

# Young developers

- to properly involve young people!



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# Foreword

Getting young people involved is important - it's something all adults talk about. But despite this, young people are not involved at the level needed for real change. We believe that youth participation is a fundamental part of a democratic society. And with the help of this guide, we want to help adults who want to do their part to promote young people's rights and to get young people properly involved.

Working as Young developers has been very fun and meaningful for us. We have carried out several assignments. The first was to share our thoughts from an individual perspective on the Västra Götaland Cultural Strategy 2024-2027. We then wrote a recommendation regarding how children's right to culture can be strengthened in the development of healthcare in the Region Västra Götaland. We have also presented the results of both assignments to the Cultural Affairs Committee. As our final project, we chose to create this guide to promote the idea of Young developers.

To conclude, we hope that this guide will give other young people the opportunity to be part of similarly rewarding assignments such as ours. We hope that you, the reader of this guide, will help us keep this way of working alive.

**Adrita Ahmed, Alicia Källgren and Helen Ashtari**  
Young cultural developers

# Young developers - to properly involve young people!

**Do you have an assignment related to development and decision-making processes where you need to involve young people? Then the Young developers concept might be for you.**

**Working with Young developers is about getting young people properly involved. It not only gives young people the opportunity to make their voices heard, but also allows them to influence the development of society. The concept enables young people to participate and influence to a greater extent. They get to express their own views and get heard. Their perspective becomes part of something bigger. In practice, a Young developer assignment may involve contributing to a new strategy document or to change management.**

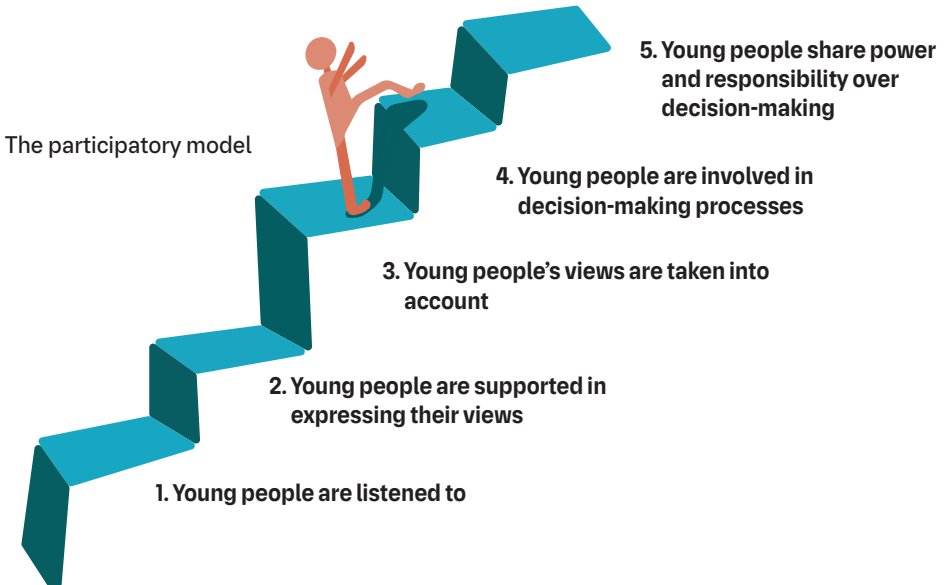
## **Why should young people be involved?**

Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adults have a duty to involve children and young people in all matters affecting them. Taking young people's perspectives into account promotes democracy.

Young people have a unique point of view, and they are an important part of our society. Young people's opinions and experiences are often ignored and not taken seriously. This despite the fact that important decisions also affect them. Their ideas and insights are an endless source of knowledge that adults need to tap into. They can make good use of this source by talking to young people and getting them involved. Young people have perspectives that adults lack. It's therefore important for young people to be involved. Young developers is a platform that provides the opportunity to contribute on equal terms.



To gain a new perspective on society



### High level of participation and influence

The participatory model shown in the picture describes different levels of participation and influence. The assignments of the Young developers should be in line with level 4 or 5. This means that young people are directly involved in decision-making processes instead of simply advising. This level of influence increases young people's sense of ownership and belonging.

