



YOUTH
ENVIRONMENTAL
ACTION SUMMIT

AMBASSADOR HANDBOOK

A comprehensive guide to being a
YEAS Ambassador



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ENVIRONMENTAL
ACTION SUMMIT


YEAS is a community project of the Wicomico Environmental Trust





TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-------------|
| <u>What is YEAS?</u> | page 1 |
| <u>Ambassadors and their Responsibilities</u> | pages 2-6 |
| <u>Youth Activist Toolkit</u> | page 7 |
| <u>Bay Backpack</u> | page 8 |
| <u>Creating Your Action Project Proposal</u> | pages 9-17 |
| <u>Executing Your Action Project</u> | pages 18-19 |
| <u>Creating a Maintenance Plan</u> | pages 20-22 |
| <u>Celebrate Your Win!</u> | page 23 |
| <u>Previous Action Projects</u> | page 24 |
| <u>Potential Resources/People who can Help</u> | page 25 |





WHAT IS YEAS?

The Youth Environmental Action Summit (YEAS) is a community-based environmental education program that works in Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset counties.

The YEAS mission is to support you in taking action on hyper-local environmental issues and to build up your capacity to lead and **make the change you want to see in your community!**

You can use this language when describing YEAS



Ambassadors and their Responsibilities

As an ambassador, you are the engine
that powers YEAS!

Ambassadors are enthusiastic student-
leaders who embody the vision of YEAS
and share the program's vision for
supporting young people in making
positive environmental change on the
Lower Eastern Shore.

You can use this language when describing
what YEAS Ambassadors are



There are three main aspects of being a YEAS Ambassador:

1. Bring your talents and interests to the planning and execution of YEAS events
2. Gain leadership skills and experience through activities, projects, and workshops
3. Develop and implement your own action project, or support those of your peers



Committments

1. Attend most **Ambassador Meetings**
2. Engage in the YEAS **GroupMe** by giving input, completing polls, and responding to questions
3. Attend and support either the annual **Youth Summit** (typically hosted in March or April), or the **group action project**
4. Design an **environmental action project**, submit it as a proposal to YEAS, and implement the project
5. Conduct **outreach** by engaging new groups of students, classes, and community programs to enhance the inclusivity of YEAS



Opportunities

1. Participate and organize community **action days** (think: working at local community gardens, trash clean ups, advocacy campaigns, etc.)
2. Gain important leadership skills that will help **build your resume** for college, jobs, and scholarship applications
3. Gain **service learning hours** for all of your time



**In addition, Ambassadors
may be eligible for...**

Letters of recommendation

Scholarships

Funding to support your own
action project idea



Youth Activist Toolkit

The Youth Activist Toolkit is a detailed guide to help young people develop a plan, organize a coalition, and define and implement strategies to achieve measurable social impact goals.

This is one of two key documents utilized by YEAS ambassadors when thinking about community action. Please click “Youth Activist Toolkit” and review the document





Bay Backpack

When you have an idea for an action project, it can be daunting when you don't know the necessary steps to bring your idea to life.

The Bay Backpack is here to help! Their website has resources for nearly 30 different types of action projects to help you understand how to bring your project to fruition. Please click “Bay Backpack” and review the action projects.



Creating Your Action Project Proposal

Proposals should include the following three elements:

- **Project Description** (this can be in the form of a 1-2 page document, a video, OR set of google slides)
- **Logistical Plan**
- **Budget**

*If necessary, a letter of support from the landowner, facilities department, principal, or someone in charge



Step 1: Project Description

Regardless of what format you choose, the content should address the following:

- What **local environmental issue** does the action project address?
- What is the **research/data** behind the issue (scientific, social, economic, historical, etc)?
- **How did you come up with** the action project?
- What are the **goals** of the project? How will the goals be accomplished?
- What are the expected **impacts** of the project?
- What is **innovative** and/or unique about the project?
- How is this project going to be **maintained** into the future?



If You Create A Video...

If you choose to create a video, it can be created on a variety of platforms (phones, video cameras, tablets, computers, etc.). When submitting, please **upload your video to YouTube or Google Drive** to eliminate the need for transferring large files over email.

