

2023 Youth Council

Overview and Accomplishments

Presented by:

Jessica MacDonald, Coordinator, Government and Community Relations

Dhara Parsania, Youth Council Executive Member

Vamika Sharma, Youth Council Executive Member

February 28, 2024

Agenda

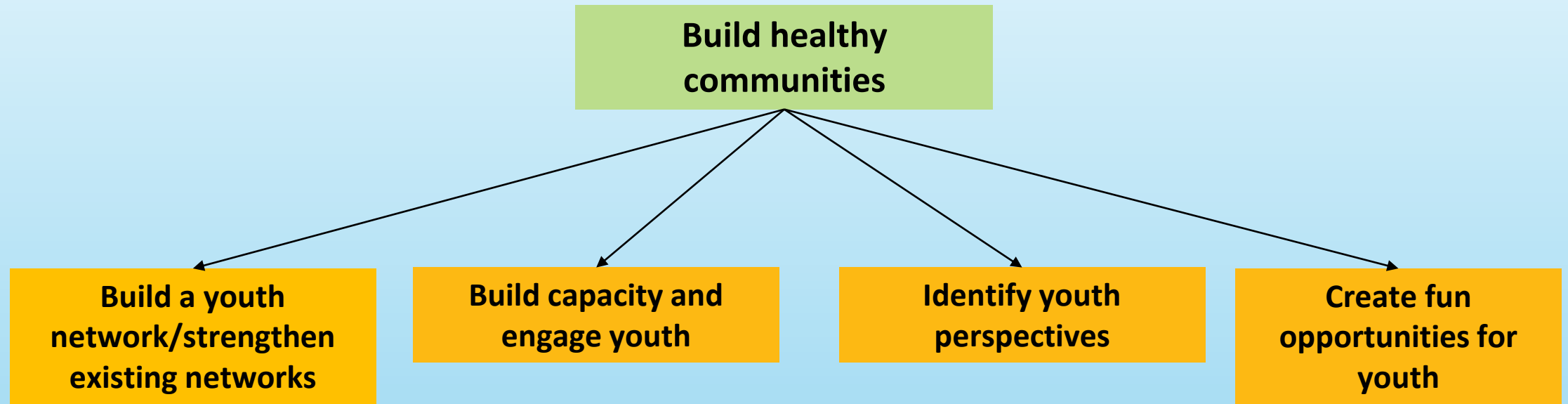
- Overview – Program Goals and Objectives
- Current Membership Interests and Demographics - as of December 2023
- 2023-2024 Highlights
 - Youth Council Events
 - Outreach