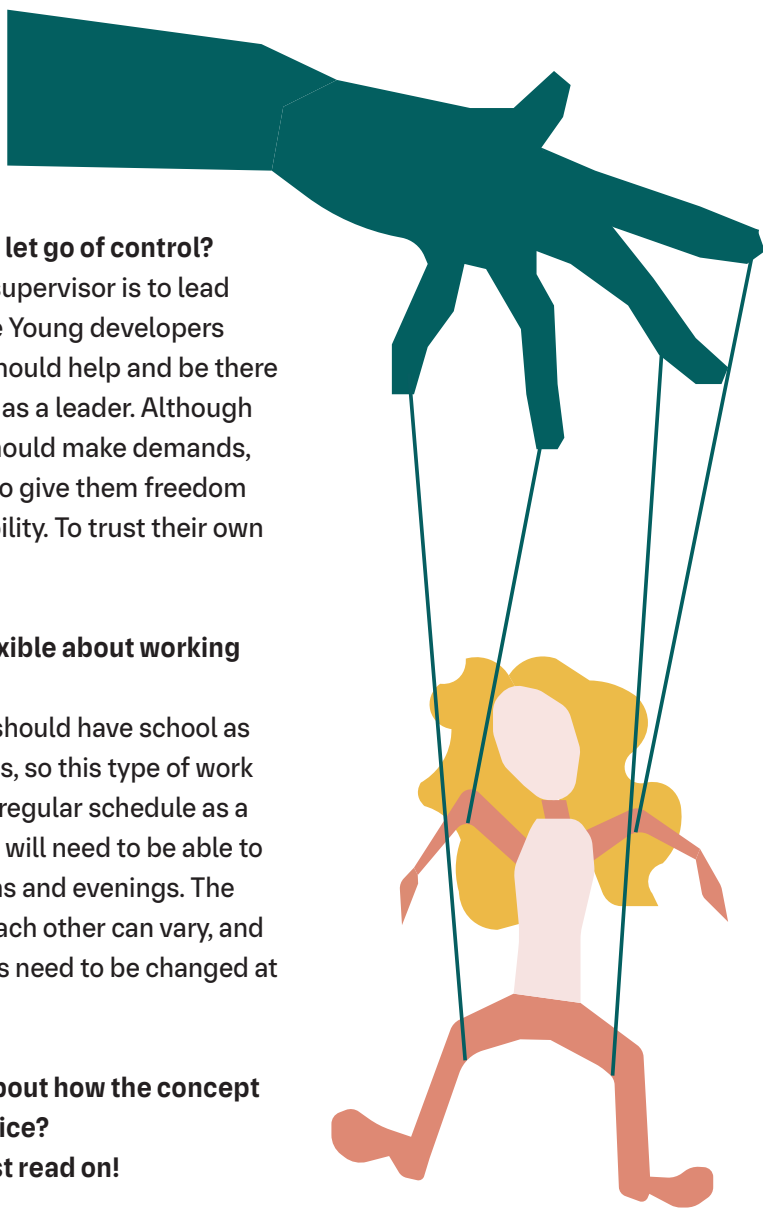
### Does the concept suit you?

Working with Young developers requires a lot from you as an adult. That's why there are some questions

that are important to consider. The answers will help you decide if the concept is right for you and if you are prepared to be a supervisor.

### Are you willing to share power?

Working with Young developers is about giving young people a high degree of participation and influence. You will be their gateway to power, as adults are usually in charge. That's why it's important to let them think and discuss freely. Dare to listen and make good use of their thoughts! Not being afraid to give up power enables young people to make the assignment reach its full potential.



**Do you dare to let go of control?**

Your role as a supervisor is to lead the work of the Young developers forward. You should help and be there as a guide, not as a leader. Although you can and should make demands, it's important to give them freedom with responsibility. To trust their own ability.

