

Young Transatlantic Leadership Program

Bringing together the next generation of leaders

Program Concept

The Young Transatlantic Leadership program (YTL) is a truly transatlantic immersive leadership exchange format between Canada and Germany. While aimed at building a sustainable network of (young) leaders, the program's core element consists of two-week study trips to Germany and Canada on an annually rotating basis. Its participants are to be empowered to play an active role during and also after the program. The participating young leaders are strongly encouraged to keep the spirit of this exchange alive also after the respective visits by, for instance, becoming active members in one of the organizations partnering in this initiative (i.e. Young Transatlantic Initiative, Canada Meets Germany Network e. V., German-Canadian Association – see page 2 for details), assisting with the planning of future country visits and/or alumni events, collaborating with other community leaders and by taking any other initiatives to foster the transatlantic network. The program's vision is to discover and bring together the next generation of young leaders who share a similar interest, enthusiasm and commitment for the transatlantic relationship.

Program Goals

The goal of the program is to:

- Help the participants discover new perspectives at a transatlantic level while providing first-hand experience (discussions, activities etc.)
- Encourage local and regional participation of community leaders
- Allow for the exchange of best-practice solutions in different societal areas
- Develop interpersonal bonds between participants
- Build a transatlantic network for life-long learning and exchange

Target Group of Participants

The participants of the program are:

- German and Canadian young community or professional leaders who have already stood out through their professional or personal impact on a local or regional community (in Canada or Germany)
- Expected to be in the age range of 27-37 (exceptions are welcomed)
- Showing an interest in the German-Canadian relationship at some level
- Willing to travel internationally
- Selected by means of an application procedure

Program Details for 2020

In 2020, the cornerstones of the study trip are the following:

- Period of travel: 5-16 October 2020
- Destinations: Hamburg, Berlin & Frankfurt am Main
- Number of participants: 17 (11 Germans & 6 Canadians)
- YTL will organize (not fund) accommodation (Airbnb) and the commute between destinations including the field trips

The interdisciplinary program will include:

- Exchange with representatives of the civil society
- Discussions with scientists from various disciplines
- Formal discussions among the participants regarding the German-Canadian and transatlantic relationships, and other topics, with representatives from different fields
- Field trips and hands-on activities

Topics that will be covered during YTL are the following:

- Modern Mobility solutions: The mobility demands have substantially changed over the last years. We have seen an increase in sharing services, new ways of micro mobility, and the change to sustainable mobility. In Germany, where one of the economic backbones is the automotive industry, the discussion about these new solutions is fully underway. To explore how and with which different types, we will define our mobility in the future, we are going to visit research entities, start-ups, and well-established companies to learn from them, and see new solutions for large scale and private mobility.
- Current politics in the context of European history: 2020 marks the 30th anniversary of the German reunification. Being in Berlin, we will explore different crucial places of this time and learn how life was in a divided city. But we are not only looking into the past but also in the present and future. We will discuss the current state of European and transatlantic politics and what role Germany and Canada can play in these fields. Topics will be around the German presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2020, the UN security council, and transatlantic politics from a German perspective.
- The cultural bridge across the Atlantic: Europe and Germany are well known for its rich cultural heritage. All three cities, which we will visit, have a rich cultural life. Canada has this variety in the cultural life as well. Therefore, Canada was selected to be Guest of Honor of the Frankfurt book fair 2020. We will learn about the artists in Germany and how they add their perspectives to the societal dialogue, but we will also hear the Canadian voice. To do so, we will visit the Frankfurt book fair and learn more about the varied literature scene in Canada.

Funding

The required funding for the program is estimated to range between 16,000 and 30,000 euros depending on the different locations to be visited. We estimate up to 14,000 euros for travelling from Germany to Canada and up to 16,000 euros for accommodation and travelling in Canada. It is intended to fund the program through participants' contributions on a self-pay basis as well as external philanthropic, charitable and corporate partners while also accessing public funding sources. The goal is to cooperate with travel partners, such as AirCanada and VIA Rail to reduce travel expenses.

Program Organizers

The Young Transatlantic Leadership program is led by the German-based association Young Transatlantic Initiative (YTI). YTI was established in 2011 and formed a Canada-Department in 2015. Its members are primarily students and young professionals. The association is committed to fostering the German-Canadian relationship with a specific focus on young professionals. In 2018, YTI carried out a study tour to Canada for the first time. The tour addressed various topics, as the economic and political relations, the special role of Québec and the cultural and social situation in Canada. Different stakeholders have been visited.

Supporting Partners

The program is supported by the following German-based organizations, which are also actively shaping the German-Canadian discourse:

The German-Canadian Association (DKG) is a non-profit organization founded in 1951, which aims to advance the economic, cultural and social links between Germany and Canada. Since 1965, the DKG organizes a work & travel program for German students travelling to Canada. Since 2012, the association offers professional internships for German students in Canada. Over the course of the two programs' existence, more than 3,400 students have visited Canada, making the DKG a valuable and experienced cooperation partner for YTL.

The Canada Meets Germany Network e. V., formerly Canada Meets Germany Alumni Forum e.V., was founded in 2009 as an alumni association for (former) participants of the 'Canada Meets Germany – A Forum for Young Leaders' program. Today, the membership in the CMG Network is not limited to alumni of the former program, but it is open to all people interested in German Canadian exchange. Its main activity is the German Canadian Concourse, a yearly transatlantic conference organized in Canada and Germany covering innovative topics of interest to both countries, Canada and Germany (www.germancanadianconcourse.org).

Canadian cooperating partners are being actively sought.