

YTL 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 the 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 2024

In 2024, the YTL continues its program. The cornerstones of the study trip are the following:

- Period of travel: 22 September - 4 October 2024
- Destinations: Hamburg and Frankfurt am Main
- Number of participants: 12 (6 Germans & 6 Canadians)
- YTL will organize accommodation (Airbnb or similar) 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:

- It's a changing economy: The global economy faces a dual transition that is occurring simultaneously. New digital applications, such as AI, are creating new business models and opportunities. Additionally, the demand for more sustainable and fair solutions questions the current way of life. Mobility, energy, and finance are just some examples of industries that are changing due to this dual transition. We are going to delve deep into the challenges companies face and explore the solutions they are creating to address these issues.
- Increasing polarization in a stressed society: A prevalent theme in the current political discourse in Germany is the notion of a stressed society. The outbreak of COVID-19 and the subsequent political and economic turbulences in recent years have left an enduring impression of ongoing exceptional circumstances. In tandem with the call for structural changes, people argue that insecurity and new developments contribute to heightened polarization within German society. We aim to explore this thesis and engage in discussions with various societal groups to understand their perception of the current state of German society and anticipate potential future trajectories.
- Germany at 75: In 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) were established, representing two states with distinct economic and societal systems on German soil. Seventy-five years later, the face of Germany has undergone substantial changes. The reunification of the two states into a single entity, now a member of the European Union and NATO, was beyond the imagination of many. We aim to trace back to the early days of the state as we recognize Germany today, delving into its historical roots, and gaining a deeper understanding of the current discussions and concerns.

Program Organizers

The Young Transatlantic Leadership program is led by the German-based association German-Canadian Association (DKG). The association is committed to fostering the German-Canadian relationship with a specific focus on young professionals. In 2018, YTL 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), a non-profit organization, was founded in 1951 and aims to advance the economic, cultural and social links between Germany and Canada. Since 1965 DKG has organized an annual work & travel program for German students travelling to Canada. Over the course of the program existence, more than 3,000 students have visited Canada, making the DKG a predestined 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.