HOW TO MAKE A MANIFESTO FOR THE FUTURE

A DREAMERS & DOERS TOOLKIT FOR YOUNG FUTURISTS

CALIFORNIA 100
YR MEDIA
“WE DO NOT INHERIT THE EARTH FROM OUR ANCESTORS, WE BORROW IT FROM OUR CHILDREN.”

—NATIVE AMERICAN PROVERB
WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

This “Dreamers & Doers” toolkit is for young futurists — student leaders, activists, artists, innovators, creators, changemakers — and their champions and allies.

It is designed as a set of interactive tools, games and idea-sparking prompts to help you envision more innovative and equitable futures, develop creative solutions and strategies, and build strong connections and commitments to inspire change and take action.

This toolkit is grounded in California 100’s intergenerational and youth engagement work, including Our Dreams, Our California: A Youth Manifesto for the Future and the first ever Youth Futures Summit held in Sacramento in March 2023.

The toolkit has been created in collaboration with the Teach YR division at YR Media, an award-winning nonprofit media, technology, and music training center and platform for emerging BIPOC content creators who are using their voices to change the world, just like YOU!
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**Start Here:**

- **1.** Why make a manifesto for the future?
- **2.** How to think about the future
- **3.** What is a futures manifesto?
- **4.** Start with a vision
- **5.** Design creative solutions & strategies
- **6.** Build strong connections & take action
- **7.** Dive deeper
- **8.** Learn more
WHY MAKE A MANIFESTO FOR THE FUTURE?

Young people have a lot at stake when it comes to the future of our communities and our democracy as a whole. The COVID-19 pandemic, recent movements for racial and social justice, climate disasters and the growing power of artificial intelligence have heightened the urgency to ensure that young people play an active, informed role in decision-making processes that seriously affect our collective futures.

This Dreamers & Doers Toolkit builds on California 100 and YR Media’s work to inspire passionate student leaders, young activists, and creative changemakers to design a series of visions and dreams for the future and to develop calls to action that bring together a growing network of young futurists.

You are essential to enacting meaningful change and envisioning a more vibrant future for the next century.
A FUTURES MANIFESTO CHECKLIST

START WITH A VISION
What does your ideal future look like? Your dreams for people, places, your community and the environment.

DESIGN SOLUTIONS & STRATEGIES
How can you build a better world? What changes and big ideas can help fulfill your visions? Your strategic, creative, and innovative approaches to a problem.

BUILD STRONG CONNECTIONS & TAKE ACTION
What can you commit to and how can you amplify your visions and solutions for your ideal future? Your personal commitments, networks of influence, and action plan to expand mindsets and make other transformative changes.

Make sure to also include who you are, your core values and motivations for creating this manifesto, and action recommendations.
A futures manifesto can take many forms and shapes:

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<td>Live Performance</td>
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Let your passions guide you!
Strategic foresight and futures thinking are approaches that help you imagine, think critically about, and have a tangible impact on shaping what the future might look like.

Rather than simply “predicting” the future, futurists use these tools to imagine multiple futures and explore different scenarios and potential changes that could happen in the upcoming years, decades, or even centuries.

Futurists play a crucial role in today’s world. Reflecting on the future—as an individual and collectively in community—empowers you to challenge assumptions, make and shape your desired futures, actively participate in decision making, envision a more resilient and equitable world and then work collaboratively to create it!

The interactive tools, games and idea-sparking prompts in this toolkit will help you begin your journey as a futurist, but they are just the beginning! We hope you’ll use these as a starting point.
SO, WHAT IS A FUTURES MANIFESTO?

**MANIFESTO**

A *manifesto* is a declaration of values, visions and ideas that brings awareness to an issue and invites a community to take action and make change. Manifestos have played an important role in history as a way to publicly lift up and amplify the voices, intentions and demands of individuals and communities.

**FUTURES MANIFESTO**

A *futures manifesto* goes beyond the present day and outlines a set of shared visions, solutions, strategies, and commitments to inspire innovative and creative, long-term change. It paints a picture (or vision) of an ideal or alternate set of futures and outlines the steps and changes needed to move towards that vision.
EXAMPLES OF FUTURES MANIFESTOS

OUR DREAMS, OUR CALIFORNIA: A YOUTH FUTURES MANIFESTO
Drafted by a statewide coalition of young Californians in partnership with California 100.

CALPIRG RESOURCES PAGE
Tools & frameworks to run strong campaigns and win victories in higher education.

