



4TH INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE ON  
**Small Island  
Developing States**  
27-30 MAY, 2024  
ST. JOHN'S, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

## *Youth Delegates: An informal guidance note*

This informal guidance has been prepared by UNDESA to support the preparation of youth delegates attending the SIDS4 Conference.

### **What is a UN Youth Delegate?**

In the United Nations context, a youth delegate is normally **a young person selected by a Member State to participate in one or more intergovernmental meetings as their representative, normally as part of a delegation**. The selection processes, mandates and responsibilities of youth delegates are determined by each Member State.

Most youth delegates are also active at the national level and contribute to shaping policies. Although youth delegates may have some overlapping tasks with mission experts, staff and interns, their tasks are often geared to supporting the substance and processes of intergovernmental meetings, as opposed to undertaking administrative functions.

The potential for engagement is also shaped by the intergovernmental processes in which youth delegates participate. They can participate in the delegation's general work, as appropriate, through attending a variety of meetings and informal negotiations, as well as providing assistance in covering sessions and drafting reports.

### **Preparing your youth delegate – Member State Support**

The inclusion of youth representation in a national delegation to United Nations intergovernmental meetings involves cooperation and coordination.

It is recommended for Member States to appoint a focal point or coordinator within the national delegation as a contact person for the youth delegate. Communication with youth delegates is key to ensure that they receive the appropriate information prior to relevant engagements. This allows them to prepare the necessary information to input into processes and meetings. It also allows youth delegates to conduct research, so that they are informed and can contribute concretely during the preparatory process.

Member States support youth delegates in a variety of ways and frequently offer assistance by:

- Holding advance briefings/meetings with the relevant ministry preparing the country's participation to the SIDS4 Conference.
- Establishing a focal point, point of contact or coordinator in the delegation for the youth delegate.
- Communicating expectations of the youth delegate in advance (in terms of their activities during their time at the SIDS4, and anything they should prepare prior to the inter-governmental meeting).
- Ensuring the youth delegate has access to relevant materials and knows what to expect.
- Including the youth delegate in official press conferences and media releases, where relevant.
- Facilitating the youth delegate's participation in the delegation's briefings or relevant bilateral meetings as appropriate.

Before attending the SIDS4 Conference, it is helpful for youth delegates to become familiar with the preparations for the Conference, its main programme and objective. All details are available here: <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/sids2024>.

National governments must also make sure that their youth delegates are duly registered to attend the Conference as members of their national delegations. Details are available here: <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/sids2024/participate>

Some Member States encourage their youth delegates to connect with youth nationally in preparation for a Conference/intergovernmental meeting. In some cases, delegates organize events, public or online discussions, consultations or school visits in order to create awareness of their role as a national youth delegate. Many youth delegates have used social media and other platforms to share about their participation in UN Conferences.

Youth delegates need to be proactive in conducting research and in their preparation to engage at the SIDS4 Conference.

Normally, in anticipation of their participation, youth delegates begin drafting relevant input ahead of intergovernmental meetings. This allows the youth delegate to gain feedback from consultations with youth networks / organizations at the national level, align with their Member States positions and be ready to answer relevant questions.

Some good practices include:

- Creating a communication or outreach strategy and social media plan.
- Preparing talking points.
- Organizing logistics and have all official travel documents.
- Reviewing Conference programme and create plan of engagement.
- Setting up meetings with relevant individuals / organizations.

## Attending the SIDS4 Conference:

While the role of a youth delegate is dependent on their delegations, and the processes in which they participate, most attend planning meetings, bilateral meetings with other Member States, social events or participate in the general work of their delegations during the Conference.

Youth delegates may be invited to speak on an issue relating to youth or on a topic of priority during side events organized by permanent missions, UN agencies or NGOs.

Many youth delegates have a communication and outreach role. They tend to have an active online social media presence by writing articles, blog entries, posting videos and updates on social media platforms.

Quick checklist for consideration:

- Has the permanent mission and youth delegate(s) met and discussed participation?
- Is there a schedule for engagement during meetings (this could include deciding which side events to attend)?
- Will the youth delegate write blog entries or provide updates via social media?

## Follow up and Knowledge Sharing

Upon returning from the SIDS4 Conference, youth delegates may be asked to prepare a report to submit to the various ministries within the government and national youth structures, as appropriate. In some cases, they may undertake additional outreach activities, in order to share their experience attending the SIDS4 Conference with other young people as a potential mechanism for knowledge sharing.

## Additional Opportunities for Youth Engagement and Networking during the SIDS4 Conference

- **SIDS Children and Youth Action Summit** – Youth delegates are highly encouraged to attend the SIDS4 Conference special events, most specially the “**SIDS Children and Youth Action Summit**” which will be held between 24 – 26 May in St. John’s. The concept note is available here. Interested participants must register using this link: <https://forms.gle/uuEvEHeFWLtAKCC97>. Please, reach out to Claxton Duberry ([Claxton.duberry@ab.gov.ag](mailto:Claxton.duberry@ab.gov.ag)) and Asha Challenger ([asha.challenger@ab.gov.ag](mailto:asha.challenger@ab.gov.ag)) in case of questions. for details about registration to attend the SIDS Children and Youth Action Summit.
- Youth delegates are also encouraged to connect with networks mobilizing youth in connection with the SIDS4 Conference. Interested youth delegates can reach out to Ms. Yugratna Srivastava ([yugratna.srivastava@unmgcy.org](mailto:yugratna.srivastava@unmgcy.org)) and Mr. Sameh Kamel ([sameh.kamel@unmgcy.org](mailto:sameh.kamel@unmgcy.org)) for additional guidance.
- For more information about the United Nations Youth Delegates Programme, please check out the website at <https://social.desa.un.org/issues/youth/un-youth-delegate-programme> or reach out to Samantha Savarese ([savareses@un.org](mailto:savareses@un.org)) and Kohei Yamada ([Kohei.yamada@un.org](mailto:Kohei.yamada@un.org))