the Executive Director.
- G. Shall support in the promotion of Working Groups and their initiatives.

2.2.6 Director of Policy & Advocacy

- A. Shall develop strategic advocacy and policy engagement initiatives for TYC endorsed projects or positions.
- B. Shall identify issues and develop policy positions for which the TYC can advocate.
- C. Shall work with external and internal stakeholders to support and advocate for greater inclusion of the youth voice in policy, programs and services
- D. Shall develop multidisciplinary approaches to support policy education and engagement
- E. Shall support policy initiatives within Working Groups.

2.2.7 Director of Organizational Development

- A. Shall be responsible for developing regular TYC Training and Anti-Oppression sessions.
- B. Shall be responsible for the creation of guides and materials to assist in the education and capacity-building of members.
- C. Shall be responsible for making presentations to the Cabinet on current municipal events and policies, as required.
- D. Shall be involved managing organizational evaluation and in any capacity-building or growth initiative involving the membership or Executive Committee.

2.3 Working Group Leads

- A. Shall be responsible for developing and executing a one-year work plan for the Working Group
- B. Shall be responsible for membership recruitment, engagement, and retention for the Working Group
- C. Shall work with the Executive Committee to ensure effective collaboration and communication
- D. Shall perform such tasks as to be in compliance with organizational policies & procedures, as well as directives from the Leadership Team
- E. Shall miss no more than two (2) meetings without prior notice and reason

2.4 TYC Staff

- A. The TYC shall have the authority to hire staff as needed, in addition to the staff members listed in this constitution.
- B. The Director of Internal Affairs, with the assistance of the Executive Director, shall be tasked with issuing a callout, receiving applications, interviewing qualified candidates, and recommended the ratification of hires to the Cabinet.
- C. Staff shall be impartial in decision-making matters of the TYC.

2.5 Other Positions

2.5.1 Chair of the Cabinet

- A. Shall chair all meetings of the Toronto Youth Cabinet and act as a spokesperson for the organization, as required by the Executive Committee.
- B. Shall be appointed by the Cabinet upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee.
- C. The Chair shall have at least one year of experience in governance within the Toronto Youth Cabinet.

2.5.2 Appointed Positions

- A. The Executive Committee may create additional positions with set mandates, as appropriate.

- B. All positions must expire at or before the end of each term.
- C. The Executive Director may recommend candidates to the Executive Committee for appointment.

ARTICLE 3: WORKING GROUPS

3.1 Working Groups

- A. Working Groups shall focus on specific projects (a specific policy/ position, a particular event, or outreach strategy) and be supported by at least one Executive Committee member, who shall act as liaison between the Working Group and Executive Committee.
- B. Working Groups are to be struck at an Executive Committee meeting.
- C. Working Group Leads shall be appointed by the Executive Committee after an open application at the beginning of each term or after the Working Group has been struck. This person will be responsible for managing the group and reporting on the progress of the group to the corresponding Executive and the Cabinet.

ARTICLE 4: MEETINGS

4.1 Cabinet Meetings

- A. Cabinet meetings shall take place on the second Thursday of each month, and be chaired by the Chair of the Cabinet
- B. All TYC members are welcome and encouraged to attend and participate in the meeting.
- C. Each Executive member and Working Group Lead shall submit a report no longer than 3/4 of a page in length outlining what has been done since the last meeting and reporting any relevant information for items to be discussed.
- D. Reports and agenda items shall be submitted to the Director of Internal Affairs no less than 5 days in advance of the meeting.
- E. The Director of Internal Affairs shall assemble all reports, along with minutes from the last Cabinet meeting, Leadership Team meeting(s), and Executive Committee meeting(s) and send this package to all Cabinet members no less than 3 days before the meeting. Members are expected to have read through all materials prior to the meeting and should be ready to discuss items without needing more information or background.
- F. Failure to properly submit a report shall be reflected in the records kept by the Director of Internal Affairs.

4.2 Executive Meetings

- A. The Executive meeting shall take place at least once per month and have a quorum of 4 Executive members.

4.3 Leadership Team Meetings

- A. The Leadership Team shall include all members of the Executive Committee, all Working Group Leads, and such appointed positions as deemed necessary by the Executive Committee.
- B. Meetings of the Leadership Team shall take place at least once per month and have a quorum of a simple majority of Leadership Team members.

4.4 Working Group Meetings

A. TYC Working Group meetings will be scheduled according to committee availability and timeline of event/initiative.

4.4 Annual General Meeting

A. The Annual General Meeting shall take place during the month of March, at which financial and Executive reports and amendments to the constitution shall take place.

ARTICLE 5: DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

5.1 Decisions relating to the operations of the organization shall be made by the Executive Committee and reported at each Cabinet meeting through regular reports from the Executive Director or Director of Internal Affairs.

5.2 The Leadership Team shall vote on the creation of the annual budget and may make amendments after consultation with the Executive Director and Coordinator.