NATIONAL TRANS YOUTH COUNCIL NINE POINT PLATFORM
A living document drafted to define a revolution and achieve liberation for trans youth.
EXAMPLES OF FUTURES MANIFESTOS

**THE MAKER’S BILL OF RIGHTS**
Championing open access to information and the democratization of innovation, drafted by the Maker Movement.

**THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY’S TEN POINT PROGRAM**

**THE YELLOW MANIFESTO**
A collaboratively drafted art project and true account of a border and its people.
EXAMPLES OF FUTURES MANIFESTOS

**UNICEF’s #ENDVIOLENCE YOUTH MANIFESTO**
Young people want to stop violence in schools. Here’s how.

**UNITED NATIONS YOUTH 4 CLIMATE MANIFESTO**
To ensure meaningful youth engagement and involvement in the global climate movement.

**OUR FUTURES FORUM**
Documentaries from the future created by young people.
“THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE BEAUTY OF THEIR DREAMS.”

—ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
START WITH A VISION (OR MANY VISIONS!)!!

Native artist Sorren Richards created giant mural panels for the California 100 Youth Futures Summit, inspired by topics and policy areas that resonate with young people throughout the state.
Use your passions, identities, and core values to brainstorm statements (visions) about the future. These are your dreams for people, places, culture and the environment.

Think about your dreams and visions over different timeframes and how they might be different in 10 years, 50 years, and even 100 years into the future. You can select a specific topic or issue that is meaningful for your community, or think more broadly about the world you and future generations want to live in.

California 100’s Youth Futures Fellows identified 10 topics and policy areas that were important for them:

- Pre-K-12 Education
- Higher Education
- Community Health
- Health Systems & Technology
- Natural Resources
- Conservation & Sustainability
- Civic Engagement
- Community & Identity
- Housing
- Food Systems
ASK QUESTIONS

WHAT DOES YOUR IDEAL FUTURE LOOK LIKE? WHAT SHOULD IT BE “FULL” OF, AND WHAT SHOULD IT BE “FREE” OF?

WHAT ARE YOUR DREAMS AND VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE?

I DREAM OF A CALIFORNIA WHERE...

I WILL FIGHT FOR A CALIFORNIA WHERE...

HOW URGENT IS YOUR ISSUE AND WHAT KIND OF EVIDENCE IS THERE TO SUPPORT IT? WHAT MIGHT “100%” MEAN? WHAT MIGHT “NET ZERO” MEAN? (For example: 100% inclusion, 100% civic engagement, net zero carbon, or zero racism)
FREEDOM DREAM The year is 2053 and you have just been elected President of the United States. You’re drafting your inauguration speech. How did you get here? How did your community support you? What is your campaign slogan? What is the first thing you will do as president?

SHARE ONE WORD that summarizes how you feel about the future.

CREATE WORD CLOUDS with Mentimeter. Use Mentimeter or another word cloud generator to free-associate as a group to develop core values and visions. Example: California 100 Futures Fellows Word Clouds

GET INSPIRED BY YOUR PEERS Use this list of current pressing “futures” topics in the Northern Hemisphere, and California 100’s Our Dreams, Our California: A Youth Futures Manifesto as inspiration.

WRITE A NEWS HEADLINE for the future. Prompt: The year is 2033. Imagine two worlds: one beautiful and filled with hope, and one catastrophically gone wrong. Write the top headlines for each world, keep them short and punchy, sweet!

MAKE A LIST OF QUESTIONS you have about the future. For example: will we still have college degrees? Will we need oxygen to breathe? Will we use cars to get around?

SHARE ONE WORD that summarizes how you feel about the future.

DRAW YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD in the year 2073 (50 years from now). What has changed for the better? What are people celebrating?

WRITE A NEWS HEADLINE for the future. Prompt: The year is 2033. Imagine two worlds: one beautiful and filled with hope, and one catastrophically gone wrong. Write the top headlines for each world, keep them short and punchy, sweet!

START WITH A VISION (OR MANY VISIONS!) CONTINUED
"WE HAVE TO REIMAGINE OUR FUTURE, CLAIM IT, AND WALK INTO IT."

—NNEDI OKORAFOR, Writer and Afrofuturist
Solutions and strategies build on your visions for an ideal world or community, and are grounded in your core values. They offer strategic, creative, and innovative approaches to a problem. **Brainstorm** your wildest and most intriguing solutions, and then list the steps and things you need to make them happen.

Imagine big picture solutions and also concrete examples of what can realistically get done. Again, make sure to **consider a range of timeframes** and how your solutions might differ in 10 years, 50 years, and even 100 years into the future.

