

Public Health Association of BC

RISE UP!

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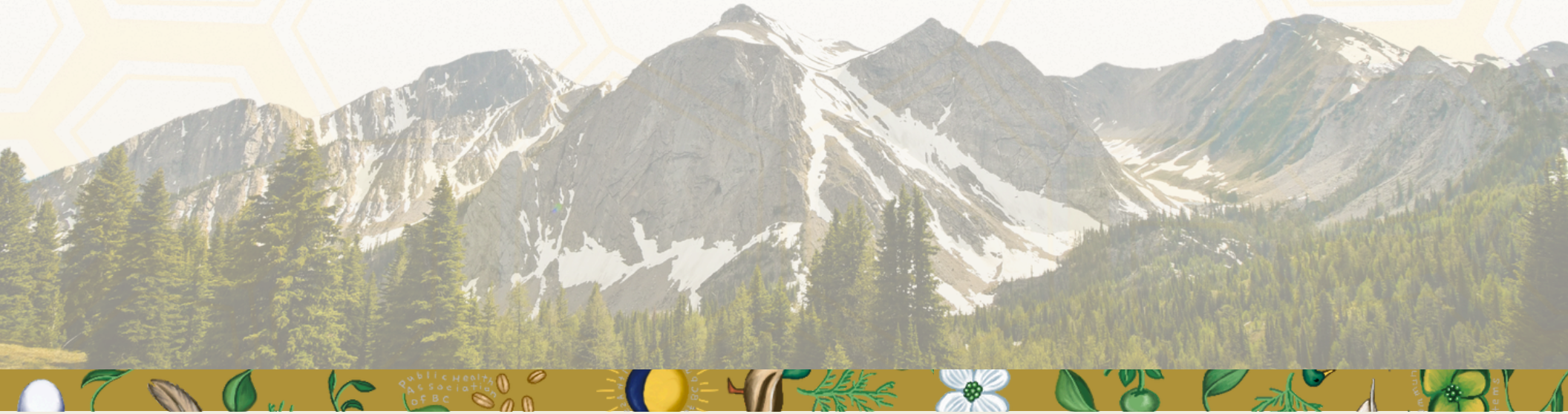
Host Organization Toolkit



As we begin this work together, it's important to reflect on where we are and how our efforts are connected to our land-based work. PHABC is a provincial organization and acknowledges that our work goes beyond the places we live and impacts the lives of nations across British Columbia and Turtle Island. We recognize the deep relationships that Indigenous Peoples hold with the lands and food systems where our work takes place.



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Rise Up! Host Toolkit

Co-Creating Impactful Youth Experiences

This program is built on relationships between youth, communities, and the local organizations that guide and support them. We're so grateful to be walking alongside you as we create spaces for learning, leadership, and meaningful connection.



Welcome to Rise Up!

Rise Up! brings together young people and host organizations across British Columbia who are committed to building stronger, more just food systems and communities.

Your involvement helps make this vision real, and your role as a host is grounded in care, collaboration, and mutual learning. As we begin this work together, it's important to reflect on where we are and how our efforts are connected to place.

The Rise Up! program is built on relationships between youth, communities, and the local organizations and businesses that guide and support them. We're so grateful to be walking alongside you as we create spaces for learning, mentorship, and meaningful connection.

This toolkit is your guide throughout the Rise Up! journey. Inside, you'll find tools to help co-create a unique and meaningful opportunity for youth volunteers, help them prepare for their placement and approach the experience with equity and intention. The Rise Up! staff are here to support you, whether you have questions, ideas, or just want to check in.

We thank you for helping us inspire youth to Rise Up! to strengthen food systems and environmental stewardship across British Columbia.



Lauren Bernardi
Provincial Manager
Rise Up!

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The Rise Up! Journey

An Overview of How Youth, Hosts, and Communities Grow Together

Rise Up! connects youth across British Columbia with local businesses and organizations to support food systems and environmental stewardship in their communities.

Through meaningful service placements and community engagement, youth are rising up to become leaders in creating a more just, sustainable, and resilient future.







Who We Are: A Collective Partnership

Rise Up! is managed by the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC), in partnership with CityHive and MeaningfulWork. Each health authority region has a Regional Lead that will work with host organizations and youth throughout the program.