5.3 Upon the recommendation from the relevant Working Group or Committee, the Leadership Team shall approve all official positions and policies and reported at each Cabinet meeting through regular reports from the Executive Director, Director of Internal Affairs, or relevant Working Group Lead.

5.4 Policies relating to the internal governance of TYC require a two-thirds majority, where consensus is not possible, at a Leadership Team meeting to be adopted, amended, or abolished.

5.5 The Executive may make time-sensitive decisions on issues that require immediate attention. These decisions will be reviewed by the Cabinet after as necessary and may be reversed at that time.

ARTICLE 6: Advisory Board

6.1 Advisory Board

A. The Cabinet shall appoint a board of up to 7 advisors for a term of up to 2 years, upon the recommendation from the Director of Stakeholder Engagement.

B. This Advisory Board shall have some connection to the Cabinet or City Hall (ex. former members in high esteem, current and former politicians, well known community activists).

C. The Advisory Board shall provide advice and guidance to the Cabinet as needed.

ARTICLE 7: APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVES

7.1 The callout, application, and selection process for the appointment of the Executive Committee shall be run by the Selections Committee, to be made up of the Coordinator and two outgoing or former Executive Committee members.

7.2 Applications for Executive positions shall be made available during the month of March by the Selections Committee.

7.3 Qualified applicants shall be granted an interview with the Selections Committee, either in-person or online.

ARTICLE 8: TYC TRAINING, PROGRESS TRACKING, AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

8.1 TYC Training

A. TYC orientation should be held at least three times per term and include: anti-oppression workshop, an introduction to TYC, and email and communication etiquette.

8.2 Progress Tracking

- A. The Director of Internal Affairs shall keep records of each member's attendance and work product.
- B. Committee chairs and Working Group leads should report monthly on the attendance and work of their members.
- C. Should a member meet requirements set out by the Director of Internal Affairs, they shall be eligible for a certificate of completion and a reference from the Coordinator.
- D. The Coordinator shall not play an active role in tracking members' progress or determining whether a member is eligible for recognition.
- E. If a member disagrees with a decision by the Director of Internal Affairs, the Executive Director shall investigate to see if recognition is merited.

8.3 Removal of Responsibilities

8.3.1 Any member may be forcibly removed by the Cabinet, forfeiting all responsibilities and voting rights for the remainder of the term, if all of the following requirements are met:

- A. The member has demonstrably acted in contravention of applicable laws, this Constitution, or TYC governance policies.
- B. The member has been given not less than one week advance notice by the Executive Director of Director of Internal Affairs of an intention to relieve the member of responsibilities before the question is brought to the Cabinet.
- C. A vote by secret ballot of the Cabinet requiring a two-thirds majority passes.

ARTICLE 9: COMPLAINT PROCESS

9.1 Shall be comprised of Two (2) Executive and the Coordinator.

9.2 Shall only meet when required.

9.3 Shall create their own procedures and present them to the Membership for approval before being required to meet on issues.

ARTICLE 10: DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

10.1 The TYC expressly condemns any act, behaviour or policy which serves to discriminate, oppress, and exclude the voice of another based on their age, sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, sexual orientation/identity, ancestry, place of origin, citizenship, religious beliefs, creed, marital status, family status, socio-economic status, disability, mental, emotional and/or physical health or appearance (size or looks) or occupation. Further, any act behaviour or policy, which serves to discriminate, disrespect, oppress, or exclude the voices of those who do not identify with the above grounds, is also considered discriminatory.

10.2 The TYC acknowledges the right of every person to their freedom of speech and expression, but also acknowledges the right of every person to live free of harassment, oppression and discrimination based on the above-mentioned criteria.

10.3 The City of Toronto Human Rights and Harassment Policy and Procedures apply here.

10.4 Violations of the aforementioned policy will be dealt with by the Executive as such situations arise.

ARTICLE 11 NON ALIGNMENT

11.1 The Toronto Youth Cabinet is a non-partisan organization, and does not support or maintain any political alignment.

ARTICLE 11: AMENDMENTS

12.1 A review of the Constitution shall be triggered by a 2/3-majority vote of the Cabinet, with changes being voted on at the Annual General Meeting.

12.2 A notification of at least 7 days must be provided before meetings that intend to vote on amendments to the Constitution.

ARTICLE 13: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

13.1 A conflict of interest refers to a situation in which private interests or personal considerations may affect a member's judgment in acting in the best interest of the Toronto Youth Cabinet. It includes using a member's position, confidential information or TYC time, material or facilities for actual or expected private gain or advancement. A conflict may occur when an interest benefits any TYC member's family, friends, previous group affiliation or business associates.

13.2 Declaring a conflict of interest shall be the first item on every agenda.

13.3 By declaring a conflict of interest, the member shall not be eligible to vote on the item, which the interest was declared for.

ARTICLE 14: ENABLING CLAUSE

14. These Articles of Constitution shall be the supreme governing document, and overrule all other policies of the TYC, as of 9 March 2017.