Youth Leadership Development Program Checklist

Consider the following questions when developing your youth leadership development program.

These will help you think through how you define and describe your program, as well as how you design the content in your program!

1. Are the activities in your program specifically geared towards developing youth leadership or are they general youth development activities?

2. Does your program provide opportunities to build relationships with peer and/or adult mentors who focus specifically on supporting their leadership development?

3. Does your program support young people to develop a leadership identity that draws on their personal and cultural strengths and assets? Does the program consider the individual, cultural, political, and gendered experiences of its youth participants?

4. Does your program offer opportunities for individual and group-level leadership skill-building alongside opportunities to put these into practice?

5. Does your program support young people apply their individual level leadership strengths to real world challenges and to participate in meaningful and consequential social change at the community level and beyond? Does your program focus on addressing issues relevant to lived experience and take context into account?

6. What does leadership look and feel like in your program? Leadership ideas and practices change over time and are different based on historical, social, and cultural contexts. In order to support youth leadership development to its fullest potential, avoid reproducing adult-centric, hierarchical and masculine versions of leadership.

7. Does your program work to address the barriers that marginalized youth face when accessing or participating in youth leadership development opportunities? These barriers may include (but are not limited to):

- Experiences of racism
- Poverty (need for employment or need to take care of siblings)
- Lack of identification with dominant conceptual frame of "leadership"