



YouLeadD Summer Program 2025

Celebrating Filipino
Culture and Community

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Overview and History

Youth Leaders in the Diaspora (YouLeadD) is a cultural immersion initiative of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) aimed to help Filipino youth born abroad or who migrated at a young age who feel disconnected from their cultural roots in discovering/rediscovers their Filipino roots. Originating from the Lakbay-Aral Program—meaning “travel study”—the program invites young Filipinos abroad to rediscover and appreciate their heritage. YouLeadD offers an in-depth exploration of Philippine history, language, and cultural practices through lectures and guided tours to significant scenic and historical landmarks.

Additionally, YouLeadD offers participants the opportunity to interact with local Filipino students, public officials, indigenous community members, and engage in traditional festivities. The program not only helps participants deepen their understanding of their Filipino heritage but also supports them in addressing personal questions about their identity as part-Filipinos. Ultimately, YouLeadD aims to foster a stronger, more meaningful connection between participants and their Filipino families, communities, and the broader nation.

Previously, participation in the YouLeadD program was facilitated through strategic partnerships with Filipino organizations collaborating with the Commission on Filipino Overseas (CFO), along with overseas youth groups eager to join. These partnerships have enabled the program to support and engage with the Filipino diaspora, primarily in specific regions. However, for 2025, YouLeadD will undergo a significant expansion to open its doors to all Filipino youth aged 16-22, regardless of their country of residence. This expansion seeks to not only increase global participation but also to foster a more inclusive and diverse community of young Filipinos from various regions across the globe.

By broadening the program’s scope, the initiative aims to reach a larger and more dynamic group of Filipino youth to further empower them with opportunities for leadership, collaboration, and personal growth. Furthermore, the expansion will allow for greater representation of the diverse cultural experiences and perspectives within the Filipino diaspora, creating a richer and more interconnected global network.

Objectives

The topics will be focused on the exploration of Filipino Identity and Culture. Participants are expected to learn and experience the following:

- ✦ **Filipino Identity** - To gain a better understanding and appreciation of the rich tradition and cultural heritage of the Philippines.
- ✦ **Good Governance and Leadership** - To expose the participants to best practices of the Philippines' good governance and familiarize them with laws implemented for the welfare of the Filipino community; To conduct leadership training for the development of an action plan supported by Filipino communities overseas that would engage young Filipino leaders in the development of the country.
- ✦ **Volunteerism and Social Responsibility** - To learn about international and national agencies and organizations on their best practices to improve the lives of the Philippines' vulnerable population such as indigenous people and minority group; To introduce and develop modes of volunteer mechanisms for Filipino youth abroad for joint development efforts in the Philippines.
- ✦ **Diaspora to Development** - To actively participate in discussions and workshops of the Diaspora to Development Summit and network with possible partners / stakeholders in the various sectors; To include generations of overseas Filipinos in discussions on how to implement programs in the development of the country based on their various sectors and expertise.

Program Details

PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES:

Online Preliminaries and Online Forum

Dates: June 04-06, 2025

Platform: Zoom

The online preliminaries will introduce participants to the program objectives and activities, and be an opportunity for them to get to know their peers. These sessions will cover interactive forums on basic conversational Filipino language and leadership training for participants. Additionally, participants will engage in insightful discussions on Filipino values, including good manners and proper conduct, fostering a deeper understanding of cultural norms and social etiquette.

MAIN EVENT:

YouLeaD In-Person Event

Dates: June 08-14, 2025

The in-person event will immerse participants through tour and community engagements, farm immersion, adventure and ecotourism, cultural and gastronomy tours aimed at providing deeper understanding and appreciation of the four (4) core pillars of the program

It will include visits to different National Museums, adventure and ecotourism tour in Mt. Pinatubo, farm Immersion in Pampanga, Cultural and culinary tours in Las Casas Filipinas de Acuzar in Bagac Bataan, and Intramuros

POST-EVENT ACTIVITIES:

Synthesis and Ways forward

Dates: June 27, 2025

Platform: Zoom

The post-assessment session will serve as a forum for participants to discuss their key takeaways from the program. Additionally, it will provide an opportunity for them to engage in collaborative brainstorming, share their ideas on how to implement their advocacies, and discuss potential challenges they may face moving forward. There will be an interactive discussion on sustainable leadership practices, with a focus on creating lasting impact within local communities and beyond. Participants will leave with concrete steps for their next actions and a clear roadmap to drive positive change to their own communities.

Eligibility

Individuals with Filipino ancestry who are 16-22 years old;

Can commit to participating for the whole duration of the program;

Physically able to participate in activities (trekking, farming activities, etc.);

Has no conflict in their school or work schedules and no prior commitments on the said dates; and

Has the funds to support themselves and their personal expenses during the trip.

Requirements

Filled up Interest Form (this will serve as confirmation of your participation);

Documentary Requirements (signed waiver, bio page of passport, filled up insurance form, medical certificate as necessary); and

Program Fee payment