



The MSMGF Youth Reference Group Terms of Reference

The Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSMGF) is an expanding network of AIDS organizations, MSM networks, and advocates committed to ensuring robust coverage of and equitable access to effective HIV prevention, care, treatment, and support services tailored to the needs of gay men and other MSM. Guided by two international and interrelated governance structures (a 9-member Board of Directors and 15-member Steering Committee), the MSMGF works to promote MSM health and human rights worldwide through advocacy, information exchange, knowledge production, networking, and capacity building.

Background

Historically and in many instances, community-based projects and larger global efforts directed at HIV and rights-based programming for young gay men have been conflated with those of all other gay men and other men who have sex with men (MSM), regardless of age. This has led to funding gaps, inappropriate programming, lack of surveillance data, access problems, and an absence of youth-specific services targeting the unique needs of young gay men.

Purpose

As an advocacy organization working for the health and human rights of men who have sex with men, the MSMGF strives to be sensitive, respectful and responsive to the issues faced by different MSM populations and recognizes the importance of supporting and involving young MSM (YMSM) groups and networks in its work. As such, the MSMGF has established a Youth Reference Group to advise and help to coordinate the work of the MSMGF on YMSM issues. The Youth Reference Group (YRG) seeks to advocate and empower YMSM within the global HIV response through skills building, cross networking and meaningful participation in the decision-making processes that affect YMSM.

Objectives

The objectives of the MSMGF YRG are:

1. Elevate key issues relevant to YMSM health and human rights globally.
2. Provide a forum for greater collaboration and support for advocates working on issues concerning YMSM health and human rights.
3. Strengthen the efforts of existing YMSM programming and provide support to these efforts when appropriate.
4. Support and facilitate broader engagement between networks of MSM and youth advocates regionally and globally.
5. Support youth-adult partnerships and inter-generational dialogues at national, regional and global levels.
6. Serve as a primary point of communication for YMSM members of the MSMGF and the MSMGF Secretariat.



Membership

The MSMGF YRG is comprised of a total of 9 youth leaders. Membership criteria broadly take into account the following considerations:

- Geographical and socio-economic diversity
- Expertise in culturally relevant and diverse identities
- Expertise in YMSM issues
- Expertise from YMSM openly living with HIV
- Expertise from YMSM who identify as sex workers
- Expertise from young transgender people
- Between the ages of 15-30 years
- Ability to communicate in English and have regular internet access to effectively participate in MSMGF YRG discussions
- Ability to participate in a monthly conference call

Roles and Responsibilities

The primary role and responsibilities of the MSMGF YRG include:

1. Participating in monthly conference calls
2. Electing two Co-Chairs to lead and co-ordinate the group
3. Representing the MSMGF YRG at meetings and committees
4. Providing expert guidance and leadership on YMSM issues
5. Reviewing youth-related MSMGF documents and activities with feedback and comments
6. Initiating strategic discussions and dialogue toward youth activism and organizing
7. Disseminating YMSM updates within their region and communities
8. Being part of the MSMGF's steering committee

Service and aging out

1. A regular term of service for a YRG member is 2 years
2. If in good standing, YRG members can renew their service commitment to serve up to 3 consecutive terms,
3. YRG members will automatically leave the group once they reach their 30th year of age
4. Former out members can still take part in YRG activities upon request, as part of the YRG alumni group (refer to the alumni group guidelines for more information)