**Can you be flexible about working hours?**

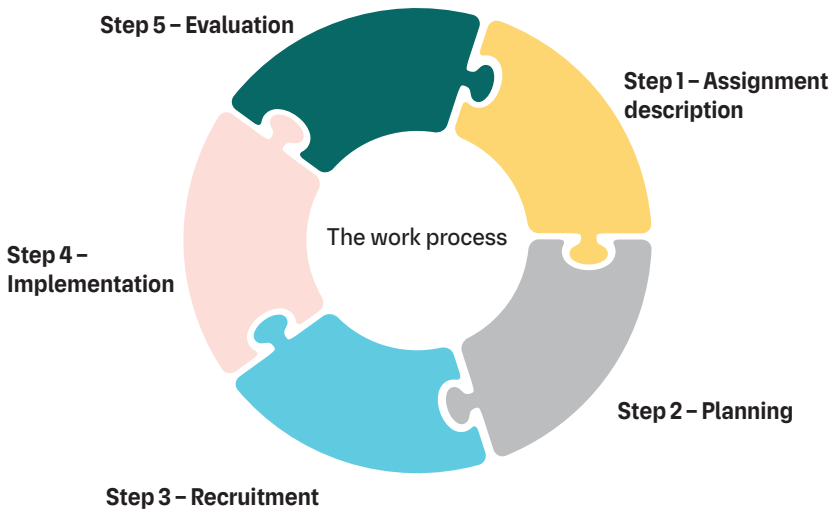
Young people should have school as their main focus, so this type of work doesn't have a regular schedule as a typical job. You will need to be able to work afternoons and evenings. The days you see each other can vary, and may sometimes need to be changed at a short notice.

**Still curious about how the concept works in practice?**

**Great, then just read on!**

Dare to let go!

# Approach



Once you have an idea for a meaningful assignment, the Young developers concept has a process you can follow. It consists of the following five steps:

## Step 1

### Assignment description

It's important to formulate a proper assignment description that is clear and meaningful. For example, there should be information on the purpose and objectives of the assignment, as well as the working hours and remuneration for the work. Your expectations as the supervisor of the Young developers should be

made clear. One tip is to write an assignment description that you can go through together.

The Young developers concept involves several young people working together in a group. We recommend three to five young people. This creates diversity and gives everyone the opportunity to have their say. It's important that young people are in the majority in relation to the number of supervisors.

### Hiring or paying by the hour?

The scope of the assignment affects the type of financial remuneration that can be considered. If it's a long-

term assignment, such as a major project, employment may be a better option.

If it's more about young people being consultants and sharing their perspective on a specific issue, an hourly rate may be more appropriate. Keep in mind that the type of remuneration influences the type of young people that will apply, as it will reflect the scope of the assignment.

Remember that hiring requires more from you as a supervisor, for example, workplace health and safety laws must be followed.

## Step 2

### Planning

It's important to have an overall plan for the implementation. This must be adapted to the assignment. It doesn't have to be planned in detail, as you will shape parts the approach together. Allow for some additional time, things often take longer than expected. Think about where and how the work sessions will be held. There should be a safe and regular place where you can work.

It's good to consider beforehand whether you should meet physically and/or digitally and if hybrid meetings are an option. Remember that the school day is long and that

young people need a break. It's a good idea to offer snacks to give them energy for working.

## Step 3

### Recruitment

The nature of the assignment affects the recruitment for it. What demands does the work place on Young developers? It's important to develop a job profile with clear information. Young people need to understand what's expected of them and what the assignment entails.

It should state what skills and qualities are useful to have. This way, young people suitable for the job will apply and you will get the right people for the job.

The recommendation is that Young developers need to be able to take responsibility. There doesn't need to be a strict age limit on applicants, but we recommend applicants to be around the age of 15-20 years. In this age range they are often mature enough to understand the meaning of the assignment, but young enough to still have a youth perspective.

Think about whether applicants really need to provide their CV. There's a risk that many will not have one because they might not have had a job before. Another way to

determine if a person is suitable is to ask for a reference, such as a teacher or coach.

### **Marketing**

To reach your target audience, it's important to use the right type of marketing. It can be done through school visits, social media, posters in youth centers, and so on. The layout of the ad and how it's distributed will influence the type of applicant for the assignment.

### **Selection**

In the selection process, you need to think about creating a diversity of perspectives based on factors such as age, geography and experiences. Once you have made a selection, you may want to have a conversation with each candidate to ensure that both you and they feel confident about the assignment.

## **Step 4**

### **Implementation**

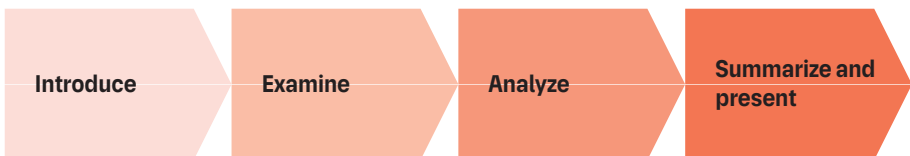
The implementation consists of the following phases. They vary in length and are adapted to the assignment in question.

