

Agents of Change Project Lead Handbook

A GUIDE FOR AGENTS OF CHANGE PROJECT LEADS

Introduction

The **Agents of Change (AoC) Program** at York University aims to support innovative student-led community initiatives that uniquely address the [Social Determinants of Health](#) and [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#). The program offers students start-up funding, one-on-one coaching, mentorship, training, and networking opportunities.

This Handbook serves to inform incoming Project Leads on what they can expect from the AoC Program, what the AoC Program expects from Project Leads, and what the Project Leads are accountable for. This Handbook is by no means exhaustive but provides guidance for both the Project Leads and the AoC Team.

Key Project Lead Responsibilities

1. Attending weekly or bi-weekly Agents of Change meetings with the Agents of Change Coordinator(s) and the Student Success Coordinator
2. Populating the weekly or bi-weekly meeting agenda 2-3 days prior to meeting the Agents of Change Team
3. Tracking potential expenses and consulting the Agents of Change Team on all expenses prior to making a purchase or agreement with community partners
4. Tracking Executive Team members' volunteer hours and tasks for reference letters from the Project Lead and for recognition at the annual CCSC Awards Ceremony. A template will be provided to the Project Lead(s) for reference.
5. Creating an annual report to showcase project progress and plans for the following cycle. A reference template will be provided to Project Leads from the AoC Team.
6. Participating at the Agents of Change EXPO at the end of the project cycle (typically held early to mid June)
7. Submitting a budget report to the Agents of Change Team by the end of March

Not adhering to the aforementioned duties may lead to funds being withheld and/or a temporary halt in receiving assistance from the AoC Program.

Support from the Calumet & Stong Colleges & the Agents of Change Team

Who is Supporting You

The Agents of Change Program aims to encourage student entrepreneurial spirits and equip them with the appropriate resources and experiences to lead a community health initiative. The Faculty of Health has to routinely report back to the Donor who funds this program on progress updates and to maintain funding for student-led projects for the years to come.



Figure 1 is a visual representation of all personnel involved in the Agents of Change Program and how information is passed from the Project Lead to the Donor. The Project Lead's **first point of contact** is the Agents of Change Coordinator(s) who connects them to all the other stakeholders involved.

It is through the Agent of Change Coordinator(s) that the Project Lead's questions, concerns, allocation of resources, use of funds, and project progress are approved and shared with all stakeholders. Therefore, the relationship built between the Project Lead and the Agents of Change Coordinator is **paramount** in the development, implementation, and sustainability of the project.

Figure 1: Agents of Change Stakeholder Communication Flowchart

What Type of Support is Available to You

1. Identifying digital/cloud platforms for organizing and maintaining digital assets
2. Assisting with team recruitment, team departmentalization and team mobilization
3. Supporting the creation of professional development plans for Project Lead and the Executive Team members
4. Providing initial and ongoing training on project management and team development
5. Researching and directing Project Leads to opportunities for grants, sponsorships, and donor relations
6. Helping Project Leads apply for grants and curate proposals for funding and partnerships
7. Providing consultations on budget allocation and guidance on matters regarding payments and invoices
8. Identifying and advising Project Leads on leadership development events, conferences, trainings, and other opportunities that can contribute to long-term career development
9. Coordinating a transition plan for eligible Agents of Change project to become a registered non-profit organization or an alternative future direction

How & When to Access Support

- **Weekly or Bi-Weekly Meetings**
 - The Agents of Change Coordinator will send a meeting agenda to the Project Lead 2-3 days before the meeting for it to be populated with discussion items
 - If there is an item that requires further inquiry and research by the Agents of Change Coordinator to support your project, please communicate this 2-3 days in advance so that the Agents of Change Coordinator has had adequate time to look into the matter
- **Email or Slack**
 - Note that response times for email and/or Slack messages range from 1-3 business days
 - If the matter is urgent (e.g., you have an event tomorrow at noon but the tech request was cancelled the night before, or you are coordinating a partnership and a document was requested on short notice, etc).
 - For **urgent** inquiries and requests, please directly contact Waziha Kabir, Student Success Coordinator:
 - Email wkabir@yorku.ca and **CC the Agents of Change Coordinator** any time, and if the request is time sensitive write “URGENT” or “ACTION REQUIRED” in the subject line
 - Alternatively, you can also reach out via call at 416 – 736 – 2100 x77060 between 8:30 am – 4:30 pm from Mondays to Fridays

NOTE: that the Agents of Change Coordinator(s) and the Student Success Coordinator will support and direct the Project Lead to resources and tasks but the responsibility of connecting with resources and completing tasks is on the Project Lead. There are exceptions to this case, for example, submitting TUUS forms, coordinating room bookings, connecting with the finance department, etc., may be completed by the Agents of Change Coordinator. However, the AoC Team will request information and action items from the Project Lead in order to complete these tasks to be in compliance with YorkU guidelines.

Communication

All Agents of Change Project Leads are expected to maintain weekly contact with their Executive Team members, the Agents of Change Coordinator(s), and the Student Success Coordinator.

AoC Project Leads & the AoC Team are all expected to remain respectful and maintain professional standards when communicating with one another whether that be verbal or written communication.