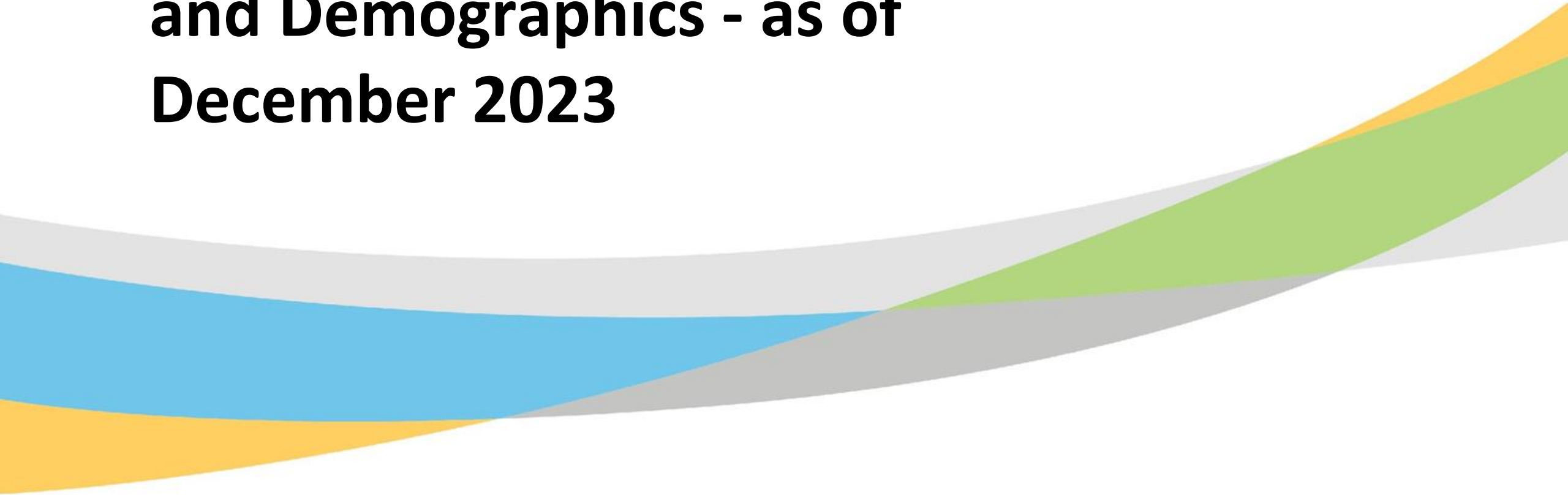
Overview – Program Goals and Objectives



TRCA Youth Council Program Framework



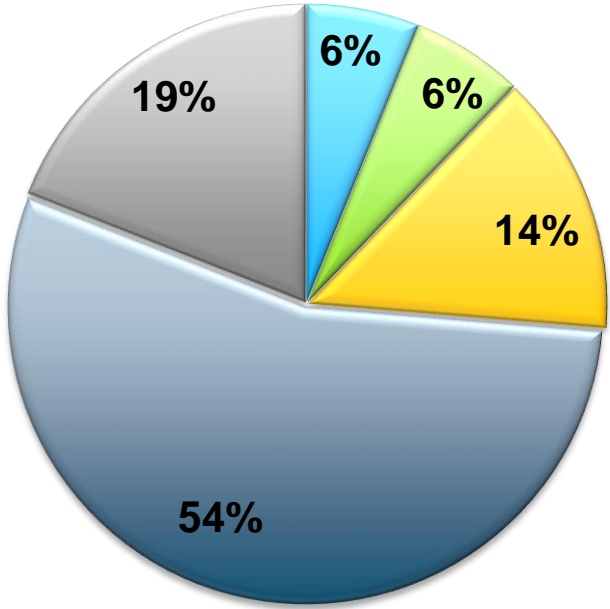
Current Membership Interests and Demographics - as of December 2023



Current Membership

- Youth is defined as 16-30 years old
- Must reside or attend school in TRCA's jurisdiction
- Two ways for youth to participate
 - General member – Intake is open year-round, passive engagement
 - Executive – Application-based volunteer position, responsible for determining program activities for their one-year terms
- 505 current members
- 69% Female, 28 % Male, 3% Other

