



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: Director of Operations

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.
 - You can apply to more than one position. For a list of positions and their descriptions, see yja.org/elections.
- Submit **all parts** of your application by using the *Submit Application* button at yja.org/elections:
 - Written application (Word Document), file name "NAME – Director of Education Application"
 - Resume (PDF), file name "NAME – Resume".
 - If you do not currently have a resume, please email 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. 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!

Signature (sign or type your name)

Date



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Application

Please keep all responses within 100 to 250 words, unless otherwise noted.

1. Why are you interested in the Director of Operations role, and how does it align with your skills and experiences?
2. Tell us about a time when things felt messy—maybe a process was unclear, a project was all over the place, or your team wasn't aligned. How did you bring structure or clarity to the situation? What was your approach, and what changed because of it?
3. One of the challenges of this role is balancing time-sensitive admin work (like onboarding or board meeting logistics) with longer-term org-wide improvements. Can you share a time when you had to juggle short-term responsibilities while also building toward a bigger goal? How did you prioritize and make progress?
4. Sometimes, you may notice operational gaps in other board members' work. The Director of Operations doesn't "own" those roles—but can help improve them. Describe a time when you spotted something that could be improved in someone else's area. How did you approach the conversation and work together toward a fix?
5. Big operational changes often require buy-in from Co-Chairs to be successful. You'll need to keep them informed and aligned—while still moving ideas forward. Think of a time when you brought a team lead or manager along on a new idea. How did you earn their trust and move the work ahead?
6. YJA's biggest operational challenges won't be solved in a week. They require long-term vision, consistency, and the ability to make steady progress—even when the payoff isn't immediate. These kinds of improvements often involve behind-the-scenes problem-solving and are core to the Director of Operations role. Share a time when you worked on something that required steady, thoughtful progress over weeks or months. What was your vision, how did you keep moving forward, and what made the work meaningful to you?
7. In Convention years, a significant portion of the Executive Board's time and energy is directed toward planning YJA Convention. As a result, long-term organizational growth and broader YJA initiatives may take a backseat. Do you see this as a challenge to growing and evolving as an organization? If so, how would you approach it? Share a few short-term and long-term ideas you'd want to explore to help the board keep making meaningful progress on long-term goals—even during a Convention year.
8. This is a brand-new position. There's no predecessor, and part of your role will be defining what the Director of Operations becomes. Tell us about a time you were the first to take on a new

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project or role or were tasked with a problem which had no clear and defined guidelines. What excited you about it—and what helped you succeed (or what support do you wish you'd had)?

9. 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

Background

The Director of Operations is a new position designed to support long-term sustainability, efficiency, and scalability for YJA. While YJA has grown significantly in scope, programming, and visibility over the years, its internal operations have not scaled at the same pace. This has led to recurring challenges in knowledge transfer, continuity, and overall efficiency. The Director of Operations will play a key role in addressing these gaps — helping to build institutional memory, reduce duplicated effort, and streamline how the board functions behind the scenes. This ensures that YJA can continue to grow without burning out its leaders.

Task

The YJA Operating Manual, housed within Google Drive, was created to centralize key documentation about how the organization runs. Over time, though, the Drive has become cluttered with years of materials, and the manual is rarely referenced. Most board members now search ad-hoc, reuse old files, or miss critical documentation altogether.

You've been tasked with reimagining how YJA stores and shares institutional knowledge in a way that is accessible, easy to maintain, and actively used by board members.

In your response, please address:

- A few potential solution ideas (with pros/cons of each)
- Your recommended approach and why
- Key considerations you'd take into account to ensure long-term success, scalability, and sustainability
- Steps you'd take to implement this solution across the board term
- How you would collaborate with board members to shape and test your solution
- How you would define and measure success

Please limit your response for this task to 2 pages. Feel free to use Word, Excel, or any other platform you feel appropriate to document and create your outline.

Submit your proposal (Word, Excel, PDF) and name the file "NAME - Operations Work Product".

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

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Position Description

The primary duties of the Director of Operations shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Overseeing YJA's internal operations and ensuring board-wide efficiency and alignment by:
 - a. Setting up and maintaining core administrative infrastructure, including Slack, Google Admin Suite, Google Drive, credential transfer, long-standing subscriptions and accounts, etc;
 - b. Maintaining the organization's accounts and credentials;
 - c. Compiling a master board calendar of key dates, events, initiatives, and milestones;
 - d. Developing systems to support long-term sustainability;
2. Maintaining institutional knowledge and sustainability by:
 - a. Creating and managing an operating manual to house procedures, key operating documents, and transition materials for ongoing board use;
 - b. Maintaining and updating the YJA Constitution and other governing documents;
 - c. Owning transition processes;
3. Managing key organizational processes, including:
 - a. Coordinating flights, meals, accommodations for board members to attend board meetings and conferences;
 - b. Supporting the BoT nomination and interview process alongside Co-Chairs;
4. Assisting Co-Chairs in overseeing operational workflows led by board members by:
 - a. Ensuring systems and processes are sustainable, scalable, and well-documented;
 - b. Providing actionable recommendations and partnering with board members to strengthen infrastructure, streamline execution, and promote long-term efficiency;
5. Supporting long-term strategy by:
 - a. Collecting and maintaining operational data and insights to help shape organizational planning;
 - b. Leading the development of a multi-year continuity plan;
 - c. Identifying and implementing improvements to increase the efficiency, scalability, or sustainability of organizational efforts and initiatives;
6. Overseeing internal data collection and evaluation by:
 - a. Developing systems to collect board engagement and performance metrics;
 - b. Coordinating board-wide assessments to support continuous improvement;
7. Fulfilling their individual obligations as set forth in the YJA Operating Manual.

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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, 2026.

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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! 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.

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.

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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