#### **Introduce**

The introduction is the beginning of the whole process of working with the Young developers. This phase is for creating an understanding of what the assignment means in practice.

Young people will get answers to the “why” and “how” questions. They should be provided with information on the area/topic/issue to be investigated so that they can begin their work.

The introduction is also about getting to know each other. Don't be afraid to make demands and tell young people about their responsibilities. As a supervisor, it's important to demonstrate the participatory model and explain it



Phases of implementation

carefully. Tell the young people what their role will be in the work.

### **Group dynamics**

It's important to highlight the importance of everyone having a voice and being listened to. One way to do this is to agree together on a common ground for well-being and cooperation. It may seem obvious, but it will be reassuring for everyone. Decide how you are going to have a good dialog, for example by raising hands or if the floor is free. It's good to have exercises for getting to know each other in the start-up phase.

### **Examine**

This phase is for the young people to immerse themselves in the assignment

or issue. They will gather knowledge and experiences that they can contribute later on in the work process. In practical terms, this may involve reading up on the area, engaging in a dialogue with stakeholders or carrying out study visits, and gathering the opinions of children and young people. Once the group is up and running, it's usually smooth sailing from there. This phase may vary in length depending on the assignment and scope.

### **Analyze**

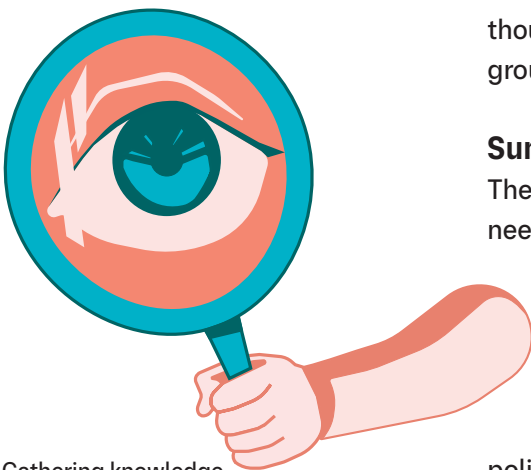
In this phase, the Young developers will analyze and draw conclusions on previous lessons learned. It's a good idea to let them reflect on matters on their own and together.

It's important to write down thoughts and take notes during the group discussions.

### **Summarize and present**

The content and work in this phase need to be adapted according to the desired outcome of the assignment. If they are to contribute to a strategy, they will need to write and edit texts.

If they are giving a presentation to politicians, they need to prepare for it.



Gathering knowledge

Once the Young developers have completed their assignment, it will be up to you as their supervisor to take their perspectives into account in the development or decision-making process. It's also important that you give them feedback on the final outcome of the issue in question.

implementation. This will help you improve the approach for next time. But you will also need to regularly check in with the young people during the course of the work. This will give you an opportunity to change things that are not working well.

## Step 5

### Evaluation

Evaluating your work with young people will give you feedback on its

Each unique individual brings their own perspective to the table.



# Things to consider as a supervisor

## Reception

Us and them. Adults tend to think the age gap matters more than it does. The difference between young people's skills and those of adults is actually not that big.

*“Young people are people too”*

## Responsibility

You need to make it clear to the young people what your different roles are in the work. They need to understand what their responsibilities are, as well as your own. They should know that while they are highly influential, the adults are ultimately in charge.

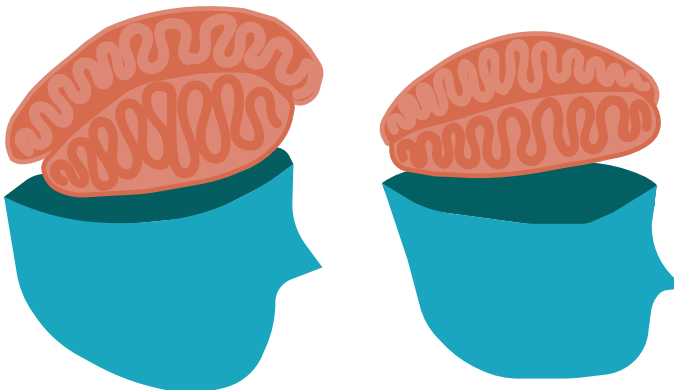
It's important to explain to them that adults are responsible for

the outcome of the work and any consequences stemming from it.

