

Frequently Asked Questions – NYA Program Recruitment

What is the NYA Canadian Program? What is the NYA Next Program?

The NYA Canadian and Next Programs are for youth from Nunavut and the NWT that give opportunities to travel, gain work experience, earn high school credits and more! They are both 10-months long and are highlighted by a summer placement in Southern Canada. Over 650 young people from Nunavut and the NWT have completed an NYA Core Program.

As an NYA Program Participant (in any Core program), youth will:

- Earn up to 9 high school credits.
- Do assignments from February-October, with the help of a Mentor.
- Travel during the summer.
- Learn new skills.
- Share their culture while experiencing others.
- Visit college and university campuses and learn about post-secondary.

Additionally...

Canadian Program Participants will:

- Live with a Host Family and another NYA Participant in a southern province.
- Volunteer 35 hours a week at a work placement.
- Gain independence.
- Learn about career options and get work experience.
- Experience life in the south.

Next Program Participants will:

- Live at a college residence in Ottawa, with a group of around 16 other youth.
- Explore your own interests.
- Prepare for post-secondary and next steps.
- Volunteer and contribute to the community.
- Complete hands-on college classes like construction and cooking.
- Experience city life.
- Work and live as a team.

What are this year's program dates?

This is what we are anticipating for Canadian Program 2026:

- NYA Canadian Participants leave their community: **Around June 15th**
- NYA Canadian Participants Travel Home: **Around August 1st**.

For NYA Next Participants, we are expecting these travel dates:

- Participants leave their community: **Around July 3rd**.
- Participants Travel Home: **Around August 1st**

What can youth expect from participating in NYA?

Lots! Youth earn high school credits, gain valuable skills and work experience, learn about new cultures while sharing their own, meet other Northerners and people across Canada, and have fun! Youth can also expect to be challenged and overcome obstacles that will help them grow and become stronger, more confident and independent people.

What do Participants need to do?

- Be committed to the program. Participants can get a lot out of NYA but will need to work hard too!
- Be willing to challenge themselves and live away from home.
- Follow the behaviour policy, which includes agreeing not to drink alcohol, consume cannabis, or do drugs during all parts of the program placement.
- Be committed to volunteering and taking part in program activities.
- Complete assignments before, during, and after the summer placement.
- NYA Participants are asked to fundraise \$1,500 in support of their participation.

Who can apply?

- Any youth between the ages of 15 and 20 (as of June 1st, 2026) living in Nunavut or the Northwest Territories can apply to the NYA Canadian and Next Programs.
- You do not need to be attending school to participate.

How do I apply?

- Go to <http://www.nya.ca/apply> to fill out the online Application Form.
- If you can't fill out the form online, you can pick up an Application Form from your school.
- You will need to get 2 adults (your Mentor and one other person) to fill out "Participant Referral Forms" for you and send them with your application.

While some youths are a good fit for both programs, the two programs provide different experiences and

How do I choose between Canadian and Next Programs?

opportunities. Applicants should learn more about each program before deciding! Applicants can visit our website, read previous blogs from past participants, ask Alumni, speak to Mentors, or give NYA a call!

What is a Mentor? Why do I need one?

A Mentor is someone who can support you as you do your assignments for NYA. They are a volunteer, who will help you get ready for NYA, and will help a few hours a month leading up to the summer. They can be someone like a coach, boss, or teacher. They can't be a family member who lives with you.

Who can fill out my referral forms?

Any adult who is not part of your immediate family. They could be an NYA Alumni, a teacher, boss, coach, or a family friend. Remember that one of your referral forms needs to be filled out by your Mentor.

If I am selected, what is the cost to me?

There is no cost to you, but you will need to fundraise \$1,500 before travelling.

What happens after I apply?

- NYA will let your Mentor know when we receive your application.
- After the deadline has passed, NYA will contact you to schedule a short phone interview with one of our selection teams.
- NYA will inform you whether you are selected – Participants will be selected before Christmas holidays.
- Selected Participants and Alternates will receive their first assignment pack at the beginning of February.

What is an Alternate?

We select several Alternates who are 'Participants in Waiting'. Each year, Participants withdraw from the program for various reasons before traveling and Alternates take their place. Alternates who are up to date on their assignments have a good chance of being promoted to a Participant spot. Alternates who complete their assignments but don't get to travel are guaranteed a spot in the following year.

Where can I get more information?

- Check out our website at <http://www.nya.ca/> for more info.
- Read the experiences of past Participants at www.nya.ca/blog/.
- Find Northern Youth Abroad on Facebook and Instagram. 'Follow' us for updates and to stay in touch.
- Talk to NYA Alumni or past Mentors in your community who are familiar with NYA.
- Contact the NYA Office. Staff can answer your questions or send you more info.

What if I need help?

Ask your Mentor, e-mail nya@nya.ca, call the NYA Office at 1-866-212-2307 or text 1-867-888-4001 and we would be happy to help you.

When are applications due?

November 13th, 2025. It is a good idea to complete your application early and not wait until the last minute!