What Needs to be Communicated?

Personnel	Finances	Events	Partnerships	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview process, panellists, questions, and schedule • Training dates and content for team members • Issues that arise with team members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will coordinate purchases and be reimburse • Concerns that arise regarding budget allocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining event location, date, time, budget, catering, etc • Event promotion and outreach • Scheduling mock sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting dates/times with community partners • Reporting all confirmed and potential community partners and expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you meeting key objectives and deliverables? If not, why? • Any changes to original timeline in the proposal and provide reasoning • Potential delays to project launch and reasoning

This list is not exhaustive and Project Leads will be required to provide information beyond the notes listed in this table.

Conflict Scenarios & Resolution Procedures

6 Conflict Resolution Tips to Use With Your Team



1. Choose the right setting and timing



2. Be specific when communicating concerns



3. Inform the discussion with documentation



4. Listen actively and demonstrate empathy



5. Take a collaborative, creative approach



6. Build a foundation for future cooperation

<https://www.upwork.com/resources/conflict-resolution-tips>

- **Conflict between the Project Lead and Executive Team Members:**
 - Try to address the conflict amongst each other and find a suitable solution
 - If a solution cannot be found, the matter can be escalated to the AoC Coordinator who can support mediation
 - The matter can be further escalated to the Student Success Coordinator when and if necessary
- **Conflict between the Project Lead and the AoC Coordinator:**
 - Try to address the conflict amongst each other and find a suitable solution
 - If a solution cannot be found, the matter can be escalated to the Student Success Coordinator who will then organize a meeting to mediate discussion
- **Conflict between the Project Lead and the Student Success Coordinator:**
 - Try to address the conflict amongst each other and find a suitable solution
 - If a solution cannot be found, the matter can be escalated to the Manager of Student Success & Stakeholder Engagement at Calumet & Stong College, Stephanie Cheung, to mediate discussion

Meetings & Communication with the Agents of Change Team

The Project Lead is expected to attend all weekly or bi-weekly meetings as mutually scheduled.

1. Between late August and early September for the Fall Term, or late December and early January for the Winter Term, AoC Coordinators will reach out to Project Leads with potential dates/times for scheduling weekly meetings
2. By mid-September or mid-January, meeting dates/times for the semester will be confirmed and finalized
3. Meetings will be held virtually via Zoom the following exceptions:
 - a. The first meeting for each semester will be held in-person and the location for these meetings will be communicated to the Project Lead by the AoC Coordinator(s)
 - b. AoC Coordinators, the Student Success Coordinator, or the Project Lead may request meetings to be held in person at any time. The AoC Team may request in-person meetings leading up to events for mock sessions, for example.

Rescheduling or Cancelling Meetings: If there is a need to reschedule or cancel meetings due to emergencies for either the Project Lead or the AoC Team, then either party must communicate this as soon as possible and no later than 12 hours prior to the meeting.

- The individual requesting to reschedule or cancel must send an email to the other and must CC the Student Success Coordinator. This is to ensure there is consensus on the matter at hand and that important project and program updates are addressed via email or Slack

Response Times: We recommend reaching out to the Agents of Change Team as soon as possible when you have an inquiry or concern. Response times for emails can range from 1-3 business days and emails are not responded to before 8:30 a.m. and after 4:30 p.m. on weekdays. For urgent matters, please see above for instructions on how to connect with the AoC Team.

Meetings & Communication with Executive Team

The Agents of Change Project Lead is responsible for scheduling and coordinating weekly and bi-weekly meetings with their Executive Team members. The meeting format and frequency will be decided by the Project Lead based on the demands of the project. For example, smaller teams have 1 weekly team meeting with all members from the different departments and larger teams have 1 weekly department meeting, and 1 weekly or bi-weekly all-members team meeting.

The Project Lead will be expected to bring progress updates and pertinent issues from their project's departments to agenda ahead of each the weekly or bi-weekly Agents of Change

meetings where the Agents of Change Coordinator and the Student Success Coordinator will assess and provide insights for the Project Lead to consider and implement.

Training

The Agents of Change Program organizes several training pieces in order to equip Project Leads with the tools and resources needed to successfully run their own health initiative. These training sessions will be **mandatory** for all Project Leads to ensure they are being set up for success.

Training Requirements for Returning Projects:

- Project Leads who have attended the AoC Project Lead Onboarding Training in the previous years are only required to attend 1 of 2 days unless otherwise specified by the AoC Team (e.g., program updates have been implemented, content has been revised for the training, etc)
- Project Leads who did not attend the AoC Project Lead Onboarding Training in the previous years are required to attend both days

Training	Summer	Fall	Winter
Agents of Change Project Lead Onboarding Training	August 10 th & 11 th		
Financial Training		Mid-September	Early January

Failure to attend training dates and complete materials may lead to funds being withheld and/or a temporary halt in receiving assistance from the AoC Program.

Finances

Turnaround Time for Purchase & Payment Requests: Minimum 2 weeks of advance notice must be provided for purchase or payment requests.