As part of this process, you will also want to consider challenges and possible obstacles that may impact your solutions. Use the Systems Change Hierarchy, Moonshots Game, and other futures-thinking tools on the next slide to help structure your brainstorm.
ASK QUESTIONS

HOW CAN YOU BUILD A BETTER WORLD?

WHAT INNOVATIVE AND STRATEGIC APPROACHES CAN YOU TAKE TO SOLVING A PROBLEM?

WHAT OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES MAY COME UP? HOW CAN YOU ADDRESS THESE?

WILL YOUR APPROACHES BE DIFFERENT 10, 50, OR 100 YEARS FROM NOW?

WHAT ARE IDEAS THAT HELP FULFILL YOUR VISIONS?

HOW CAN YOU DEEPEN CONVERSATIONS AND EXPAND OUR IMAGINATION FOR MORE AMBITIOUS ACTION?
SPARK IDEAS

TRAVEL INTO THE MULTIVERSE and explore alternate futures
- Play AfroRithms from the Future—a cooperative design and storytelling game that centers Black and Indigenous perspectives.
- Explore California 100 and Institute for the Future’s Mega Scenarios to imagine different time frames and worlds.

PLAY A GAME
- Moonshots is a game that helps you brainstorm radical solutions to the World’s toughest problems.
- 100 Ways will help you expand your mind to the possibilities of the future.

RUN AN ASSESSMENT
Use the Systems Change Hierarchy to consider obstacles and identify strategies for transformative change.

CREATE A COLLABORATIVE MOOD BOARD to visualize your creative solutions and possible future strategies as a group. Draw inspiration from this Miro Board considering the Future of California created by California 100 Futures Fellows.

RESEARCH YOUR IDEA FROM EVERY ANGLE
- Where in the world are countries/states/cities doing what you hope to see in your future?
- Use news and journal articles, podcasts, Google, Youtube, and committee hearings to find signals of change, and let one source lead you to another. Be sure to check out these YR.Media resources on fact-checking & finding and vetting reliable, diverse, truth-bound sources: DIY: Delivering the Accuracy and How to Find Diverse Sources in the Digital Age with Haley Samsel.
- Amplify your lived experience and the lived experience of others to advocate for the needs of your community.
- Find the cost of what you’re asking for as well as counter arguments to your solutions.
“ANY USEFUL STATEMENT ABOUT THE FUTURE SHOULD AT FIRST SEEM RIDICULOUS.”

—JIM DATOR, Futurist
BUILD STRONG CONNECTIONS & TAKE ACTION
You have envisioned an ideal future, designed innovative solutions and defined strategic approaches for long-term change. Now it’s time to identify your personal commitments, build a network of support and influence, and take action.

Use the tools here to define your personal and community commitments — these should be clear actionable steps to:

- move your work forward,
- help others understand what you hope to accomplish,
- and inspire them to take action with you!

Think of this as an opportunity to change public understanding, overcome existing barriers, and win over hearts and minds.
**Ask Questions**

- How can you personally ensure progress towards your visions and solutions?
- What can you commit to? Personally, professionally, and civically?
- Who holds power and influence in your issue area and how can you network with them?
- What will motivate you (and your community) to take action and make an impact?

**Build Strong Connections & Take Action (continued)**

- How can you create a roadmap to take your ideas from vision to implementation?
- How can you make your voice heard and amplify your vision and solutions to your community, your state, and the entire country/world?
- What can you inspire others to commit to? (Government agencies, companies, family members, friends)

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**SPARK IDEAS**

**BUILD A POWER MAP** to understand who holds influence over your issue or community and how you can strengthen your network.
- CALPIRG Students Activist Toolkit: Making a Power Map (pg 29)
- The Commons Social Change Library: Power Mapping and Analysis
- Union of Concerned Scientists: Power Mapping Your Way to Success

**DESIGN ARTWORK, A GAME, OR OTHER CREATIVE WORK** to amplify the ideas and solutions in your Manifesto.

**HARNESS THE POWER OF PUBLIC RECORDS** for advocacy, YR Media will teach you how.

**WRITE A LETTER TO YOUR FUTURE SELF** and FutureMe will send it for you! Lay out your visions and solutions, and follow-up on your commitments in 3, 5 or 10 years from now.

**HOST A FUTURES SUMMIT** to convene and engage with like-minded leaders and participate in collective visioning and action.