Young people participate based solely on their own perspectives. It's not their responsibility to represent all children and young people.

## Requirements and expectations

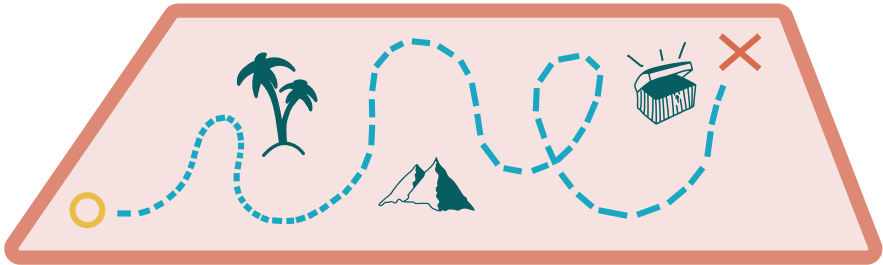
Young people need to understand their assignment, and it's your job to make your expectations clear. You should definitely make demands, but they must be realistic and reasonable. You also need to be prepared for things not to go as planned. It's not realistic to assume that everyone will behave in a certain way. The important thing is that the requirements are clearly stated so



Our differences are what we have in common!

that the young people can follow them.

way. Your role as a supervisor is important here.



You need to show them the way!

### **Safety**

It's recommended to have a check-in at the start of each work session. A round where everyone gets to tell you how things are. It will be a tool where everyone gets their needs met which can help make them feel safe. Remember that exercises, discussions, and so on need to be adapted to the needs of both the individual and the group.

### **Be a guide**

What does it mean to be too controlling, or not controlling at all? Don't let them do all the work, but don't be too controlling either. Young people should trust you to lead the

### **Follow-up continuously**

Follow up the work regularly. Ask the young people how the assignment is going and how they feel. This will allow you to identify weaknesses in your work, but also strengths. Young developers are given more space. It can raise team spirits and increase the quality and development of your work.

Checking in helps everyone to get an idea of the current situation and to keep the work moving forward. This can be followed up, for example, by evaluation exercises or open discussions.

## **Recommendations to the supervisor**

Those working with Young developers need to have some knowledge of children's rights (see the helpful links section) and how that perspective should be taken into account.

You need to understand the concept of different levels of participation and shape assignments in a way that empower young people properly. You will also need to know how to deal with legal and ethical issues, such as remuneration and parental consent.

A starting point in the Region Västra Götaland's dialog work is the regional guideline Barn och unga som medskapare i Västra Götalandsregionen (see the helpful links section). If you don't have a guideline of your own, feel free to take inspiration from it!

When hiring, you need to comply with workplace health and safety laws and regulations. If the person in question is under 18 years of age, the Swedish Work Environment Authority's regulations on the working environment of minors also apply. They include introduction procedures and rules on working hours for different ages. You don't

have to be an expert in this, you can ask for advice from HR staff. They will also know the rules for recruiting and advertising jobs.

Whether you choose to hire or not, the recommendation is to carry out a risk and impact assessment before young people start to work. This allows you to identify occupational and environmental risks and develop an action plan with measures (see the helpful links section). This will make it safer for both you as a supervisor and for the young people in their work!

It will take a little bit more time the first time, but it's worth it!

## **Concluding words**

It's incredibly important to know that there are no rights or wrongs. This is just a guide with suggestions on how you can work with Young developers. You need to adapt your approach to your circumstances and to the nature of the assignment.

Things will go wrong and that's okay. You need to be open to making changes in your plan and daring to let go. Young people are not dangerous, and if given the right tools and support, they will be able to create amazing things.

## Helpful links

### **Barnkonventionen – från teori till praktik**

An online training course developed by Region Västra Götaland in collaboration with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions.



### **Laws, rules and regulations on health and safety at work**

From the Swedish Work Environment Authority.



### **Regional guideline**

**Barn och unga som medskapare i Västra Götalandsregionen**



