



# Young Jains of America

Federation of Jain Associations in North America

A Non-Profit Tax-Exempt Religious Organization. IRS Code Section 501(c)(3) EI #54-1280028

elections@yja.org | www.yja.org

## Application for YJA Executive Board

Position: Co-Chair

Name:

Email:

City, State:

Phone Number:

Date of Birth, Age:

## Instructions

- Applications are due **Tuesday, July 15th at 11:59 PM PST**.
  - Complete this application, incl. the associated work product - help us get to know you!
  - Check your eligibility for the position at [yja.org/elections](http://yja.org/elections).
  - You can apply to more than one position. For a list of positions and their descriptions, see [yja.org/elections](http://yja.org/elections).
- Submit **all parts** of your application by using the *Submit Application* button at [yja.org/elections](http://yja.org/elections):
  - Written application (Word Document), file name "NAME – Co-Chair Application"
  - Resume (PDF), file name "NAME – Resume".
    - If you do not currently have a resume, please email [elections@yja.org](mailto:elections@yja.org) for instructions on what to submit instead!
  - Work product - please see instructions in the application.

## Next Steps

- If selected for an interview, we'll contact you by **email** to schedule it anytime between when you submit your application and July 30th. Please respond promptly! Interviews may take place on a rolling basis, so we HIGHLY encourage you to submit as soon as your application is completed!
- If you have **any** questions or concerns along the way, please don't hesitate to email us at [elections@yja.org](mailto:elections@yja.org). Have fun and good luck - we can't wait to hear from you!

*All the information in this application is true to the best of my knowledge. If I am offered a position on the YJA Executive Board and accept it, I will fulfill the duties of that position to the best of my ability!*

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Signature (sign or type your name)

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Date



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## Application

Please keep all responses within 150 to 250 words, unless otherwise noted.

1. Why have you decided to continue your involvement with YJA and run for Co-Chair this year? What makes you most suited for this position? What are some of your strengths and weaknesses, and how would you apply them to this role?
2. What's one strength and one weakness in how YJA currently operates — especially on the organizational level? How would you build on the strength and improve the weakness?
3. Tell us about a specific project, initiative, or event (in or outside YJA) that you were part of that didn't go as planned. What were the signs that it needed to change, pause, or stop? What call did you make and what would you do differently now?
4. A Co-Chair has to be able to calmly and maturely handle any internal issues that come up over the course of the year. During a previous term on the YJA Board or through a non-YJA experience, describe a time when you received negative feedback or were involved in a conflict or disagreement with another Board member or an external party (parent, vendor, etc.). How did you handle the situation then, and what would you do differently now?
5. Think of a time when someone on your team (YJA or otherwise) wasn't following through — maybe they were burned out, overwhelmed, or just disengaged. How did you handle the situation and what did you learn from it that you'd apply as Co-Chair?
6. Co-Chairs have to balance competing responsibilities, both within their role in the organization, as well as with their personal and professional lives. How do you juggle multiple responsibilities and manage stress? What steps do you take to keep yourself organized, and what areas for improvement do you have for yourself in this regard?
7. As Co-Chair, you will have to make difficult decisions on behalf of the organization, sometimes without unanimous agreement amongst your team. What would you prioritize when reconciling differing views, and what steps would you take to come to a decision?
8. As Co-Chair, you'll be one of the most visible representatives of YJA—whether it's speaking at events, interacting with donors and community leaders, or shaping how YJA shows up online. Think back to a time when you had to represent a group, manage public perception, or navigate a situation where image or reputation mattered. What did you learn from that experience? Now, based on that, how would you think about YJA's public-facing image? What would you prioritize in strengthening or evolving how the world sees YJA? (no more than 300 words)
9. As a Co-Chair, you will have to ensure your Board maintains the strong relationships that YJA has established with Jain Centers, JAINA leadership, YJA alumni, YJA donors, YJP, and the Long Range

**Young Jains of America (YJA)** is the umbrella youth organization of the **Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA)**. The mission of YJA is to be recognized nationally and internationally as an umbrella youth organization for establishing a network to share Jain heritage and religion through youth.



