

## Frequently Asked Questions: *GYC Human Rights Delegations*

### **Why does GYC charge a program tuition? How is my program tuition spent by GYC?**

Similar to many educational institutions and organizations, GYC charges a program tuition to participants. The tuition directly supports the costs incurred by GYC in organizing the program. As a non-profit organization, GYC does not make a profit from the program tuition received from participants. We do our best to keep our costs low and to use the money received wisely and consciously. At the same time, the programs are very time intensive to organize and manage. We invest a lot of energy into each project and keep the number of participants low to promote a high level and quality of interaction. We also place a high value on being available and supportive to all participants before, during and after the program.

In addition to the program tuition we receive from participants, we typically invest additional money, time and resources into the project, not to mention the general costs of running the organization. We make up the difference between what participants pay in program tuition and the true cost of running our programs through financial contributions and in-kind donations from individuals and foundations who are supportive of our work, not to mention the many volunteers who help along the way.

Please refer to the section entitled “Program Tuition and Conditions” in the program descriptions for a more detailed breakdown of how the program tuition is allocated and which expenses are and are not covered by the program tuition.

We welcome you to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have regarding the financial aspects of participating in this program.

### **Are scholarships and/or financial aid available?**

We hope that the costs involved with participation will not prevent anyone who is truly motivated and committed to being a part of the activities of the program from being able to participate.

We do have a firm commitment to providing advice and support to each selected participant as they seek ways to raise the needed funds to cover their participation in the trip. It is our experience that participants from all backgrounds are typically able to find sources of funding to help make it possible for them to participate in the program.

GYC staff will work with each selected participant to help them develop and implement a fundraising plan as well as think about potential sources of funding. We recommend that you check out the ideas in our fundraising guide. It may give you some ideas that you hadn't thought about that might make your participation in the program possible.

Furthermore, many colleges and universities have pools of funds available to assist students interested in educational opportunities abroad and/or may be willing to provide academic credit for your participation in the program. If you are currently a student, you may want to check with your academic advisor or the career services office to see if they have more information about this.

Please review the information in our Fundraising Guide for ideas and tips on how to successfully raise money towards your participation in a GYC delegation:

[www.globalyouthconnect.org/pdf/fundraising\\_guide.pdf](http://www.globalyouthconnect.org/pdf/fundraising_guide.pdf)

### **Can I apply for more than one program?**

We kindly ask potential participants who are interested in more than one program to apply to only their two top choices. Therefore, we ask you to seriously consider which programs we are offering which best match your interests and needs.

If you apply for more than one program, you must submit a separate application for each specific program. You will need to note on each application that you are applying for more than one program and clearly indicate which program is your first choice and which is your second choice.

## **Can I get academic credit for participating in a delegation?**

While GYC is currently unable to directly award academic credit to participants in the delegation, many past participants have been able to successfully obtain academic credit from their college or university. We are more than happy to work with any student who is working to obtain academic credit towards his/her participation in the delegation.

However, please be aware that policies for awarding academic credit vary widely from school to school so we recommend that you discuss the possibilities with your academic advisor and/or professors to learn more about what is possible and what additional requirements your school may have to earn academic credit for participation in the delegation. For example, some schools may require you to write an additional research paper, make a presentation at your school, receive a completed evaluation form from the program director, etc.

## **What is a "Learning Community"?**

A "Learning Community" is an experiential educational process. Participants work together to develop common frameworks of understanding, enhance their substantive knowledge of human rights, strengthen their leadership skills, build supportive peer relationships, and develop collaborative projects to address issues of peace, justice and human rights. The term Learning Community comes from the popular education movement and refers to a group of learners who work together to create knowledge through shared dialogue, reflection and action.

## **What about safety and security?**

No matter where you travel, safety is always a concern. The key is to be a smart traveler, be aware of your surroundings and to not take any unnecessary risks. Of course, there are no guarantees but the best thing that participants can do is read as much as they can about the potential hazards and be very cautious about the choices that they make while on the trip.