**CREATE A CAMPAIGN** and make your voice heard. Use CALPIRG Students’ Activist Toolkit to get started.

**DRAFT A PLEDGE** related to your visions and solutions, and publish it along with your manifesto to inspire commitments. Check out this Climate Pledge (Environmental Justice Foundation), Anti-Racism Pledge (YWCA), Save our Democracy Pledge (Gen Vote), and Redistribution pledge (Resource Generation).

**GET TO KNOW YOUR LEGISLATORS**, share your ideas and solutions, and help draft a bill at the state level. Organizations like GENup, CALPIRG Students, and YR Media are championing student-led social justice, student activism, and issues-driven journalism.
“ALL THAT YOU TOUCH, YOU CHANGE. ALL THAT YOU CHANGE, CHANGES YOU.”

—OCTAVIA E. BUTLER, Author and Afrofuturist
DIVE DEEPER

More resources to inspire you to envision an ideal future, design innovative solutions, and take action to make transformative change.

SELF-CARE AND CENTERING COMMUNITY
is essential to this work. Here are some YR Media resources to prioritize mental health when covering critical issues:

- Beyond Self-Care: Fight the Good Fight, But Protect Your Peace
- Beyond Self-Care: Caring for Your Mental Health as a Student Journalist
- Four Tips to Treat Yourself With Compassion
- Individual, Societal Approaches to Mental Health
- Retired Extrovert: Learning to be Sensible About My Social Battery
- Learn How to Make Your Own Coping Box!
- How To Care For Yourself After a Burnout

EXPLORE YOUTH-REPORTED STORIES that highlight young people connecting on issues that matter.

- Young People Lead the Change in Tackling Mental Health Issues
- You’re Not Alone
- The New Normal
- Behind Our Masks
- Not So Golden: Struggles Facing California’s Young Adults

LEARN MORE ABOUT LONG-TERM FUTURES WORK:

- Explore California 100 toolkits, developed in collaboration with School of International Futures.
- Join communities like SOIF’s Next Gen Foresight Practitioners (NGFP) network and the Institute for the Future’s Urgent Optimists community.
CONNECT WITH LIKE-MINDED COALITIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

HOUSING
- Housing is a Human Right
- Shift the Bay

FOOD SYSTEMS
- Black Earth Farms
- Roots of Change
- Nourish CA Collective

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
- Young Invincibles
- CALPIRG Students
- California Native Vote Project
- Civics Unplugged
- Catalyst California
- Black Futures Lab

EDUCATION & ARTS
- Dream Defenders
- Catalyst Project
- Black Teacher Project
- GenUP: Students for Education Equity
- The Education Trust-West
- Reimagine CA Schools
- Gameheads
- AfroRithms
- From the Future

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING
- Do No Harm Coalition
- MILPA Collective
- Black Emotional & Mental Health Collective
- Loveland Therapy Fund for Black Women & Girls
- The Foundation for Black Women’s Wellness Blackfullness

ENVIRONMENT
- Sierra Club
- Sunrise Movement
- California Environmental Justice Alliance
- Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice
The California 100 initiative envisions a future that is innovative, sustainable, and equitable for all. Our mission is to strengthen California’s ability to collectively solve problems and shape our long-term future over the next 100 years. Youth engagement and intergenerational collaboration are a key component of the initiative.

In March 2023, California 100 gathered more than 500 student leaders, youth activists and partners on the West Lawn of the Capitol in Sacramento for the Youth Futures Summit — the first long-term futures convening of its kind in the entire country. Our Dreams, Our California is a futures manifesto that outlines the collected visions, solutions and strategies of our growing youth futures movement.

YR Media is an award-winning nonprofit media, technology and music training center and platform for emerging BIPOC content creators who are using their voices to change the world. Learn more about our work at: yrmedia.org and check out our youth-created content on our platform, yr.media.

Teach YR is the public-facing learning division of YR Media, bringing curriculum, events, and rigorous research to young creatives, educators, and other stakeholders beyond our headquarters in Oakland and new Midwest hub in Chicago.

Thanks to our many partners, young leaders, and the YR Media and California 100 teams for their contributions, including: California 100 Futures Fellows, YR Media National Youth Advisory Board, AfroRithms From the Future, CALPIRG Students, UCSA, GENup, Young Invincibles, MILPA, Native Vote Project, Gameheads, Institute for the Future, School of International Futures

California 100 Team: Julia Malta-Weingard, Lindsay Maple, Nina Parker, Karthick Ramakrishnan
YR Media Team: Nana Boateng, Lauren Rascoe, Monica Clark PhD, Lissa Soep, Rochelle Reeder, Eli Arbreton, Marjerrie Masicat, Pedro Vega Jr.