

Background

The Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta (CFSEA) partners with schools, youth groups, and community organizations across the region each year to deliver the Youth in Philanthropy (YiP) program. YiP empowers students to become community leaders through hands-on grantmaking, research, and real-world decision-making.

Through YiP, students learn about local needs, explore the role of charitable organizations, and work together to direct real grant funding to causes that matter in their communities.

About CFSEA

CFSEA is a charitable organization dedicated to building vibrant, healthy, and caring communities across Southeastern Alberta.

Our work is guided by three core pillars:

We Grow – We receive donations from the public and invest them to build permanent community endowments.

We Give – We distribute grants to support local charities and community projects.

We Inspire – We provide leadership, education, and support to strengthen the charitable sector.

Founded in 1992, CFSEA was established with an initial \$25,000 gift from local rancher and philanthropist John Ignatius. Today, donations are invested permanently, and the annual earnings from those investments are used to fund grants, including Youth in Philanthropy grants, ensuring lasting impact for generations.

What is Philanthropy?

Philanthropy means generosity in all its forms. It is often described as giving **time, talent, and treasure** to help improve the lives of others and strengthen communities.

What is Youth in Philanthropy?

Youth in Philanthropy is a leadership development and grantmaking program designed to introduce young people to philanthropy and community impact.

Through the YiP program, participants will:

- Explore issues affecting their communities
- Research local organizations using a variety of tools and approaches
- Identify shared priorities and values as a group to guide decision making
- Work collaboratively to evaluate opportunities and make funding decisions
- Direct real grant funding to organizations they believe can make a difference

This is not a simulation. YiP students direct real grant dollars to real organizations. It's a one-of-a-kind experience!

How the Program Works

1. Form a YiP Committee and Register:

YiP Committees are **youth-led** and may operate within a school, club, youth organization, or community group. Each committee must have at least one adult advisor to provide guidance and support.

2. Learn About Your Communities' Greatest Needs:

Committees begin by exploring their community and identifying local needs and strengths. Participants are encouraged to review [CFSEA's publications](#) and gather information through discussion, media, lived experience, and additional research.

3. Set Priorities and Research Organizations:

As a committee, youth participants discuss what matters most to them and identify shared priorities to guide their work. Committees research local organizations that align with those priorities and learn about their mission, programs, and how YiP funding could support their work. CFSEA allocates a **minimum of \$1,000** to each committee to distribute through the program.

Committees may learn about organizations in a variety of ways. This may include reviewing websites and annual reports, watching videos, inviting guest speakers, conducting interviews, or connecting directly with organizations by phone, email, virtual meeting, or in-person. Each committee may choose the research methods that best fit their schedule, location, and learning goals.

4. Required Grant Criteria:

All Youth in Philanthropy grants must meet CFSEA's minimum requirements:

- Grants may only be made to **registered charities or qualified donees**. Review the [CRA's List of Charities](#) before proceeding.
- Projects must **benefit communities within Southeastern Alberta**.

5. Present Your Research:

Committees prepare a presentation summarizing their research. Presentations will be in front of a panel that includes CFSEA staff, volunteers, or board representatives. Final grant recommendations are submitted using the [Grant Recommendation Form](#) by **Friday, May 1, 2026**.

You may choose to present your findings to CFSEA first before making a final decision. Contact CFSEA to arrange a time to present in person or virtually.

6. Grant Awards and Celebration:

Once approved, CFSEA works with committees to organize cheque presentations with recipient organizations before **Friday, May 29, 2026**. Media may be invited.

Participants are also responsible for preparing thank-you letters to YiP donors, with contact information provided by CFSEA. Committee members can now enjoy seeing the real impact of their decisions!

Questions & Support

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Youth in Philanthropy Additional Resources

- [Youth in Philanthropy page](#)
- [YiP Video](#)
- [List of local charities](#)