GYC takes a number of measures to address safety concerns:

- All participants are registered at the U.S. embassy by GYC
- GYC will purchase comprehensive travel insurance on behalf of all participants in order to protect them in the event of a medical or other emergency while traveling.
- GYC provides all participants with links to information on the current security situation in the country and advises participants to be familiar with the current political and social context through a combination of individual research and required readings
- We take seriously the participant selection process and select participants that we feel are emotionally and psychologically prepared for the program. The group dynamic also provides an important supportive community.
- Participants are provided with a basic safety briefing during the program orientation as well as a written emergency guide and tips on how to handle certain emergency situations that may arise during the program.
- We seek advice and support on safety concerns from our local partner organizations and a representative of the local partner organization typically participates in many of the program activities.
- Experienced program staff is available throughout the program to facilitate any problems that might arise.
- We monitor news related to all of our programs on a daily basis in order to keep updated on current events and how they affect our program activities.
- We reserve the right to change and/or cancel program activities or location of activities at any time in order to address any potential safety concerns.
- We make assessments and take actions as to special safety concerns that we need to address

in organizing the logistics and content specific to each program

We feel that it is very important for all interested applicants to familiarize themselves with potential security, safety and health concerns decide for themselves if they feel comfortable with the risks associated with traveling and participating in the program.

The U.S. State Department regularly prints travel warnings with current information on possible security concerns in every country in the world. To learn more about potential security concerns in any country, check out the following link:

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1765.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html)

Health issues should be a concern of all travelers to foreign countries, including illness from food and water. Participants should take the time to familiarize themselves with potential health risks and take the necessary precautions. Current health information for travelers to any country can be found on the Center for Disease Control's web site:

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/destinationList.aspx>

### **What about language issues? Will I have a problem communicating?**

What you get out of this program will be a direct reflection of how much you put into it. We expect that all participants will be active and engaged; this includes being willing to pro-actively open lines of communication despite language challenges. In fact, the ability to understand and be understood across cultures is one of the most valuable skills that you will obtain by participating in this program. We will appreciate your patience and understanding as we work through language barriers and communication issues during the program.

**Important:** GYC's Latin American programs are Spanish immersion programs and all applicants must speak at least an intermediate level of Spanish to participate. All activities and sessions will be conducted in Spanish and translation will not be provided.

### **I'm under/over the age restrictions but I am really interested, can I still apply?**

GYC's mission is specifically focused on building the skills, knowledge and capacity of young people (ages 14-30) to be human rights advocates. Each program is designed with the needs of a particular group of participants in mind. In the past our programs were targeted for youth activists between the ages of 18-25. Due to the fact that we have had many high school students, young professionals and older college students contact us with interest in participating in our programs, we have added a new program for high school students (16-18) and extended the age range for our young adult programs to participants between the ages of 18-30. We hope this will allow more people to be able to participate in our programs.

If you do not meet the eligibility requirements for this program, we encourage you to get in contact with us as there are many other ways that you can get involved in our work as a volunteer, as a mentor, as an employee, by attending an event hosted by us that is open to the public, by discussing with us ways to collaborate with projects that you are involved in, and by staying informed and activated through the information we provide on our listserv, our reports, and on our website.

### **I'm not a U.S. citizen, a permanent resident of the U.S. or an international student at a U.S. college or university but I am really interested in participating in the program, can I still apply?**

GYC will seriously consider qualified and motivated applicants who are not U.S. citizens, a permanent resident of the U.S., or international students at a U.S. college or university. However, applicants must be able to meet all the other criteria for the program and participants meeting all the selection criteria may receive preference in the selection process. The program tuition will be the same for all participants, regardless of their country of origin. No scholarships or discounts are available.

As a globally-minded organization, we hope to widen the geographic scope for our program participants in the future. Right now, our small size and limited capacity requires us to focus our programs narrowly. Get in touch with us to let us

know about your interest in working with us and we'll keep you updated on future opportunities. The more we know that people are interested in our work, the more we can work to meet the needs and build new programs.

**I'm from the program country, how can I get involved in the project?**

Participants from the program country are selected through a separate selection process. If you are interested, please contact us to let us know and we will make sure to send you additional information.

If you work with an organization or institution in any of our project countries, we welcome you to contact us to share with us your programs and mission. We are always looking to for new organizations to collaborate with and we'd be happy to discuss specific ideas with you further.

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**For More Information**

Global Youth Connect

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E-mail: [contact@globalyouthconnect.org](mailto:contact@globalyouthconnect.org)

Website: [www.globalyouthconnect.org](http://www.globalyouthconnect.org)