

Youth Leaders in the Diaspora (YouLeaD) Manual of Operations

**COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS
Office of the President
Manila, Philippines**

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Youth Leaders in the Diaspora (YouLeaD) was first known as the Lakbay-Aral which is a Filipino term which means "travel study". It is a two-week cultural immersion program in the Philippines.

The Lakbay-Aral, developed and implemented by CFO since 1983, enables Filipino youth overseas to rediscover their Filipino roots and appreciate the richness and diversity of their heritage. The program combines lectures on Philippine history and language and guided tours to scenic and historical landmarks. Interaction with Filipino students, public officials and members of indigenous communities and participation in local festivities are also included in the program.

Lakbay-Aral is the result of a survey conducted by CFO in 1981 among immigrants from selected cities of Canada and U.S.A. The survey showed that immigrants agreed that it was important for their children to know and appreciate their Filipino heritage. The Lakbay-Aral program which was first implemented in 1983 has been conducted in 1985, 1987, 1988, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007. The program has enabled 180 participants from France, Spain, Switzerland, and U.S.A., to learn more about the Philippines and its people.

With President Aquino's agenda and the desire of the Filipinos abroad, YouLeaD was formed by CFO in 2011 in recognition of the vital role overseas Filipino youth in migration and development. It presents a framework on how the next generation can contribute to the country's growth, aligned with CFO's strategic goals of policy advocacy, socio-economic development, culture and education, and integration and reintegration.

OBJECTIVES

The program seeks to provide youth overseas with opportunities to trace their roots and rediscover their identities as Filipinos. This study-tour hopes to help the second and third generations of the Philippine Diaspora gain deeper understanding and appreciation of their rich cultural heritage through immersion trips to the Philippines.

The activities were formulated based on four main objectives: Filipino Identity, Good Governance and Leadership, Volunteerism and Social Responsibility, and Diaspora to Development. They are defined as follows:

1) Filipino Identity

- To gain better understanding and appreciation of the rich traditions and cultural heritage of the Philippines that is not impartial or prejudicial to the colonialism teaching or attitude

2) Good Governance and Leadership

- To eliminate false conclusion and assumptions of corruption in government by exposing participants to best practices on good governance and familiarize them with laws implemented for the welfare of the Filipino community
- To conduct a leadership training for the development of an action plan supported by Filipino communities overseas that would engage young Filipino leaders in the development of the country

3) Volunteerism and Social Responsibility

- To learn about international and national agencies and organizations on their best practices to improve the lives of the Philippines' vulnerable populations
- To introduce and develop modes of volunteer mechanisms for Filipino youth abroad for joint development efforts in the Philippines

4) Diaspora to Development

- To actively participate in discussions and workshops of the Diaspora to Development Summit and network with possible partners / stakeholders in the various sectors

- To merge generations of overseas Filipinos in discussions on how to implement programs in the development of the country based on their various sectors and expertise

PROGRAM MECHANICS

The program is open to all Filipinos or of Filipino descent abroad who are 15 to 30 years old youth with Filipino ancestry or anyone who would like to learn more about the Philippines.

Program modules may be developed by interested groups in consideration of their interests and availability. However, the CFO can also customize a program and module according to a particular group's reference/ interest and budget considerations. Interested participants will be required to submit the duly accomplished registration form, parental consent, and medical authorization.

The cost will depend on the venue of the tour and may subject to change depending on the length of tour (number of days) and number of participants. The program cost includes all inland transportation, food (breakfast, lunch and dinner), hotel accommodation, tour packages, and medical and accident insurance for the duration of the program. The program fee does not cover international airfare to and from Manila.

Payment can be sent through bank remittance to the following account:

Account Name	:	Commission on Filipinos Overseas
Account Number	:	0405-027536-080
Bank Branch	:	Development Bank of the Philippines-Main

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