Need some inspiration? [Click here to see a video from Berlin Intermediate School from YEAS 2019](#)



Step 2: Logistical Plan

The logistical plan is the specific breakdown of how your project will come to fruition. It must include...

1. **Timeline** (with specific dates or date ranges)
2. **Actions to be completed** (including who, what, when, and how)
3. **Necessary supplies** (all of the supplies you need should also be included in your budget)

Example Logistical Plan

This plan is written as if a whole class is participating. If your group is smaller, you can write in the actual names of the students who will complete the tasks.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <u>Week of April 6:</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Our class (Mrs. Jones's AP Environmental Science Class, 18 students) will mock up designs for stormwater drains using the dimensions recorded during a previous site visit to the drains. |
| <u>April 10:</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Our class will present the designs in the cafeteria during lunchtime and use tally-mark voting to select the three top designs. |
| <u>April 13:</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mrs. Jones will reconnect with the Sonnytown stormwater management division (Mr. Grant Dopper) to schedule a time for him to meet with our class during the week of April 20th. She will also work with the school administration to get approval for transportation to Reed Park on May 3.Our "logistics team" will order supplies (paint, additive, and poster paper) so that they will be here in time for our project day on May 3. They will also send an email to the Department of Transportation to request the use of orange safety vests for the project day.Our "marketing team" will write a press release about the project day and send it via email to the local press outlets. They will also draft social media posts for the school's social media accounts to get the word out about the project day and draft an email that will be sent out to parents from the PTA.Our "event team" will email Reed Park to confirm the in-kind reservation of the pavilion to use as a "home-base" on May 3. They will also create an informational handout about the stenciling project using the poster paper that will be distributed to attendees and/or passersby during the project day. |
| <u>Week of April 20:</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Our class will meet with Mr. Grant Dopper to confirm which stormwater drains in Sonnytown are priorities for the stormwater stencil project. We will present him with our designs and invite him to the project day. |
| <u>April 29:</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Our class will gather all supplies (paint, paint brushes, additive, informational posters, camera, trashbags, work gloves). We will print out life-size versions of the stormwater drain designs to use as a reference during the project day. |
| <u>May 1:</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Project day. Our class will break into 3 groups to paint stormwater drain designs onto the appropriate drains. We will hand out the posters to anyone who comes out for the event and post them in businesses that are in the vicinity of the area. The marketing team will be ready for interviews with any press that attend and the "event team" will document with photos. |



Step 3: Budget

The budget describes where money is being spent (**expenses**) and where you are getting it from (**income**). A detailed budget must include everything that you will be spending money on.

*Note: If your action project budget is greater than \$250 (which is OK!) please provide a low-cost solution in addition to your big idea. For example, if you request \$2,500 to install a community greenhouse, what could you do with \$100-\$250 that would have a similar, but smaller, impact? The project is more likely to be funded at some level if it's financially scalable in this way.

Example Budget

| Item | Amount per item | Number of items | Total Cost | Total Donated | Total Requested from YEAS |
|---|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Poster paper (to advertise community event) | \$1.00 per sheet | 50 sheets | \$50 | \$0 | \$50 |
| Sherwin Williams ProPark traffic paint (for storm drain painting) | \$35/gallon | 3 gallons | \$105 | \$0 | \$105 |
| Shark Grip anti-skid additive (for storm drain painting) | \$9 | 2 containers | \$18 | \$0 | \$18 |
| Community Event Space - Reed Park Pavillion | \$100 | 1 day | \$100 | \$100 (from Reed County Parks) | \$0 |
| | | | Total Project Cost: \$273 | Total Project Donated: \$100 | Total Project Requested from YEAS: \$173 |



Letter of Support (if needed)

We want to know that your school/organization is passionate about and supportive of your project. Most organizations, including schools, are particular about the upkeep of their grounds, so **all projects involving any sort of planting, installation, etc. must include a letter of support/commitment** from someone in charge to ensure the feasibility and long-term maintenance of the project.



Now What?

Proposals should be submitted via email to info@yeasummit.org.
(questions can also be sent here).

Please also include the **first and last names of all students** who are a part of the project.

