

NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL X SINGAPORE POLYTECHNIC (SP) WEBINAR SERIES

FROM IDEAS TO INITIATIVES: CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUNG CHANGEMAKERS

5 AUGUST 2026, 4.00PM – 5.30PM

On 5 August 2026, 473 youths from Singapore Polytechnic (SP) attended a webinar to (i) gain a better understanding of what drives youths to become changemakers, (ii) hear from young changemakers about their experiences and lessons learnt and, (iii) explore how youths can create impact together.

This session was co-organised by SP and the National Youth Council (NYC), and involved the following panellists and moderator:

- Ms Natania Tan, Founder of You(th) Can Do It, NUS Student and Recipient of NVPC's President Volunteerism & Philanthropy Award
- Ms Lim Li Khee, Chief Curator of Young ChangeMakers and NYC INSPIRIT Youth Leader
- [Moderator] Mr Mamutuk Charles Theodore Ison, Y2 Diploma in Mechatronics & Robotics, SP

The moderator shared that NYC, together with its Government and non-Government partners, had conducted a series of engagements, including the NYC x SP webinar series, to shape the SG Youth Plan (SGYP). He shared that the SGYP was a five-year youth-led blueprint that reflected the aspirations of youths for themselves and for Singapore, organised around three pillars: Confident, Connected, and Contribute, aimed at empowering youths to thrive, belong, and make a difference.

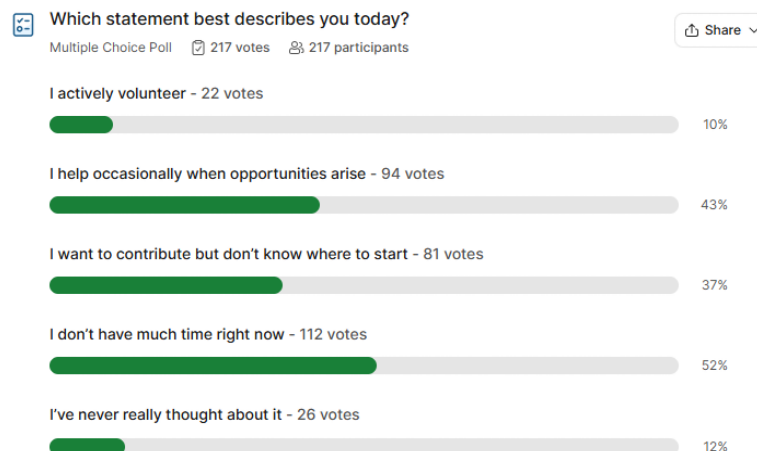
i) What Drives Youths to Become Changemakers

Participants were asked (via Slido) which community or social issue they cared about most.



- The most prominent response was “**elderly**”.
- Ms Tan shared that she had been interested in youth volunteerism since secondary school and saw opportunities to encourage her peers to volunteer and bridge the gap between youths and non-profit organisations.
- Ms Lim said that she was motivated to begin volunteering after seeing social issues such as the elderly living alone and underprivileged children who could not afford tuition.

Participants were asked (via Slido) which statement best described them today.



- 43% of respondents indicated “**I don't have much time right now**”.
- Ms Lim said that youths could start making a difference through causes aligned with their interests, while balancing other commitments and exploring other areas over time.

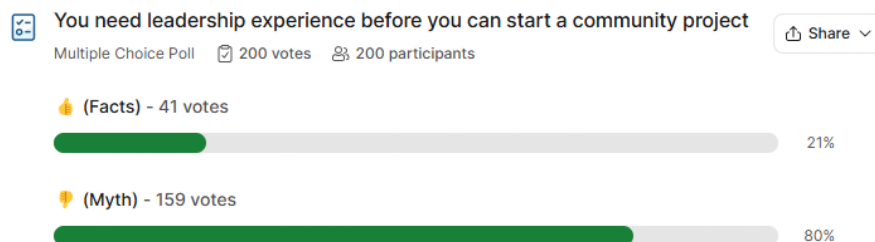
- Ms Tan said that volunteering could be done on an ad-hoc basis rather than requiring a regular commitment, and youths could sign up for opportunities together with friends.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) how youths could gain the confidence to start contributing.

