

# Student-led philanthropy driving change in Canadian communities



Students participating in the Youth & Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) Canada select a youth team to receive a \$5,000 grant to support a charity.

**T**hese are challenging times. Never have we experienced such disruption in our daily lives caused by the global pandemic. Today's youth are among the most resilient, but also among the hardest hit as they navigate a world in which their education and their engagement in their local communities are facing major disruptions.

Now more than ever, investing in our youth is paramount. The demand for year-round services – from housing, to food security, to providing mental health support – has significantly increased. Meanwhile, donations have dramatically decreased.

Youth & Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) Canada was founded in 2002 by the Toskan Casale Foundation, a multi-generation family foundation committed to providing near-term relief to at-risk people while building values of compassion and empathy. The organization's values are rooted in the founders' experience with MAC Cosmetics and the MAC AIDS Fund.

At YPI Canada, we see the impact young people can make as champions for social issues and community leadership. Over the past two decades, YPI Canada has granted close to \$11 million to community-based social service charities, selected by thousands of high school students through a unique student-driven, school-based curriculum.

Born out of a simple idea when it was first piloted in Toronto at Royal St. George's College, YPI's mission and mandate are now more relevant than ever before. Grade nine and ten students select and study their chosen charities and non-profit organizations. They then present their knowledge and findings to their teachers and classmates, who collectively decide which organization should receive a YPI grant. As one Grade 10 participant shared with us, "I honestly think young people are often left out of philanthropy because adults think we'll mismanage money and organize it in the wrong places. It's important to change this because



YPI's grant-making program is inclusive and transformative for young people and the communities they serve.

“Growing up in an immigrant household, my family instilled in my siblings and me the importance of giving back and helping others from a very young age. When we founded YPI, we didn't just want to write cheques to various charities. We wanted instead to create the tools to teach and empower youth for future generations.”

Julie Toskan, MSM, OMC  
Founder and board chair of Youth and Philanthropy Initiative Canada

everything will be in our hands in the future. Beginning the process of philanthropy earlier plants a seed to continue this work after we graduate, and well into the years ahead.”

Today, despite restrictions brought on by the pandemic, YPI continues to deliver the program in collaboration with educators in over 100 schools in 8 provinces.

Through this program, students are challenging stigmas, changing behaviours, and developing leadership and philanthropy skills as they direct grants and critical public funding support for millions of people in need across Canada. Students develop a deep and personal understanding of the real issues facing their communities.

Connecting people is the central tenet guiding all of YPI's actions as this is fundamental to building compassionate communities. As such, YPI Canada's impact is made possible only by growing a community of youth, teachers, charities, and funders working together.

While the short-term impact of the grants in communities is

significant, it is the experience for Canada's youth that will have the greatest long-term impact on philanthropy. The program has clearly shown that young people are caring and capable of being meaningfully involved in addressing often complex social issues. When we trust and empower them, they become leaders now and for the future.

“The students inspire us to continue to grow more compassionate communities,” says YPI's founder Julie Toskan. “YPI's twentieth anniversary offers an opportunity to look to the future beyond the pandemic. We are challenging ourselves to not only meet the ambitious goals for 2024 in YPI's five-year strategic plan but to exceed them given the urgency to support charities and the communities they serve.”

*Join us to help today's youth thrive and shape our collective future for the greater good.*

*Learn more about YPI and how you can get involved and make an impact by visiting [goypi.org](http://goypi.org).*

## CONNECTED PEOPLE. COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITIES. PHILANTHROPIC FUTURE.

Youth & Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) Canada is a program where youth, schools, charities, and funders work together to support social services.

YPI is an idea that grant-making can be inclusive and transformative for communities and young people.

YPI is a platform for motivating, deepening, and scaling meaningful interactions between people and the social purpose sector.

Youth & Philanthropy Initiative Canada is a strategic, high-impact partner for the philanthropic community, and a leader in youth civic education. We aspire to be a champion of local charities chosen by youth and a valued partner in support of their communities.

Twenty years later, the organization's impact is real, measurable, and significant.

- Close to \$11 million in grants have been provided by YPI's funders to be granted by youth through our inclusive, participatory process.
- Over 340,000 students have developed skills, competencies, and positive attitudes towards civic engagement.
- Over 2.2 million people have learned about social issues from students advocating in their communities.
- Over 760,000 community members have been helped by frontline social service charities that have won grants through YPI.
- The YPI platform has also been adopted by educators in New York City and in schools across Scotland.

## THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

YPI Canada's grants are provided with the assistance of a community of generous donors and supporters. They range from large, national organizations, family and community foundations and local businesses across the country. The impact of the program over the past two decades would not have been possible without them.

If you would like to give youth the tools they need to participate directly in the betterment of their communities, please visit [goypi.org](http://goypi.org) to learn more.

## BRING YPI TO YOUR SCHOOL

We're excited to welcome more schools, and extend our impact to more students and charities across Canada. Once you've reviewed our guide for prospective schools at [goypi.org](http://goypi.org), please submit your school's application form online.

## There is so much to gain from student-led giving.

YPI Canada is a world leader in youth-led participatory grant-making providing a platform for civic engagement in high schools across Canada.

# yipi®

YOUTH AND PHILANTHROPY INITIATIVE CANADA



**1 LAUNCH**  
Students are introduced to YPI.

**2 TEAMS**  
Teams identify social issues affecting their communities.

**3 RESEARCH**  
Students research local charities addressing their chosen social issue.

**4 SELECTION**  
Students choose the charity they believe best addresses their cause.

**5 CONTACT**  
Students deepen their knowledge of the charity.

**6 PRESENTATION**  
Students deliver a presentation on the charity and the impact of a grant.

**7 FINALS**  
Finalists present to their school and judges. The best case receives the \$5,000 for their charity.

Connected People. Compassionate Communities. Philanthropic Future.

[goypi.org](http://goypi.org)