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Planning (LRP) Committee. Please offer specific ways that you will continue to grow these relationships.

10. Please list your other commitments for the 2025-2026 year.

**OPTIONAL:** If there is anything else you would like us to know about your background with Jainism, Jain communities, or Jain-related activities you have participated in, please write it below. Your application will not be negatively affected if you do not answer!

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## References

Please list all past Executive Board/Convention Co-Chair(s), Director of Project Development(s), and Director of Event(s) you have worked with during your time in YJA. We may reach out to them to learn more about your professional working experiences within YJA:

### Role 1

Year:

Executive Board or Convention Committee Position:

Executive Board Co-Chairs:

Convention Co-Chairs (if applicable):

Director of Project Development:

Director of Events:

### Role 2 (if applicable)

Year:

Executive Board or Convention Committee Position:

Executive Board Co-Chairs:

Convention Co-Chairs (if applicable):

Director of Project Development:

Director of Events:

### Role 3 (if applicable)

Year:

Executive Board or Convention Committee Position:

Executive Board Co-Chairs:

Convention Co-Chairs (if applicable):

Director of Project Development:

Director of Events:

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## Work Product

Please complete Task A and Task B

### Background

Being a Co-Chair is not just about continuing what YJA has always done—it's about thinking critically about the fundamental challenges the organization faces and guiding the board toward creative, sustainable solutions. As Co-Chair, you're both a strategic thinker and a team leader: responsible for setting vision, navigating ambiguity, and building a culture where board members feel empowered, connected, and supported as they work toward a shared mission.

### Task A

What fundamental challenges do you see within YJA today, and what steps would you take to mitigate these issues and ensure the organization's long-term sustainability? Identify three distinct challenges you would focus on improving, and describe how you would address them. Explain why you believe addressing these challenges is crucial for serving YJA's interests. Feel free to discuss any aspect of the organization that you consider important to address.

### Task B

As Co-Chair, you're responsible not just for what the board accomplishes, but how it feels to be on the board. The culture you help build will shape whether board members feel valued, connected, and motivated to contribute their best throughout the year—even during high-stress moments. You're at the start of the board year. You have a clean slate and a new group of people—some who know each other well, others who are brand new.

In 1 page or less, tell us:

- What kind of culture would you want to build on the YJA board this year, and why?
- What concrete actions or rituals would you put in place to help shape that culture throughout the term?
- How would you make sure that culture isn't just top-down, but co-created and sustained by the board as a whole?

**Submit Task A and Task B in one file (2 pages or less, Word or PDF) and name the file "NAME - Co-Chair Work Product."**

If you have any questions, difficulties, or confusion, **please don't hesitate** to email us at [elections@yja.org](mailto:elections@yja.org)! We're happy to help!

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## Position Description

**The primary duties of the Co-Chairs shall include, but not be limited to:**

1. Being the official spokespersons for the Organization;
2. Promoting the Mission and Objectives of the Organization;
3. Providing leadership and overall direction of the Organization;
4. Establishing, in conjunction with the Directors, Regional Coordinators, and Board of Trustees, goals for the Organization for the year;
5. Executing the set-forth goals;
6. Overseeing the Organization's accounts and finances;
7. Ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for YJA members and leadership team;
8. Appointing, as needed, a Committee (as defined in Article XII "Committees") to accomplish specific goals and designate its Chair(s);
9. Informing the Board of Trustees and JAINA Executive Committee once every two (2) months of the Organization's recent events, current activities, and planned events;
10. Leading the Organization's Executive Board meetings; and
11. Fulfilling their individual obligations as set forth in the YJA Operating Manual.

## Eligibility Requirements

1. Are on the current Executive Board; OR
2. Have served at least one prior full term on the Executive Board as detailed above; OR
3. Have served as YJA Convention Co-Chair.

Additionally, to be eligible to run you must not turn 30 years of age until after September 15, 2025.

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## FAQ and Tips

### **Q: Can I apply for more than one position?**

A: Yes, you can apply for more than one position! You must submit a separate application for each position you are interested in. During your interview, we may ask you for your order of preference among the positions you applied for.