Executing Your Action Project: Tips from Ambassadors



“A successful project leader excels in **clear communication and collaboration**. The role revolves around collaborating with peers, actively being present at events and projects, and supporting the collective passion towards our environment! Ensuring the project stays on track and achieves its objectives will result in a successful project.”

-Sharan Chandi, James M. Bennett High

“Some things I find important are **time management** (procrastination can get the best of us), **frequent communication** w/ group members, and **being realistic** when goal setting.”

-Noha Yousif, James M. Bennett High



Tips from Ambassadors Cont.



“#1 **Impact** (how much of a benefit will come with your project), immediate and long term impact, etc.

#2 **Practicality** (cost, time, etc)

#3 **Community involvement**”

-Siddharth (Sid) Ghosh, James M. Bennett High

“A successful project leader’s first priority should be to **establish a clear, realistic set of goals and objectives**. By communicating these effectively to your team, they can better understand where they fall as far as roles and responsibilities, and you encourage collaboration as well as a feedback-receptive environment!”

-Julia Gore, Parkside High School





Creating a Maintenance Plan

A good maintenance plan will ensure that your action project will continue to be successful past its initial implementation.

Your maintenance plan should be detailed enough that if it is given to someone new, they will be able to successfully maintain your action project without your help.

Update our maintenance plan as needed.



Things to Consider

1. Inventory of Assets

- Create a list of all assets and equipment that will require maintenance.
 - Anything that will need to be replaced, receive upkeep, etc. should be noted.

2. Scheduling

- Develop a timeline for regular maintenance checks, including daily, weekly, monthly, and annual tasks.
 - The frequency of maintenance checks will be unique to your action project.

3. Checklists and Procedures

- Create detailed checklists and procedures for each maintenance task to ensure consistency and thoroughness.
 - Instructions should include safety protocols, tools required, and step-by-step guides.



Things to Consider (Cont.)

4. Budgeting

- Will money need to be spent on this project in the future? If so, your maintenance plan should include **estimated costs** and **where that money is going to come from**.

5. Staffing (most important part!)

- Figure out **who will be taking over when you graduate**- will it be a maintenance staff member at your school? A friend in a lower grade? A local landowner or organization?



Celebrate Your Win!

After all the hard work you put into your action project, the world deserves to know about it! But if you aren't able to tell the whole world, try doing some of these things instead:

- **Present your Project:** If our school offers a STEM expo or something similar, use it to spread awareness about your action project.
- **Make a Plaque*:** If you plan to do this, make sure to factor the cost into your proposal.
- **Morning Announcements:** Write a blurb about your project and deliver it on your school's morning announcements.
- **School Newspaper:** Invite your school newspaper or magazine to write a piece on your action project
- **Local News:** Contact reporters from your local news station, magazine, or newspaper to report on your action project.



Previous Action Projects

The YEAS website has tons of action projects from past years.
[Click here to read about them](#)

The YEAS Instagram also has a highlight with action projects from years past.

[Click here to view the highlight](#)



Organizations Who Can Help

[Click here to see a list of
local organizations that may
be able to help!](#)

*Reach out to YEAS organizers regarding
contact information for any of these groups

Follow YEAS on social media and visit our website!



This handbook was written by
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RESOURCES

Ambassador GroupMe

https://groupme.com/join_group/90990839/ew9dOdgU

Bay Backpack

<https://www.baybackpack.com/action-projects>

Berlin Intermediate School Action Project Proposal Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QVVVchuW-s&t=3s>

Organizations Who Can Help

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGCgVlw1B0/8h0gclfWjshK_ir79A0EHA/view?
utm_content=DAGCgVlw1B0&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link
&utm_source=editor](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGCgVlw1B0/8h0gclfWjshK_ir79A0EHA/view?utm_content=DAGCgVlw1B0&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor)

YEAS Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/YEASummit>

YEAS Instagram - Action Project Highlights

<https://www.instagram.com/stories/highlights/17856956915255782/>

YEAS Website - Action Projects From Past Years

<https://www.yeasummit.org/action>

Youth Activist Toolkit

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DOjqQsu8VYkJdTznT_IZiqPSRtl0W2q3/view