We aim to support the professional and personal development of youth, and increase awareness of roles in food systems and environmental stewardship as viable career paths.

Why It Matters: Rooted in Community and Purpose

Through participation in Rise Up!, youth will develop new skills, build meaningful networks and relationships, and feel more invested and connected in their local food systems and communities. Host Organizations will increase their capacity to continue hosting future volunteer positions for youth, and show youth how they can provide valuable support to their local food systems. We aim to help youth foster meaningful connections to the land in a safe and meaningful way, while learning about cultural safety and social responsibility.











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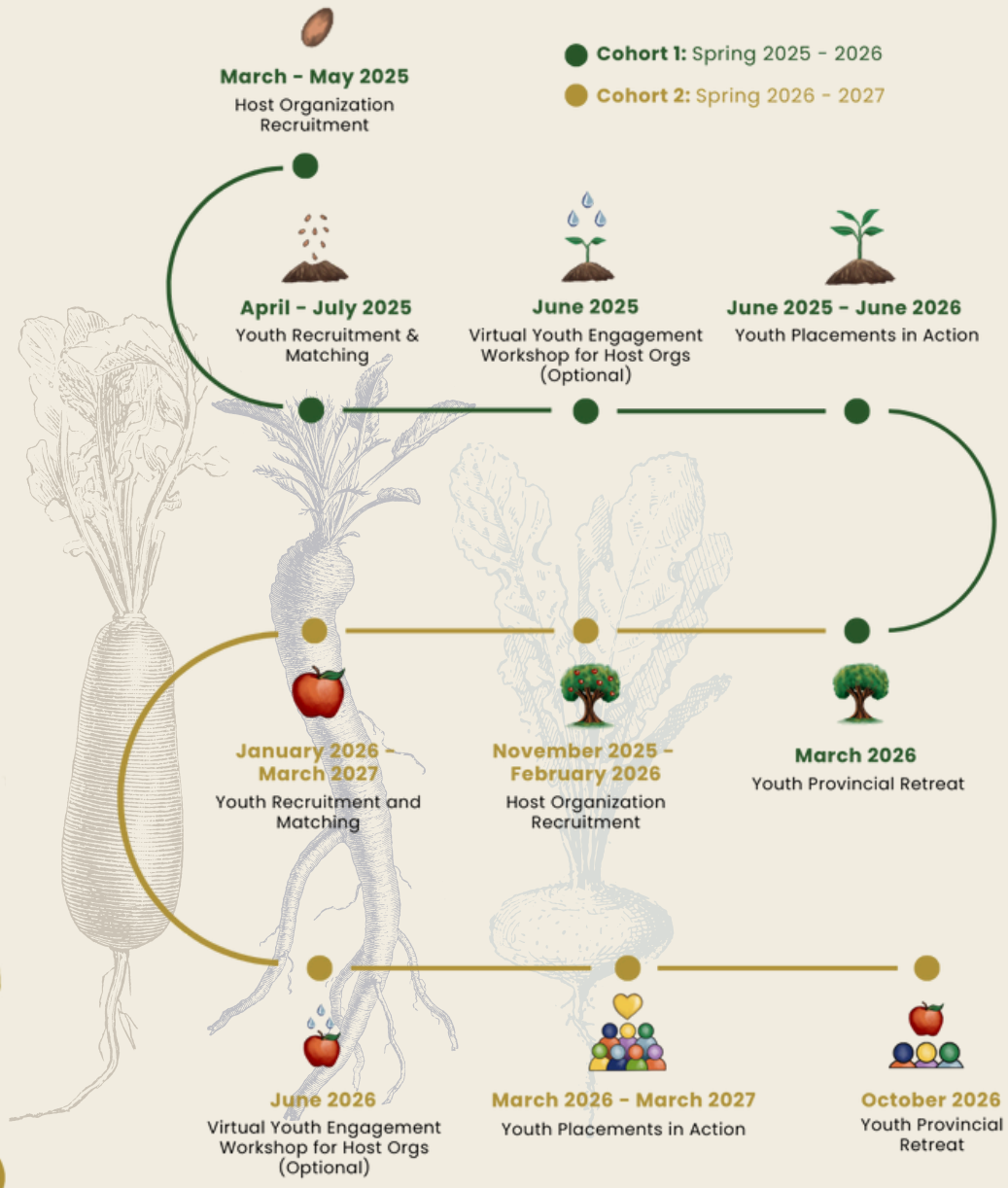
The Journey Ahead

