

# Conflict of Interest

Definition: Conflict of Interest is a situation in which a person's decisions in one setting (e.g.: as part of a YiP committee) could benefit him or her (or his or her family or friends) in another aspect of their lives.

To ensure the integrity of the grantmaking process, it is important that Youth in Philanthropy committees and members remain unbiased in their decision-making. For that reason, The Winnipeg Foundation has developed the following Conflict of Interest Guidelines for Youth in Philanthropy, which is similar to the Conflict of Interest Policy followed by Board and Staff of The Foundation.

## 1. **Obligation to Declare:**

If a YiP committee member, a member of their immediate family, or a close friend, has an existing relationship with a charitable organization, that committee member must declare their Conflict of Interest to the rest of the group by telling them the name of the organization, and the nature of the relationship. (An existing relationship with an organization could include the YiP member working or volunteering for an organization, or a friend or family member working or volunteering for an organization.)

The individual with the Conflict of Interest should not influence the committee's decision by suggesting an organization with which they are affiliated if it does not meet the committee's grant-making priorities. If an organization does meet the YiP committee's priorities, and they would like to consider the organization for a grant, the student with the Conflict of Interest should not go on the site visit, or participate in the final decision-making process for that organization's grant.

## 2. **Free of outside influence:**

Decisions about which organizations will receive grants from the YiP committee should be made by student committee members based on the grant-making priorities established at the beginning of the year. Other students, friends, teachers (including staff advisors), other school staff, parents and family members should not try to influence YiP committee members or pressure them to consider or support particular charities.

**3. Acceptance of Gifts:**

No YiP committee member or staff advisor shall accept gifts from charitable organizations (other than of nominal nature — such as a pen, or small promotional item) or use their relationship with The Winnipeg Foundation for personal gain.

**4. Confidentiality of Information:**

Information about community projects reviewed by The Winnipeg Foundation and YiP committees is not generally considered to be confidential but it is expected by organizations that information gained on site visits will be used with discretion. (e.g. if you meet a homeless person on a site visit to a shelter, it would be appropriate to share that experience with your YiP committee, but it would not be appropriate to print that person's name and life details in your school newspaper.)

**5. Orientation Program:**

These Conflict of Interest guidelines shall form part of the orientation of every Youth in Philanthropy committee member and staff advisor.



Note: Occasionally, agencies contact schools because they are interested in qualifying as a grantee. This is part of being a grantmaker and it is up to each committee to decide how best to respond. Soliciting is not encouraged by The Winnipeg Foundation, and can be considered a conflict of interest, but does happen from time to time.