- Ms Tan said that one did not need to be a leader or hold a formal position to initiate a project, and that being open-minded and receptive to feedback were more important.
- Ms Lim said that she had lacked confidence when she first started volunteering, but by showing up, starting small and being consistently involved could help youths build confidence and gradually take on larger roles.

ii) Understanding Realities and Overcoming Challenges

Participants were asked (via Slido) whether it was myth or fact that leadership experience was needed before starting a community project.



- 80% indicated that it was a “myth”.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) what were the panellists’ biggest challenges as changemakers and how they navigated them.

- Ms Tan said that her biggest challenge was balancing her involvement in You(th) Can Do It (YCDI) with her school commitments as youth-led initiatives involved significant work behind the scenes but the experience strengthened her communication and teamwork skills. She said that youths should find sustainable ways to contribute, without needing to start a project or volunteer every weekend.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) how to remain motivated when experiencing setbacks.

- Ms Lim said that seeking feedback from peers could provide different perspectives when navigating setbacks. She also said that reflecting on the reasons for contributing could help youths stay motivated when facing challenges.

- Ms Tan said that remaining purpose-driven and remembering one's initial motivation were important. She said she practised "compassionate detachment", which involved caring deeply about a cause or community without absorbing the stress or outcomes of the work into one's personal identity. She also said that a strong support system could help sustain long-term efforts and impact.

iii) Creating Impact Together

Participants were asked (via Slido) what they would most likely do first if they wanted to make a difference.



- 84% of respondents indicated **"volunteer with an existing organisation"**.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) what opportunities and platforms were available for youths who wanted to volunteer with existing organisations.

- Ms Tan said that volunteering with an existing organisation allowed youths to learn from their approaches, gain experience and meet like-minded people. She said that Youth Corps Singapore, school-based values-in-action programmes and youth-led initiatives were possible starting points.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) what platforms were available for youths who wanted to share ideas and turn them into action.

- Ms Lim shared that youths could apply for the Young ChangeMakers grant, which was open to all youths (aged 15 to 35 years). She said that projects could be of any scale or duration, and that incomplete ideas were also welcomed. She also said that NYC staff and volunteer curators were available to provide suggestions and advice to help youths develop their project ideas.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) how youths could start a community project and gain support from organisations.

- Ms Tan said that hackathons and initiatives such as the Youth Action Challenge could help youths identify issues, develop solutions, apply their skills and connect with like-minded peers.

Participants asked (via Zoom Webinar Q&A) how to motivate peers to participate in volunteering opportunities.

- Ms Tan said that youths should not pressure their peers to volunteer, as motivation to contribute might develop gradually. She said that leading by example and sharing meaningful personal experiences could be more effective, and that volunteering could also be framed as a social activity.
- Ms Lim said that youths did not need to persuade friends to volunteer if they were not aligned with a particular cause, as the right cause could naturally motivate them to participate.

Closing Remarks

The moderator asked the panellists what they hoped to see in Singapore in the next decade, and how youths could make a positive impact.

- Ms Lim said she hoped that youths helping others would become a way of life, and encouraged participants to speak up for disadvantaged groups and advocate for causes they cared about.
- Ms Tan said that she hoped youths could create a positive impact through everyday actions such as practising empathy. She said that she hoped youths could continue to be others-centred and care for others in both small and significant ways.

Stay Connected with NYC's Telegram Channel

- The conversation doesn't end here! Stay connected through the [NYC Telegram Channel](#), where opportunities are shared: from dialogues and meaningful volunteering to funding opportunities that can bring your ideas to life. You'll also receive the latest news and exciting updates on how your contributions have translated into making a real impact.

Join Us at Our Next Event!

- Curious about what's coming up? Check out our [Interest Form](#) to explore upcoming engagements and let us know which ones you'd like to be part of. We'll be in touch with more details on how you can join us, share your perspectives and contribute to the conversation. Take a look and see what catches your eye!

Notes recorded by the NYC Youth Leadership & Engagement Team