Rise Up! will engage 145 youth (ages 15–30) across British Columbia between February 2025 and March 2027, delivered in two cohorts:

- **Cohort 1:** Spring 2025 – Spring 2026
- **Cohort 2:** Spring 2026 – Spring 2027

To ensure inclusive participation, *at least 50% of placements are prioritized for equity-deserving and underrepresented youth.*





The Rise Up! Experience for Youth

Youth will complete a minimum of **120 hours** of volunteer service over 12 months, including:

- 40-60 hours with their Host Organization
- Educational modules introducing food systems, community collaboration and leadership (and many more topics!)
- Webinars covering various food systems themes with experts, such as school food programs, Indigenous food sovereignty, and food access
- Regional gatherings and a provincial retreat!

Co-creating the Youth Volunteer Placement

Volunteer service placements should be co-created with the youth, to address the Host Organization's needs while allowing the youth to suggest and explore topics of interest to them. Placements should be flexible to accommodate youth schedules and needs so they can have the best experience possible.

Host Organizations will create a profile and list their opportunities on an online platform developed by Meaningful Work, where youth will browse and apply for a placement. Placements are not intended to replace paid work, and could take place on site, virtually, or as a hybrid of both.



Working Together, Rising Together

Shared Responsibilities for Youth-Centered Opportunities

Host Organizations and Regional Leads each play an essential role in co-creating meaningful, supported youth placements.

The table below outlines the shared responsibilities within Rise Up! between Host Organizations and program staff.





	Host Organizations	Rise Up! Program
Recruitment and Onboarding	• Create a profile and volunteer opportunity in the online platform • Engage with interested youth leading up to a confirmed placement by reviewing any applications received and communicating with youth via the platform • Provide at least 40 hours of volunteer work over 12 months or less	• Recruit youth and support them in exploring opportunities on the online platform • Match youth and Host Organizations, and facilitate an introductory meeting • Share tools and resources with Host Organizations to support the development of youth volunteer opportunities

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	Host Organizations	Rise Up! Program
The Volunteer Matching Process	• Co-create the youth's specific role collaboratively (Regional Lead may support) • Provide a safe and welcoming onboarding process for your youth volunteer • Have youth complete a consent form if you plan to take photos/videos (with their permission) or if any higher-risk activities are involved.	• Support Host Organizations in best practices for youth engagement (i.e. effective communication) • Clarify expectations with the youth in their volunteer role and any outstanding details around youth engagement • Provide youth with instructions to access educational material • Ask youth to complete a photo/video consent form on behalf of PHABC
Working with Minors	• At least one staff member must have a Criminal Record Check (CRC) completed (PHABC can support free access to a CRC, please reach out to your Regional Lead to inquire)	• Criminal Record Checks completed for all Regional Leads and other program staff

	Host Organizations	Rise Up! Program
Youth Placements	• Offer mentorship, guidance, and any necessary training that empower youth and equip them for their volunteer placement activities • Ensure a healthy and safe working environment, and provide supervision where necessary • Confirm youth volunteer's service placement hours in the platform • Regular check-ins with Regional Lead, and ongoing communication as needed • Please note: if you have a reason to believe, or receive disclosure, that a youth volunteer is being harmed, please report concerns to authorities and Regional Leads, this includes criminal acts against minors	• Celebrating Host Organization and youth volunteer success • Organize Regional Gathering for Rise Up! youth • Schedule monthly check-ins with Host Organizations, and ongoing support as needed • Maintain regular touchpoints and communication with youth and offer tailored support as needed • Provide conflict resolution and mediation if needed • Direct supervision of youth on volunteer placement sites • Support the youth's accurate and timely tracking of hours through the Rise Up! digital platform

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	Host Organization	Rise Up! Program
Program Completion	• Participate in feedback and evaluation processes • Discuss participation in future Rise Up! cohorts with Regional Lead, if desired	• Provide guidance on feedback and evaluation processes • Invite youth to Provincial Gathering
Insurance	• Provide details if requested by Regional Lead	• Details to be provided by PHABC

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Equity & Accessibility in Practice - A Shared Approach

Working together to support inclusive, affirming, and accessible placements.

