



Youth Program Workshops

Mapping Municipal Power and Constraints

Local governments influence everyday life—from parks and transportation to safety and housing—but not every issue can be solved at City Hall. This interactive workshop helps youth delegates understand how city government works, where its authority comes from, and why some challenges require action beyond the local level. Participants explore the limits of municipal power, including how state laws shape what cities can and cannot regulate through concepts like Home Rule and Dillon’s Rule. Youth will also learn how different local government structures—such as strong mayor–council, council–manager, and rotating mayor systems—impact leadership, decision-making and policy outcomes. Through hands-on discussions with elected officials and real-world scenarios, delegates will practice analyzing community issues, identifying who holds authority, and choosing effective advocacy strategies. The workshop empowers young leaders with the tools to turn civic knowledge into realistic, impactful action in their own communities.

The People’s Chamber: Youth Civic Advocacy in Action

The People’s Chamber is an immersive, hands-on simulation that puts youth delegates inside the policymaking process. Designed to energize civic engagement and public advocacy, this workshop shows how local government decisions directly impact marginalized communities. The session begins with an engaging guest speaker and live Q&A, connecting participants to real-world leadership and lived experience. Youth then step into a city council–style role play, collaborating to draft, discuss, and advocate for legislation that responds to community needs. Participants experience how ideas become policy—and how voices can influence outcomes.

By the end of the workshop, youth will gain a deeper understanding of how city council legislation shapes the lives of marginalized communities. Delegates will also build practical advocacy skills by engaging in realistic policymaking, learning how to speak up, work across differences, and push for solutions that create meaningful, lasting change at the local level.

More Than a Roof: Understanding Housing & Its Community Impact

More Than a Roof invites youth leaders to look beyond rent and home prices and explore what really shapes affordable housing—and how local governments make it happen. This interactive workshop breaks down how cities plan, fund, and support housing solutions designed to meet the unique needs of their communities. Participants will learn how factors like location, income levels, and policy priorities influence housing development, and what subsidies and funding tools governments use to expand affordability. Through engaging discussions, creative brainstorming, and real-world case studies, youth will design their own affordable housing proposals while navigating real-life constraints. By the end of the session, youth leaders will gain a deeper understanding of affordable housing and the policy decisions behind it, learn how local governments fund and support housing initiatives, and see how these choices directly impact communities. More Than a Roof empowers young people to think critically about housing as a key driver of equity and opportunity.