



GLOBAL NETWORK OF
YOUNG PEOPLE
LIVING WITH HIV

GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO MEANINGFULLY ENGAGE IN ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING SPACE/PLATFORMS



Introduction

"I feel most valued when I am able to participate meaningfully in events; to be able to learn, develop my skills, network and share my ideas with others"

Attending advocacy and networking spaces, such as conferences and meetings, provides valuable opportunities for young people to expand their network, participate in sessions, explore partnerships, mobilize funds, pitch ideas, and advocate for the voices of young people living with and affected by HIV. This guide aims to provide young people with practical tips on how to actively and meaningfully engage in these events.

Please refer to the detailed guidance “We matter Value us” developed by Y+ Global here;

www.yplusglobal.org/resources/we-matter-value-us



Meaningful engage in advocacy and networking space/platforms

Here are some useful tips to consider

Preparing for the Conference/Meeting

- Research the conference/meeting agenda, themes, and speakers to identify relevant sessions and topics of interest.
- Set specific goals and objectives for your participation, such as networking, learning, or advocating for specific issues (be sure to align with the objectives of the sponsoring organization).
- Prepare your elevator pitch that highlights your organization, project, your expertise, interests, and the perspectives you bring as a young person living with HIV.

Networking and Building Connections

- Be proactive in introducing yourself and engaging in conversations with other participants, both during sessions and networking breaks. Do not forget to bring your name card, brochures or other products.
- Utilize social media platforms to connect with attendees before the event, express your interest in meeting them, and arrange informal gatherings.
- Seek out youth-focused / advocacy events, networking sessions, or youth-specific forums within the conference/meeting.

Actively Engaging in Sessions

- Identify the venue and the format of each session to enable you to effectively prepare for the session.
- Participate actively during sessions by asking questions, sharing your experiences, and providing input.
- Take notes during presentations to refer back to later and share key takeaways with your network.
- Reach out to speakers and other attendees to share your reflection and connect to them to expand your network in your interested topics.
- Use social media platforms to live-tweet or post about sessions, highlighting important points and engaging with fellow attendees. Do not forget to tag the relevant partners and use specific hashtags to help get your messages across.

Understanding Resource Mobilization and Funding Landscape

- Identify sessions or workshops focused on funding opportunities, grant applications, or pitching ideas.
- Prepare a compelling pitch highlighting the importance of your project or initiative, its potential impact, and how it aligns with the conference/meeting themes.
- Seek feedback from experienced professionals and mentors to refine your pitch and increase your chances of success.
- Approach, share your ideas, and collect contact information for later follow-up after the conference.

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Exploring New Partnerships

- Attend sessions or workshops related to partnership development, collaboration, or youth engagement to connect with potential partners.
- Utilize networking opportunities to exchange contact information and follow up after the conference/meeting.
- Initiate conversations about potential collaboration projects and discuss ideas for future partnerships.

Be Active on Social Media

- Share personal insights, experiences, and key takeaways that resonated with you. This will make your updates relatable and compelling to other young people who couldn't attend the event.
- Incorporate relevant hashtags in your posts by looking for conference-specific hashtags.
- Reach out to other young advocates and influencers on social media to collaborate on joint initiatives or amplify each other's messages

Advocating for Your Needs and Amplifying Your Voices

- Attend sessions or discussions centered on HIV/AIDS, youth empowerment, and advocacy.
- Share your personal experiences and perspectives during these sessions to ensure the voices of young people living with HIV are heard.
- Collaborate with youth-led organizations or networks to amplify advocacy efforts and lobby for policy changes.

Conclusion

Engaging in advocacy and networking spaces, such as conferences and meetings, offers young people tremendous opportunities for personal growth, networking, partnership development, and advocacy.

By following these guidelines, you can make the most of these events and contribute to positive change in the field of HIV/AIDS while representing the voices of young people living with HIV. Remember, your presence and active participation can make a significant difference in shaping the future of this important cause.

For young people who received support from Y+ Global to attend conferences/ meetings and events

We must work to ensure young people are given the space to express their opinions and make decisions that impact their lives. **Our input and voice can influence change**; use every opportunity you get to speak up!

As a young person who has received support from Y+ Global to attend advocacy and networking spaces, it is important to uphold the principles of accountability and knowledge sharing. It is critical to report back on your experience and share what you have learned, in addition to actively participating in conferences and promoting the needs and issues of young people living with HIV. This includes disclosing information about your conference participation, what you have gained, accomplishments, new opportunities and partnerships, advocacy efforts, and follow-up actions. Including evidence such as photos or other proof enhances the impact of your report

By adhering to these principles, you not only demonstrate your responsibility as a beneficiary of support but also contribute to the organization's transparency and the collective learning process. Your report will help to assess the effectiveness of the support provided, inform future decisions, and inspire other young people in the community. Remember that the insights and knowledge gained from conferences can be powerful tools for advancing the rights and well-being of young people living with HIV.



Guidelines for Reporting

Ensure that your report is **clear, concise, and honest**. Use a structured format to present information systematically, making it easier for readers to understand and assess your experience.

[Download Template](#)

1

Provide an overview

Start by providing a brief summary of the conference, including its objectives, themes, and participants.

2

Highlight engagement

Describe your active participation in various sessions, workshops, and networking activities. Emphasize your contributions, such as asking questions, sharing insights, or leading discussions.

3

Share key takeaways

Summarize the most significant lessons, new knowledge, or skills acquired during the conference. Identify specific areas that have the potential to benefit the organization and the broader community.

4

Outline achievements

Report any achievements resulting from your engagement at the conference, such as securing new partnerships, initiating collaborative projects, or gaining recognition for your work.

5

Describe advocacy efforts

Detail your efforts in advocating for the needs and issues of young people living with HIV. Highlight any impactful conversations, policy discussions, or actions taken to address these concerns.

6

Discuss follow-up actions

Explain the steps you plan to take following the conference to implement what you have learned or achieved. Outline your strategy for capitalizing on new opportunities and maintaining connections with partners or stakeholders.

7

Include visual evidence

Whenever possible, include photographs, videos, or any other forms of visual documentation that support your report. These visuals can help convey the atmosphere of the conference and provide concrete evidence of your engagement.

8

Social media

Include links to your social media engagement and reflection (if applicable):
Include your social media engagement and reflections on the events you attended to support your report whenever possible.