Rise Up! is guided by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion principles laid out by the Public Health Association of British Columbia.

Rise Up! is committed to creating an equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment, respecting and appreciating differences in age, ethnicity, Indigenous origin or heritage, gender, physical ability, beliefs, language, sexual orientation, education, nationality, social background and culture. We know that equity and accessibility are ongoing practices depending on context, community and capacity. Let's work together to create meaningful experiences for youth.



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Our Shared Commitments

Together, we aim to:

- Offer youth a welcoming and culturally safe space.
- Recognize and honour diverse ways of engaging, learning, and leading.
- Create space for feedback, reflection, and adaptation.
- Uplift youth voices and lived experience in meaningful ways.
- Be open to learning and unlearning along the way.



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Rise Up! Encourages Host Organizations to:

- View equity, diversity, and inclusion as foundational values in any advocacy and collaboration work, education, and research
- Create environments that are respectful to all and free from harassment, discrimination, and victimization
- Value, collect and incorporates input from the communities served to ensure that its presence and work is welcomed, culturally appropriate, and does not cause harm;
- Use inclusive language during all youth programming to ensure equity
- Examine and challenge possible unconscious biases that threaten to interfere with inclusivity and equity;
- Provide equal opportunities for training and professional development for every youth hosted
- Acknowledge and correct existing inequities in organizational policies, programs, and structures;
- Take seriously complaints regarding discrimination during service placements and follow all reporting procedures as outlined
- Promote cultural competency by dedicating time and resources to diversity, equity, and inclusion training for all staff and Board

We're Here to Help!

We recognize that every organization has different resources and realities. We're here to support you with:

- Ongoing dialogue and check-ins
- Support with designing youth-centered placements
- Equity and Accessibility organizational reflection prompts, found in Appendix A
- Connection to training opportunities (e.g., trauma-informed practice, intercultural communication)
- Sample tools, templates, and examples from other host organizations
- Support if challenges come up

Let's Keep the Conversation Going

Thanks again for your willingness to be part of this work. Your leadership in the community makes a real difference, and we're excited to support you however we can.



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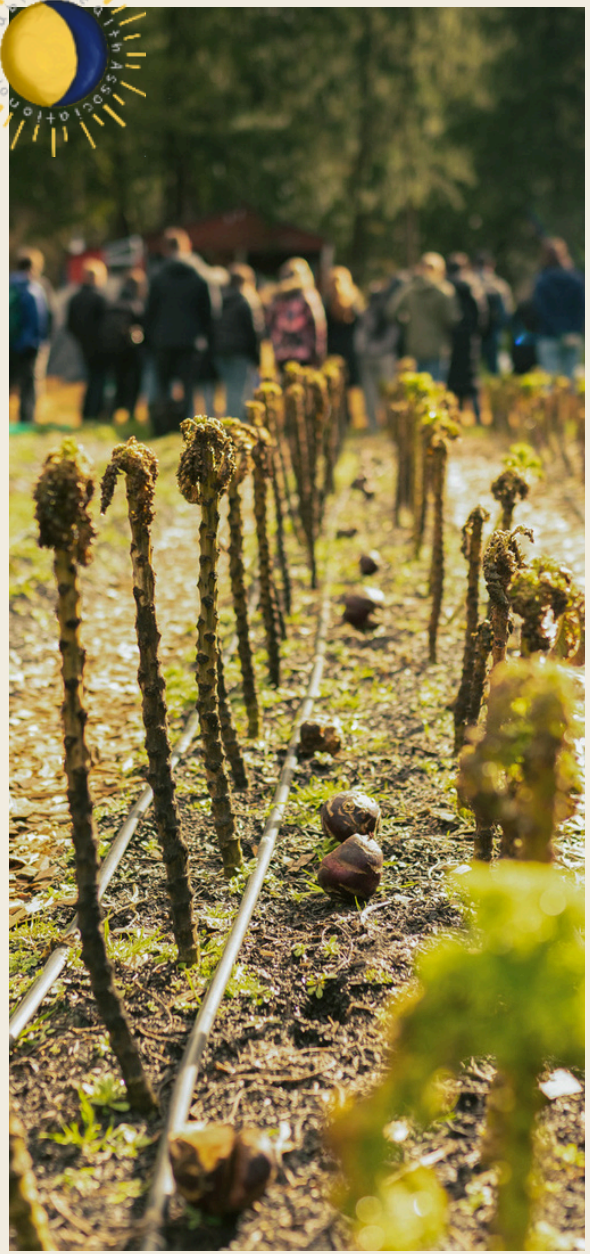