### **Q: What if I've never been involved with YJA? What if I've never been to pathshala? What if I come from a small town where we have no Jain temple, or no Jain center?**

A: There is no "required" background with Jainism to be on the Executive Board. It doesn't matter if you're from a big city or a small town, if you've been to every convention or if you just started learning more about Jainism this past year - we're looking for enthusiastic, hard-working people who are excited about helping connect Jain youth across the country, period. If that's you, apply!

### **Q: What if I don't live near a Jain community, sangh or temple?**

A: No problem! Board members have lived all over the country - sometimes even working from abroad! - without any issue. It is important to us to have the perspective of Jain youth in all different situations, including those who do not have easy access to a Jain community.

### **Q: What if I've never held a position like this before?**

A: Again, there is no "required" set of experiences to be a good fit for the Executive Board - our current board has graduate students, working professionals from various industries, college, and even high school students! We want to hear about the skills and interests you have, but there are also many that we can teach you! When thinking about what you want to apply for, look for the position description that is a good fit with both your background and your interests.

### **Q: What is a work product?**

A: The work product is an example of something that the Board member holding that position does as a part of their day-to-day YJA responsibilities. Seeing a work product helps us better understand your working style, and what you might create or do if you were in that position on the YJA Board. Work products will be looked at in the context of your application and background, so again, don't worry if you've never done something like this before! Just follow the instructions and do your best.

### **Q: Why are you asking for a resume?**

A: We've found that involvement with Jainism is not the only thing that helps us as Executive Board members - we all use skills and experiences from school, internships, and work, as well! Seeing your resume gives us a quick look into this background. No need to modify, just send us your existing resume as-is. Again, if you are in high school or college and don't have one yet, email us at [elections@yja.org](mailto:elections@yja.org)! This will not negatively affect your application.

### **Q: Should I talk about my activities or work experience extensively in my application?**

A: No need to rehash your resume in your application - use examples as appropriate, but make sure you're actually answering the questions and helping us learn more about you!

### **Q: Any other tips for application writing?**

A: Stick to the word limits - less is more! Proofread your application - typos, grammar and spelling mistakes all make it more difficult to understand what you're trying to convey.

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**Q: What does the time commitment for the Executive Board look like?**

**A:** Time commitment varies by position. Roles like Co-Chairs, Director of Events, Director of Operations, and Director of Project Development tend to be more time-intensive and usually take around 8–10 hours per week, though this can fluctuate depending on the time of year. Regional Coordinators and other Directors typically spend 4–6 hours per week, with busier periods around retreats, major events, and releases. If you have specific questions about time commitments, feel free to reach out to [elections@yja.org](mailto:elections@yja.org).

**Q: I've seen that Executive Board members travel for in-person meetings. What does this entail and are there costs involved?**

**A:** Board members typically travel at least 3 times per year. The exact timing and location of these meetings will be determined by the acting Executive Board. These gatherings are focused on planning, brainstorming, and executing the Board's goals, initiatives, and overall vision for the term. Board members are expected to cover a portion of their travel expenses, and the remainder will be subsidized by YJA. If this is a concern, your Executive Board Co-Chairs will work with you to make accommodations.

**Q: YJA Conventions take place in the summer of every even year (e.g. July 2026, July 2028, etc) — what does that mean for me as an Executive Board member?**

**A:** During a Convention year, Executive Board members also serve on the Convention Committee in addition to their usual board responsibilities. You'll take on a role that contributes to planning and executing the largest Jain youth gathering in the world! This is an exciting and rewarding part of your term, but it also means additional responsibilities and collaboration. Further details about the Convention Committee can be found at <https://convention.yja.org/board>.

**Q: Who do I contact with questions?**

**A:** For any questions about eligibility, the application process, interviews, or timeline—reach out to the Elections Committee at [elections@yja.org](mailto:elections@yja.org).

**Q: What will the interview process be like?**

**A:** If you are selected for an interview, you will be scheduled for a Zoom video interview ranging from 30 minutes to 1 hour. The interview will be transcribed and recorded for review as your application is evaluated. All recordings and transcripts will be deleted post-election cycle.

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