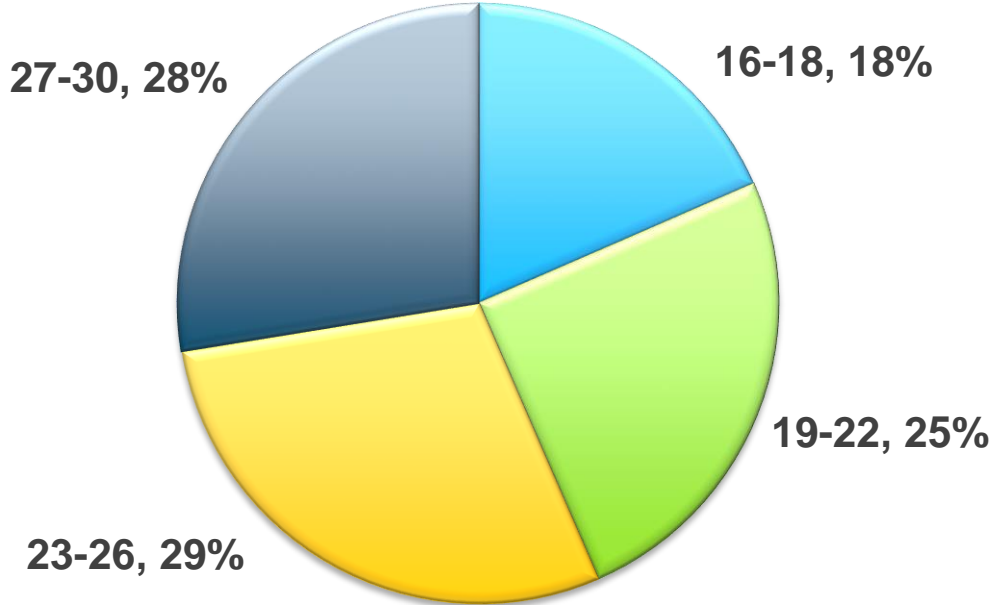
Current Membership: Demographics



■ Durham ■ Outside ■ Peel ■ Toronto ■ York

Location of Members

n.b. some members may live outside jurisdiction but attend school within the jurisdiction