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Starting Strong: Youth Onboarding Made Meaningful

What to prepare, what to expect, and how to welcome youth volunteers on Day 1.



This guide supports you in welcoming a Rise Up! youth volunteer into your organization.

A thoughtful and supportive start can help foster trust, connection, and meaningful engagement, while equipping youth with the tools and confidence they need to thrive in their role.



Before the First Day

Reaching out to volunteers in advance can help build trust and ensure everyone starts on the same page.

- Send a welcome email to introduce yourself. Provide an overview of the onboarding process and confirm key details for their first day, including time, location, what to bring, and who to ask for upon arrival. Offer a contact number in case they have questions or need directions.
- Share any background reading materials the volunteer should review before their first shift. Communicate instructions for completing processes such as Criminal Record Check, if required.
- Prepare a welcoming workspace (physical and/or virtual) that considers volunteers' accessibility needs. Begin granting access to any required software or resources, brief staff who will be working with the volunteer, and prepare any materials required for the volunteer's first day.

When They Arrive: Welcome and Introductions

A warm welcome fosters a sense of belonging and confidence, ensuring volunteers feel ready to engage.

- Provide a tour of key areas, including their workspace, washrooms, exits, and break room.
- Introduce them to key team members, and let them know who they can turn to for support.
- Encourage questions and create space for conversation to help them feel comfortable.







Getting Started: Role and Expectations

Help volunteers get off to a smooth start by providing clear guidance and practical resources.

- Collaborate with volunteers to co-develop their role responsibilities and expectations, aligning their interests with your organization's needs. Use the "Youth Placement Co-Creation Guide" to guide this conversation, and complete the Collaboration Agreement to document this process.
- Review factors such as shift hours, breaks, check-in processes, safety and wellbeing considerations, accessibility needs, and communication preferences. Invite them to any upcoming team gatherings or events to promote inclusion and engagement.
- Introduce volunteers to key equipment or technology that they will be using to complete tasks.

Thank you for welcoming a Rise Up! youth volunteer into your space. Your time, care, and openness play a key role in shaping a positive experience for youth volunteers.

The Co-creation Conversation

Tips and tools for shaping a meaningful, collaborative placement with your youth.

Involving youth in shaping their roles allows them to feel seen, respected, and engaged, while effectively supporting the needs and capacity of host organizations.

At Rise Up!, we believe that volunteer placements are most impactful when they are co-created with young people, not just *for* them. This approach involves aligning your organization's goals with the youth's interests, availability, and learning goals to shape a meaningful experience for both parties.



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Prompts for Co-Creating Volunteer Placements

These guiding questions are designed to help facilitate meaningful conversations early on with youth to shape their placement. You can also revisit them during check-ins, as needed.

Understanding Each Other's Goals:

- What is the youth hoping to learn, explore, or contribute through this placement? How does this align with what your organization is hoping to accomplish?
- Are there existing tasks or projects that can be adapted to reflect shared goals?
- What does success look like for both the youth and the host?

Availability and Capacity:

- How much time can the youth commit? What flexibility can you offer around scheduling?
- Are there upcoming busy periods or key dates that you or the youth should plan around?
- Does the youth have any accessibility needs to consider? What support and resources would help the youth thrive in their role?
- How comfortable is the youth with supervised versus self-directed tasks? How can you structure the role to align with their needs?

Learning and Mentorship:

- What skills or experiences is the youth hoping to gain? Are there areas of your organization's work that the youth is keen to learn more about?
- How might this placement support their career interests? What guidance or mentorship can your team offer to support this?
- How often will you check in and reflect on progress with the youth to ensure the placement remains meaningful? What avenues exist for youth to provide feedback?
- Are there opportunities for the youth to try different tasks and take on increasing responsibility as the placement progresses?















