



7 STEPS TO RECRUITING CYL PARTICIPANTS



Co-operative Young Leaders (CYL) is a year-round youth engagement program that encourages young people to develop leadership skills that will prepare them for the future. Here are some tips that will help you recruit participants.

1. IDENTIFY a CYL champion ideally, this is someone who has had some contact with the program in the past. It could be a past participant or a staff member.

- If you have sent participants to CYL in the past, talk to them for more recruitment tips – what would they suggest you say/do to attract more young people to CYL?
- The CYL Director can come and talk with you/your team about CYL, host a webinar, and/or introduce you to a CYL graduate so that you can better understand the program and develop champions.

2. DETERMINE who you want to send to CYL. Link your strategy for CYL to your organizational goals/objectives. It could include any of the following:

- You want to move beyond “involving youth” to actually “engaging” them in your organization. For example, to increase membership growth, to learn about their perspectives, to groom as potential staff, volunteers, or to sit on a committee or task force.
- To support and promote the themes that CYL teaches (leadership, communication, self-awareness, co-operative knowledge, and concern for community).
- To reward a young person for good grades, community involvement, or participation in a sport or club.
- To develop the co-operative principles and philosophies in the next generation.

3. IDENTIFY who you want to send to CYL.

- The target age for CYL is between 13 and 18 years old.
- Do you want to approach...
 - Young members directly?
 - Young people within your community?
 - Parents/grandparents who are members?
 - Staff, board, or volunteers about sending their own children?



4. PROMOTE the program. We have lots of materials available to help you promote CYL to your target audience on our [website here](#).

- Promotional materials include a poster, participant brochure, an infographics on Strategies for Engaging Youth in your Co-operative and on the Benefits of Summer Camp for Youth, a sample application, videos, photos and a zip file with the CYL logos.
- Educate your staff, managers, and Board. Arrange for your CYL champion or CYL graduate to speak with staff. If you have a staff newsletter, bulletin board or intranet, place information there.
- Mention CYL in any of your community outreach initiatives.
- Put up posters, signs and displays in your locations. Perhaps a CYL grad could be in your location at a peak time to assist your staff!
- Include CYL material in your youth and general member print and electronic newsletters preferably January/February and no later than March/April. Place notices on your website (on the main page and/or your youth or community development pages). Include a link to the [CYL Linktree](#).
- Include CYL content on your social media platforms and get people talking.
- Have your staff start conversations with the target group. Posters, and webpages can create some awareness, but you will have to promote CYL by talking to people! Personal interactions will increase the number of potential CYL candidates you will attract.

5. SELECT your CYL young person(s). Depending on the number of participants you are sending and your recruitment goals, you may want to consider any or all of the following:

- Have each candidate submit a short essay on why he/she wishes to attend CYL.
- Have the candidate meet with your CYL champion or someone else from your organization.
- Be sure your participant has information on your organization (mission/philosophy, size, locations, products/services, etc.) to share with others at CYL. This also helps your participant learn more about you!

Note: CYL is a three-year program. OCA recommends that participants attend all three years sequentially, if possible.

6. APPLY TO CYL!

- Once you have qualified your young person(s) to attend CYL, they still must apply online. It is important to note that qualification by your organization does NOT guarantee acceptance by OCA/CYL.
- CYL strongly recommends that your organization require the participant to contribute a portion of the CYL program fee (i.e., \$100 - \$200 - this amount is between you and the participant.) It ensures commitment from the participant and his/her family, and reinforces the value of the CYL program.



- Acknowledgement of the completed application will be sent to your organization and the participant. Note that incomplete applications do not “reserve” a spot in CYL and sessions may fill up while we are waiting for the completed application. Completed applications are subject to a \$50.00 non-refundable administration fee.
- Prior to the start of the CYL summer sessions, OCA will invoice your organization of the full CYL program fee for each of your participants.

Congratulations!

You have helped to develop a new set of skills in a young person, and you are starting to develop a relationship!

- Put a summary of your participant’s CYL experiences in a newsletter, on your website, social media platforms, or on a poster in your location(s).
- Integrate the CYL participant into your organization all year round. Have participants speak at a gathering, assist at meetings, sit on a youth panel, volunteer during fundraisers, etc. You have the opportunity to strengthen your relationship with this young person, and truly assist in the development of the next generation of leaders.
- Be sure to include CYL in your budget for next year. If you’re able, consider sending a staff or board member as a Facilitator for their own professional development, or perhaps, your organization becoming a weekly/corporate sponsor.
- Throughout the year, add to your list of who could be approached to attend CYL next year.



For more information please contact:

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