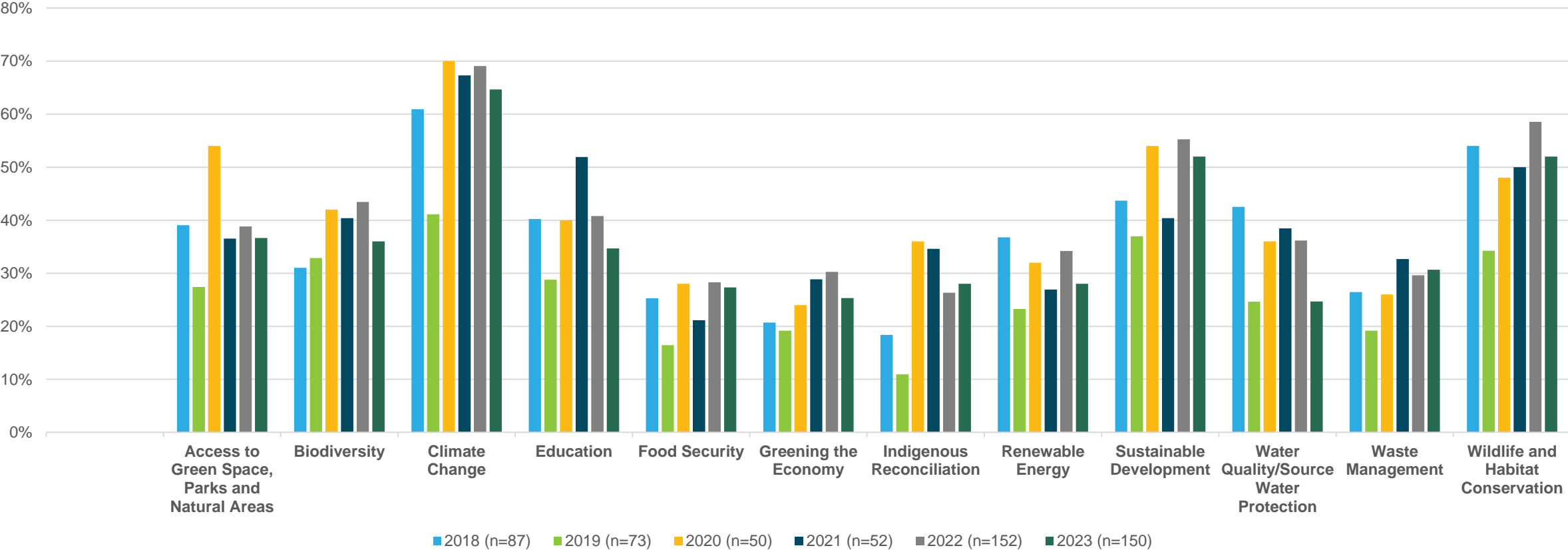


■ 16-18 ■ 19-22 ■ 23-26 ■ 27-30

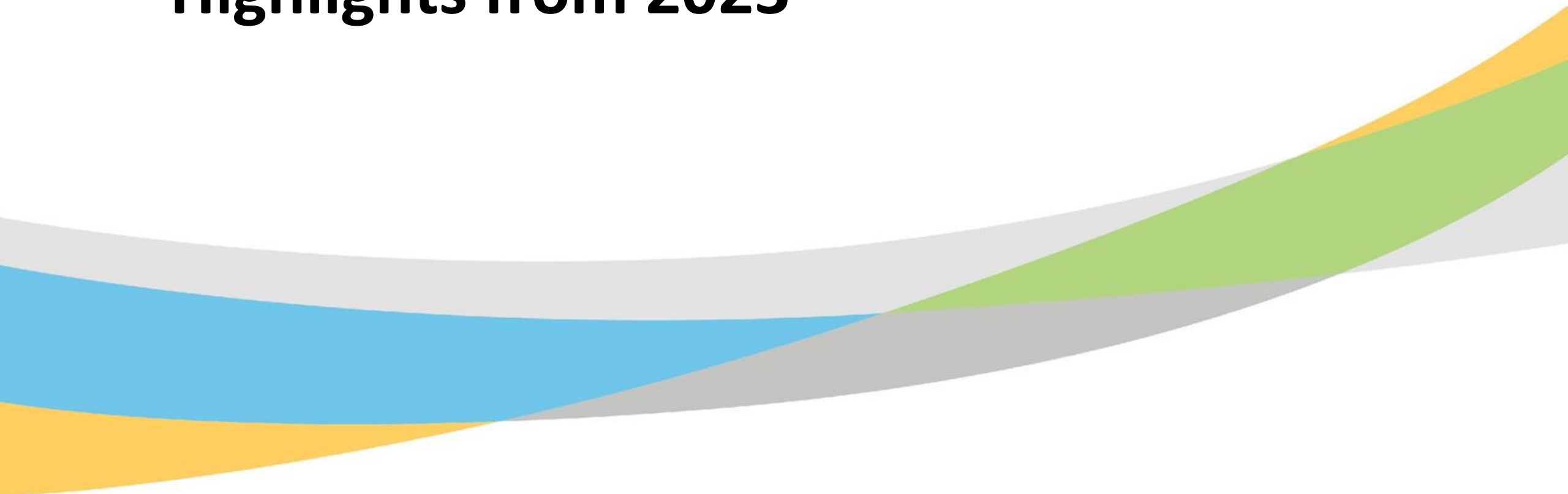
Age Composition of Youth Council Membership

Current Membership: Interests

Top 12 Interests Identified by Year



Highlights from 2023



2023-2024 Volunteer/Outreach Activities

- Loafer's Lake Earth Day Cleanup (April 2023)
- Toronto Nature NOW Radio Show (May 2023)
- Bike the Creek (June 2023)
- Peel Education Youth Climate Retreat (September 2023)
- Adventures of Salmon (September 2023)
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (September 2023)
- *Urban Nature Biodiversity Workshop with University of Toronto (November 2023)
- *Profile piece on Youth Council Executive Member in the Toronto Star (January 2024)
- Over 20 Social media promotion posts and 11 newsletters

** Denotes a partner led event – not planned/hosted by TRCA YC Executive*



2023-2024 YC Hosted Events

- *YC Town Hall : Pathways into Green Employment (June 2023)
- Youth Council Executive Retreat at Heart Lake Conservation Park Medicine Wheel Garden (July 2023)
- Vaughan-Woodbridge Youth Council Joint Stewardship Event (August 2023)
- **TRCA Flood Infrastructure Tour with Regional Watershed Alliance (October 2023)
- Fall Friends in the Forest Planting Event (October 2023)
- Smudging Workshop with Four Colours Drum Circle (October 2023)
- Guided Fungi Walk (Fall Fungi Foray) with the Mycological Society of Toronto (October 2023)



- *YC Town Hall: Controlled Burns at Alto Meadow in Mono Mills (October 2023)
- *YC Town Hall: Peel Transition 2025 (November 2023)
- *YC Town Hall: Developing Your Environmental Career and Introduction to TRCA Seasonal Opportunities (January 2024)
- *Joint YC/Canadian Conservation Corps Virtual Tour of the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre (February 2024)

• * Denotes a virtual event **Hosted by RWA

Vamika Sharma - Humber River Watershed

Youth Council Executive Outgoing Member 2024

Why did you join the Youth Council?