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Tips for Facilitating Co-Creation

- Begin with curiosity. Ask open-ended questions to explore what matters to the youth.
- Be transparent. Share your organization's priorities and any limitations or requirements.
- Build together. Collaboratively identify goals, tasks, and timelines.
- Revisit the plan. Co-creation is an ongoing process, and plans can be adjusted to ensure the experience continues to align with the needs and goals of both parties.
- Encourage feedback. Create space for reflection, questions, and suggestions.
- Set clear boundaries. If something is not possible, communicate clearly and explore other
- options.

Final Reflection

Co-creating a placement is about thoughtful dialogue, shared decision-making, and supporting youth in a way that is both practical and meaningful. By participating in this process, you are helping to shape a more inclusive, responsive approach to youth engagement.

We are here to support you at every step. If you would like support in designing a placement, your Regional Lead is available to facilitate the process or brainstorm alongside you.

Thank you for your commitment to this work and for welcoming young people into your organization.

Wrapping up the Journey

Ideas for recognizing your youth's contributions and closing the experience with care.

Below are some ideas for you to help facilitate an intentional closure to the Rise Up! journey. Your regional lead is also here to support during this process. We encourage you to take time to reflect, celebrate youth contributions, and support them in carrying their learning forward.

Thank you for being part of this shared work. Your mentorship, time, and flexibility helped create a space where youth could learn, contribute, and grow. We deeply appreciate the role you played and the values you brought into the experience.

If you're interested in hosting again in the future, we'd love to hear from you. Rise Up! grows through community, and your continued involvement helps shape what's possible.



Wrap-Up Ideas for Hosts

Have a Final Check-In with Your Youth Participant
Create space for reflection and gratitude. Share what you appreciated, and ask them what stood out or felt meaningful.

Acknowledge Their Contributions
Offer a gesture of appreciation, whether that's a thank-you note, a verbal acknowledgment, or simply naming something they brought to your space.

Confirm Placement Hours and Submit Any Final Documents
Your regional lead will let you know whether there is anything else needed to complete the placement from an administrative side

Provide a Reference Letter or LinkedIn Recommendation
Youth are encouraged to request a reference to support future opportunities. Unless significant concerns arose, we ask that hosts provide a short letter or endorsement. Your Regional Lead is available if you'd like support or a sample to work from.

Explore Whether They'd Like to Stay Connected
Some youth may wish to continue volunteering beyond the placement. If that's something you'd be open to, we encourage a conversation about what that could look like outside of the program's scope.

Share Reflections or Feedback
We welcome any insights you'd like to pass along-whether about the placement experience, the youth's contributions, or ideas for how we can continue to grow this program.





Appendix

Equity and Accessibility Reflection Prompts:

Welcoming & Belonging

- What helps someone feel like they *truly* belong in our space, not just that they're allowed to be here?
- Are there unspoken norms in our organization that might make someone feel "othered" or unsure?
- How do we show youth that *all* parts of their identity are welcome here?

Youth Engagement & Power

- Do youth have meaningful choices in shaping their experience here?
- Are we making space for youth leadership or co-creation, even in small ways?
- How do we respond when youth offers feedback or says something isn't working for them?

Access & Equity

- Are there any hidden barriers (e.g., jargon, forms, rigid schedules, assumptions)?
- Do we ask youth what support they need or wait for them to speak up?
- If a youth had a disability, trauma history, or unique life experience, would we feel confident adapting?

Emotional & Cultural Safety

- How do we repair trust if harm or miscommunication happens?
- Are our staff comfortable using inclusive language and asking about pronouns?
- What would cultural safety look like for an Indigenous youth here?
- If a youth shares something about who they are (such as their gender, culture, or learning style), are we responding with care, confidentiality, and curiosity? Would we feel comfortable reaching out for guidance if we weren't sure how to respond?

Reciprocity & Care

- Are we offering more than we're extracting? What's in it for the youth beyond resume-building?
- How do we show appreciation for the contribution's youth make here?
- Are there ways to make this a two-way learning experience?

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