

on working with youth to bridge the democratic deficit

Sharif Mahdy and Kwaku Agyemang

Monday, January 27, 2025 - 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Youth play a critical role in our democracy, and it's time we worked with them to address the democratic deficits in our society. In this session, Sharif Mahdy will focus on exploring 30+ years of best practices in engaging youth to act on the issues of our time. He will share his five ideas that demonstrate how effective youth-adult partnerships can bridge our democratic deficits.

Sharif will be joined by Kwaku Agyemang, a member of the Students Commission of Canada's #CanadaWeWant Facilitator Roster. The "Facilitator Roster" is a group of youth of diverse lived experiences and backgrounds that work inter-generationally with the Students Commission of Canada to support the organization's governance and programs.

Sharif Mahdy is the CEO of the Students Commission of Canada (SCC) and the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement. Sharif has been with the SCC since 2010 and is accountable for ensuring the cultural and financial sustainability of the organization. Sharif is also accountable for the long-term strategic visioning and operational excellence of the organization.

A headshot of Sharif Mahdy, a man with dark hair and a warm smile, wearing a grey suit jacket over a white shirt.



Kwaku Agyemang is the Lead, Production and Content Creation at the Students Commission of Canada. With a media production background and a degree from Toronto Metropolitan University, he brings valuable skills to scale the organization's communications impact.



[Read the full bios on the session page.](#)



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Five Good Ideas

1. Youth engagement is both a process and an outcome
2. Respect, listen, understand, and communicate
3. Mutuality is a key to navigating increasing complexity of intergenerational partnerships
4. Work with youth to bridge the democratic deficit
5. Youth are catalysts for systems change

Resources

- Shepherd Zeldin, Ph.D., Julie Petrokubi, M.S., Stoney McCart, Nishad Khanna, M.A., Jessica Collura, M.S., and Brian Christens, Ph.D.: [Strategies for Sustaining Quality Youth-Adult Partnerships in Organizational Decision Making: Multiple Perspectives](#)
- Sharif S. Mahdy: [Enhancing Governance and Decision Making at the Students Commission of Canada](#)
- [Youth Who Thrive](#): A summary of critical factors and effective programs for 12-25 year olds, commissioned by the YMCA of Greater Toronto, United Way Toronto and the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services.
- Stoney McCart and Nishad Khanna: [A Model for Engaging Youth in Evidence-Informed Policy and Program Development](#)
- SCC website: [Safer Spaces and Social Identity Formation](#)
- SCC website: [Hearing Unheard Moments](#)
- SCC website: [Over the Influence: Tackling the Opioid Crisis](#)



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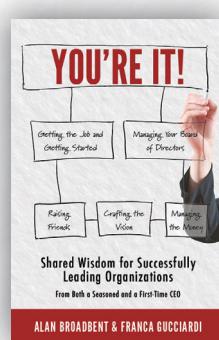
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