



Connecting Lives, Sharing Cultures



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE-SPONSORED PROGRAM
KENNEDY- LUGAR YOUTH EXCHANGE & STUDY (YES) 2021-2022**

DATE: November 4, 2020

TO: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES MEETING THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF THE YES PROGRAM

FROM: AFS INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMS PHILIPPINES & THE U.S. EMBASSY IN THE PHILIPPINES

RE: CALL FOR PRE- APPLICATIONS FOR U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE-SPONSORED PROGRAM: KENNEDY- LUGAR YOUTH EXCHANGE AND STUDY (YES) PROGRAM

**CALL FOR PRE- APPLICATIONS FOR U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE-SPONSORED PROGRAM
KENNEDY- LUGAR YOUTH EXCHANGE AND STUDY (YES) 2021-2022**

AFS Intercultural Programs Philippines and the U.S. Embassy in the Philippines are pleased to announce the opening of applications for the next cycle of the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (2021-2022 Batch). This program is a U.S. government-funded exchange program designed to expand communication between the people of the United States and partner countries with strategic importance to the US in the interest of promoting mutual understanding and respect. YES program offers full scholarship to high school students, including students with physical disabilities, in 51 countries. Students will live with host families, attend a U.S. high school, engage in activities to learn about American society and values, acquire leadership skills, and help educate Americans about their countries and cultures. The YES program is funded by the U.S. Department of State - Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in partnership with the American Councils for International Education and the YES program consortium.

The goals of the program are to:

- Promote a better understanding among youth from selected YES countries about American society, people, institutions, values, and culture;
- Foster lasting personal ties;
- Engage the exchange participants in activities that promote mutual understanding, respect for diversity, leadership skills, and an understanding of civil society during their exchange in the U.S.;
- Enhance Americans' understanding of foreign students' countries and cultures; and
- Increase the capacity of organizations in participating countries to engage youth in activities that enhance mutual understanding, respect for diversity, leadership skills, and an understanding of civil society through alumni activities.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Philippine citizen residing in the Philippines, at the time of application, selection and preparation for travel. Preference will be given to participants who have spent more than 50% of the last 5 years in the Philippines and have current family plans of returning to the Philippines after the program.
2. Be between ages of 15-18 years old (born between August 1, 2003 and August 1, 2006) by the start of the program (August 1, 2021);
3. Be enrolled in 8th, 9th, 10th, or 11th grade at the time of application; have not completed more than 11 years of primary education nor received a high school diploma (senior high school) by the start of the program.
4. Be among the top 25% of academic performance in their grade level.
5. Have an equivalent of a B average or better without failing grades.
6. Strong academic and social skills, openness, and flexibility.
7. Demonstrated English language ability sufficient to study in a native English-medium setting.
8. Sufficiently healthy to participate in the program.
9. No previous significant travel to the U.S. on a U.S. government-sponsored program.
10. Committed to cultural immersion in the U.S through a home-stay experience.
11. Able to meet cross-cultural challenges with maturity, humor, and an open mind.
12. Meet U.S. J-1 visa eligibility requirements (for instance, U.S. citizens are not eligible for J-1 visa).
13. Plans to share his/her experience with his/her home community upon return.

The program can support Persons with Disabilities (PWD) and encourages their participation.

REQUIRED PRE-APPLICATION DOCUMENTS:

1. Pre-Application Form downloadable at <https://www.afs.ph/yes-program/>; filled-up and with 2x2 ID sized photo with white background
2. Scanned copy of most recent Form 137 or transcript of records from your Philippine high school
3. Scanned copy of valid ID or government ID
4. Scanned copy of Authenticated PSA Birth Certificate
5. Signed consent by either a parent or legal guardian at the bottom of the pre-application form

Note: Application form with incomplete information requirements will lead to disqualification.

SUBMISSION POLICY

In observance to the health protocols set by the Philippine government, AFS Philippines will not be accepting printed application documents for this cycle. You may submit all your application and other requirements via e-mail to phi.YESprogram@afs.org with an email subject of "YES 2021-22 Pre-Application Form" on or before November 27, 2020 at 5:00 PM.

To provide you with more information about the YES program and its application requirements, kindly join our live information drive session via Zoom every Mondays and Fridays, starting November 6, 2020. Further details of Zoom will be announced on our YES Facebook page and website;

<https://www.facebook.com/afphilippines>

<https://www.facebook.com/YESAlumPH>

<https://www.afs.ph/yes-program/>

NOTES:

1. When emailing scanned pre-application form and other documents it should be at least 100 dpi resolution.
2. Applicants who have family members (father, mother, sister or brother) and cousins within the first degree who have participated in the previous ECA-DOS sponsored exchange programs are **NOT** qualified to participate in this program. This restriction applies as well to AFS PHI staff and board members up to the third degree.
3. AFS PHI will announce (and will notify) **ONLY** the semifinalists starting by December 7, 2020. Only semifinalists are invited for a zoom interview with the team of AFS Philippines and key alumni/volunteers.
4. Pre-applications for the YES Program will be accepted on November 5, 2020 until November 27, 2020. For more information, interested applicants may email phi.YESprogram@afs.org or visit <http://www.afs.ph> or <https://ph.usembassy.gov>.

Thank you very much and best wishes!