Process for Requesting Purchases or Expenses

- Discuss purchases with the AoC Team at weekly meetings. Provide as much detail regarding the purchases, including links, reason for purchase, priority of purchase, etc.

- Direction by the AoC Team will be provided on the best way of making the purchase or payment and the Project Lead(s) will be provided with an ETA for purchases, and when and how to receive them. Furthermore, a timeline will also be provided on processing invoices and other payments.

Reimbursements: Each project must assign 1 person to make purchases. After the budget report is submitted at the end of the cycle, this individual will be asked to submit information to process the honorarium.

External Funding: Any external funding secured by an AoC project must be reported to the AoC Team during meetings and accounted for in the budget report at the end of the cycle. Failure to do so may result in funds being withheld and/or a temporary halt in receiving assistance from the AoC Program.

Letter of Understanding

York University and Calumet and Stong Colleges would like to thank you for your Agents of Change Project Lead services. We would like to formalize the understanding of the responsibilities associated with this Volunteer position by way of this Letter of Understanding.

The parties, for good and valuable consideration, agree as follows:

Term of the Agreement

1. Your position as Agents of Change Project Lead is a volunteer position. As a volunteer you will not be receiving monetary compensation for the hours you will be working on your project. The \$750 money you will be receiving from the program should only be spent on project-related expenses.

As an Agents of Change Project Lead, the term for your position begins from August 2023 to June 2024 inclusive. Your weekly hours will be as needed for your project and may range from 4-20 hours a week.

Either party may terminate this agreement prior to the end of the Term.

2. Duties

An Agents of Change Project Lead is expected to contribute in many ways to the project and the typical responsibilities have been listed in this handbook. By having reviewed this handbook, you are accepting the terms therein, and acknowledging the

consequences of failure to comply/abide by the terms, responsibilities, duties, and accountabilities.

3. Reporting Relationship & Workspace

You will report to your assigned Agents of Change Coordinator and Waziha Kabir, the Student Success Coordinator until or unless otherwise specified.

As an Agents of Change Project Lead you confirm that you have the suitable space in your home to do the work. You can complete the work free from distractions and your workspace meets health and safety requirements.

4. Insurance

As an Agents of Change Project Lead, you are acknowledging that this position is voluntary and therefore you are not being paid for your contributions, and, as such, you will not be covered by the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act* or the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

As stated on the [YFS website](#), YFS offers comprehensive student health and dental plans. All York University students are automatically enrolled in their Member's Health and Dental Plan. If students have comparable insurance, they have the opportunity to opt-out for a refund.

The University will not be responsible for any operating costs that are associated with the employee using their home as a worksite, including home maintenance, insurance, or utilities including, but not limited, to phone and internet.

5. Incident Reporting

If Agents of Change Project Leads are involved in a situation which may give rise to liability (i.e., they are injured, their property is damaged, or they are involved in a situation involving injury or damage to a 3rd party), the incident must be reported to their Supervisor and Security Services promptly.

6. Vehicle Use

Agents of Change Project Leads are not allowed to drive University-owned or rental vehicles on behalf of the University. York University does not cover insurance claims arising from the use or operation of a Volunteer's automobile.

7. Parking

All Agents of Change Project Leads arrange for their own parking on campus **at their own expense**. The application procedure, form and maps are provided in the parking brochure available at the parking office and on the York University website at: www.yorku.ca/parking.

8. Policies and Procedures

As a Project Lead and Volunteer at the University, you are expected to abide by the University policies and procedures available on the York University website at: www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/.

9. Confidentiality

In consideration of this Letter of Understanding, you acknowledge and agree that during the course of your position as Agents of Change Project Lead you may have access to confidential information which may include, but is not limited to:

- a) personal information about employees, students and other members of the university and project team;
- b) trade secrets or scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information supplied in confidence implicitly or explicitly;
- c) information or records which York University may refuse to disclose in accordance with privacy legislation; and
- d) any other information relating to York University's business or activities that is deemed confidential or proprietary by York University.

During the course of your Agents of Change Project Lead position at York University, and after that, you are required to:

- a) keep confidential and not disclose or provide access to any confidential information to any unauthorized person;
- b) use confidential information for the purposes for which it was collected or retained, and only as may be reasonably necessary to carry out your duties to York University;
- c) maintain records containing confidential information in such a manner as to protect the records from unauthorized access, collection, use, disclosure, retention, or disposal.

10. Project Ownership

Presumption of Joint Ownership: All Agents of Change projects are funded by Agents of Change Program and therefore all project contents, including but not limited to identification and definition of project, project materials, and project branding, are co-owned by Calumet and Strong Colleges and York University.

York University is committed to working towards a barrier-free workplace and to expanding the accessibility of the workplace to persons with disabilities. Should you require accommodations to perform the above-noted duties, please notify me.

Please confirm your acceptance of the above terms by completing the Acknowledgment below and returning this Letter of Understanding to me by **Friday, August 11th, 2023**.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I understand and hereby accept this Letter of Understanding for an Agents of Change Project Lead, Volunteer position with York University, as described in the preceding pages, and acknowledge that the terms and conditions set out in this Handbook and the Letter of Understanding above reflect the entire agreement with York University.

(Signature of Project Leader)

(Date)