

Poly, university students to get cash boost for community projects

Students at Institutes of Higher Learning who want to contribute to the community will be given a cash boost by the National Youth Council.



SINGAPORE: Polytechnic and university students who want to contribute to society will be given a cash boost over the next two to three years.

The National Youth Council (NYC) will pump in S\$1.9 million to its existing community youth platforms and student-initiated projects.

To facilitate this, NYC has partnered six institutes of higher learning.

They are Nanyang Polytechnic, Singapore Polytechnic, Republic Polytechnic, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, National University of Singapore (NUS) and Singapore Management University.

These partnerships follow recent announcements on the new MCCY-MOE partnership to adopt a whole-school approach to engage secondary school students and student leaders in the community via Community and Youth Leadership Schools.

Acting Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and chairman of National Youth Council, Lawrence Wong, announced these plans at a media roundtable session.

Workshops, training sessions and leadership conferences are just some of the programmes NYC will fund.

The money will go to local and overseas projects which are community related, existing youth engagement programmes under NYC and even student-initiated ideas for social good.

Over the years, NYC has seen more students come on board for its community projects but it said it is still not enough.

NYC's Youth Expedition Project, which encourages volunteerism among youth, sees about 200 projects every year.



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By teaming up with six tertiary institutions, NYC hopes schools can play a bigger role in encouraging a culture of volunteerism and leadership development among students, even after they leave school.

Mr Wong said it is all about empowering youths.

He said: "Give our young people a sense of ownership and a sense of empowerment that there are things they can do that can shape the character and tone of society.

"We are really taking a life cycle approach in the way we engage our young people, recognising that their needs are different from school, to the time they are in post secondary and the time that they are working. And through that life cycle, we would like to cater different programmes to engage youths and youth leaders."

To further engage young people, NYC is exploring the idea of having a youth centre within universities and polytechnics. This is so that students are given easier access to the different programmes and projects available to them.

Part of the fund will also cover research projects by NUS on emerging youth trends.

NYC hopes to collaborate with more institutions and said it will tap on more funds if needed.

- CNA/ck/ms