- Meet like-minded youth
- Have a say in what goes on in my community
- Share my passion for the environment with other youth and community members
- Share my knowledge and learn from others

How do you feel your time on the YC has contributed to your personal and professional development?

- Experience delivering presentations, talking to larger audiences
- Exposure to environmental careers
- Networking
- Confidence!

What are your biggest takeaways?

- You get as much out of the experience as you put in
- Don't be afraid to speak up
- Small actions still have an impact

Vaughan-Woodbridge Youth Council Joint Stewardship Event

August 21, 2023

- Buckthorn Removal and Litter Cleanup at William T Foster Woods
- MP Sorbara attended and really got up close and personal with the buckthorn – MP Sorbara won!



Fall Friends in the Forest Planting Event

October 14, 2023

- 20 Attendees planted 300 trees planted in under 2 hours!
- Brought together members of different youth groups including Vaughan-Woodbridge Youth Council, Stephen Lewis SS EcoClub, and others
- Tree planting, rock painting art activity, networking, and fall treats followed the planting



University of Toronto's Youth for BioDiversity Workshop

November 25, 2023

- Workshop to learn about University of Toronto's urban nature research
- Youth Council Executives got the chance to share some of the work they've done with the TRCA
- Presentations from researchers in the fields of evolutionary ecology and urban ecology



Dhara Parsania - Humber River Watershed

Youth Council Executive 2nd Year Member 2024

Why did you join the Youth Council?

- Claireville conservation area!
- Passion for the environment
- Meeting like minded individuals

How do you feel your time on the Youth Council has contributed to your personal and professional development?

- Outlet to advocate
- Connections to science
- Professional skill building and networking

What is your biggest takeaway from your time on the Youth Council?

- An individual's impact on the community

What is your hopes for the next term of the Youth Council?

- Working with the YC again to plan new events!

Youth Council Executive Retreat at Heart Lake Conservation Park Medicine Wheel Garden July 15, 2023

- Hosted by YC in partnership with The Four Colours Drum Circle Leaders – Steven Winterhawk (Elder) and Cidalia Rodriguez (Earth Medicine Woman)
- Activities included:
 - Drumming, planting, weeding, general garden maintenance and stewardship, and a group art project



YC Town Hall: Pathways into Green Employment

June 28, 2023

- Guest speakers included:
 - Toronto Zoo Climate Action Learning & Leadership (CALL) Program – 2 interns and CALL Program Supervisor
 - TRCA Newcomer Youth Green Economy Project (NYGEP) Project
 - TRCA Girls Can Too
 - Canadian Conservation Corps
- Outcomes from Town Hall:
 - One TRCA YC Executive Member applied to and was accepted into the Canadian Conservation Corps Program – NS Sea Kayaking Adventure with Outward Bound and Internship at Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre in Peterborough
 - One NYGEP participant applied to Toronto CALLs Program



Youth Council RWA Representative Plans

2024 Term

- Increasing opportunities for RWA members to be involved in YC events and youth involvement and vice versa
- Quarterly updates at RWA meetings by RWA Youth Reps



Social Media Recruitment – Executive Testimonials

Meet Shatabdy

**TRCA Youth Council
Executive Member**



Meet Malhar

**TRCA Youth Council
Executive Member**



Let's collaborate!

- Always open to partnerships and collaboration
- Contact youthcouncil@trca.ca or Jessica.macdonald@trca.ca



Take Action. Make Change. Do Good

Thank you – Questions?

www.trca.ca

