

Civic Engagement and Nonpartisanship Guide

How chapters do meaningful civic work — including with elected officials and public institutions — while remaining strictly nonpartisan.

The standard

YouthConnect Network is nonpartisan. Chapters serve everyone in their community regardless of political belief. We support civic learning, service, resident engagement, and appropriate youth participation in local decision-making. We do not support partisan political activity of any kind.

Encouraged

- Learning how local government, HOAs, school boards, and civic institutions actually work.
- Inviting public officials to speak, in a way that is open to officials across the political spectrum.
- Attending public meetings and observing how decisions get made.
- Presenting resident feedback and chapter findings to decision-makers.
- Non-partisan civic education, including how and where to find official voting information.
- Service projects and community initiatives that address a documented local need.

Not permitted

- Endorsing or opposing any candidate, party, campaign, or ballot question.
- Campaign work, canvassing, phone banking, fundraising, or distributing campaign materials in the name of a chapter or YouthConnect Network.
- Using chapter channels, events, mailing lists, or materials for partisan messaging.
- Implying that YouthConnect Network, Janga Bahadur Foundation, or an advisor endorses a candidate or party.
- Accepting sponsorship or in-kind support from a political campaign or party committee.

Individual members are free citizens. Anyone may participate in political activity personally, on their own time — but not in the chapter's name, not in chapter uniform or branding, and not through chapter channels.

Working with elected officials

- 1 Invite officials because of the office and the topic, not the party.
- 2 Where an event features an official, be prepared to extend a comparable invitation to counterparts across parties.

- 3 Focus the conversation on how local decisions are made and how residents can be heard.
- 4 Present data and resident feedback, not policy endorsements.
- 5 Clear any media coverage or joint publicity with admin@youthconnect.network first.

Youth participation in governance

A longer-term goal of YouthConnect Network is to develop responsible pathways for young people to take part in community governance and local decision-making — for example youth seats on advisory bodies, structured resident input processes, and formal consultation with HOA boards, school bodies, and municipal committees. These pathways are developed with the relevant institution, comply with that institution's own rules, and remain strictly nonpartisan.

If a chapter is pressured

If any partner, official, adult, or organization pressures a chapter toward partisan activity, the chapter should decline politely, make no commitment, and report it to admin@youthconnect.network the same week.

YouthConnect Network is a fiscally sponsored initiative of Janga Bahadur Foundation. YouthConnect Network is not a separate legal entity. This document is informational guidance for chapters and partners and is not legal advice.
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