



TRANS FEMINIST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY – COHORT TWO (2025)

DEADLINE TO APPLY: 24 July 2025

ORGANIZED BY: Trans Youth Initiative – Uganda (TYI-Uganda)

FORMAT: 6 Months Virtual Sessions + 2-Day In-Person Convening



RESPONSIBILITY



#TFLACohortTwo #TransPowerNow #TYIUganda

BACKGROUND

Uganda's political, social, and cultural environment has become increasingly hostile toward trans and gender-diverse individuals. The passage and ongoing enforcement of the Anti-Homosexuality Act 2023 have not only formalized state-approved transphobia but also encouraged widespread violence, surveillance, and stigma. Trans and gender-diverse youth in Uganda, especially trans young women, transgender sex workers, and those from rural and peri-urban areas, face a complex mix of legal repression, socio-economic exclusion, and institutional neglect.

Healthcare systems routinely deny gender-affirming services. Schools and workplaces are unsafe and completely inaccessible. Community leaders, religious institutions, and state actors often serve as perpetrators of harm instead of protectors. The criminalization of gender identity has been weaponized to justify arrests, police harassment, evictions, family rejection, public humiliation, and arbitrary denial of services.

In this context, being visibly trans is an act of courage; organizing is an act of defiance. Layered onto these challenges are deepening economic crises, widening gaps in access to public services, and an emboldened anti-gender movement that seeks to roll back even the most basic recognition of LGBTQ+ rights. Trans and gender diverse youth activists already operating in unsafe environments must now contend with not only systemic exclusion but also increased digital surveillance, shrinking civic space, and the risk of being erased from public discourse altogether.

Yet despite this onslaught, trans and gender-diverse youth are leading. Across Uganda, emerging trans youth and gender-diverse activists are mobilizing mutual aid, building grassroots collectives, facilitating safe spaces, organizing healing circles, documenting human rights violations, and demanding their rightful place in leadership. They are rewriting narratives about what it means to be a leader, a feminist, and a changemaker in an era of backlash.

It is within this urgency and momentum that Trans Youth Initiative–Uganda (TYI-Uganda) introduced the Trans Feminist Leadership Academy (TFLA) in 2022—a radical and affirming space where emerging trans and gender-diverse youth leaders could come together to strengthen their leadership, challenge oppression, and build a shared vision for liberation.

The first cohort of the Academy brought together 20 emerging leaders who now serve as powerful voices in their communities, addressing gender-based violence, engaging in policy advocacy, amplifying the experiences of trans and gender diverse individuals through storytelling, and launching community-led initiatives that prioritize healing and justice.

Building on this success and in response to the urgent realities of our time, TYI-Uganda is proud to launch Cohort Two of the Trans Feminist Leadership Academy, a hybrid model combining six months of virtual learning with a two-day in-person convening.

This cohort will equip participants with transformational feminist leadership, advocacy, and movement-building skills, and also foster resilience, solidarity, and collective action amidst Uganda's shifting socio-political landscape.

This academy is a political intervention and an investment in the next generation of trans and gender diverse feminist resistance in Uganda. Cohort Two will deepen our collective capacity to imagine and realize a Uganda where trans and gender-diverse youth live free, fearless, and fulfilled.

WHAT IS THE TRANS FEMINIST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY (TFLA)?

The Trans Feminist Leadership Academy (TFLA) is a bold, transformative leadership development program by Trans Youth Initiative–Uganda (TYI-Uganda), designed to cultivate and equip a new generation of unapologetic transgender and gender-diverse youth leaders who are ready to organize, resist, and drive systemic change across Uganda.

Launched in 2022 as a radical political education space, the Academy reclaims leadership as a feminist, decolonial, and community-rooted practice, centering those most excluded from traditional power structures, including transgender youth women, transgender youth men, transgender youth sex workers, and gender-diverse youth from rural and peri-urban areas.

COHORT TWO (2025) INTRODUCES A HYBRID MODEL:

- A 6-month virtual learning journey (August 2025 – January 2026) composed of interactive workshops, mentorship sessions, and group discussions.

- Culminating in a 2-day, in-person leadership convening in August 2025 in a safe, affirming, and secure environment.

The Academy fosters political consciousness, collective healing, and concrete action strategies. Participants will learn how to influence policies, shape narratives, organize movements, and protect themselves and their communities amid intensifying repression.



COHORT TWO (2025) WILL FOCUS ON:

- **Feminist Leadership & Power Building:** Understanding leadership as an act of justice and resistance.
- **Narrative Change & Trans Joy Storytelling:** Shifting harmful narratives through strategic storytelling and digital media.
- **Decolonizing SRHR & Healing Justice:** Reclaiming bodily autonomy and care beyond Western frameworks.
- **Movement Organizing under Authoritarianism:** Navigating risk while building powerful, resilient trans formations.
- **Digital Security, Risk Mitigation & Self-Defense:** Protecting activists and communities in online and offline spaces.
- **Advocacy through Legal and Non-Legal Mechanisms:** Leveraging both systems and community power for impact.
- **Navigating Burnout & Collective Care:** Sustaining leadership through practices of rest, joy, and collective wellness.

HOW WE WORK

The TFLA curriculum is grounded in trans feminist, intersectional, and abolitionist frameworks. It draws from lived experiences, political education, and frontline organizing, combining deep reflection with practical skill-building. All sessions are facilitated by trans and gender-diverse feminist leaders, human rights defenders, legal advocates, storytellers, and movement strategists from Uganda and across the continent.

This is a learning space and a launchpad for trans feminist leadership in Uganda. Participants don't just leave with knowledge, they go with community, purpose, and an agenda for collective transformation.



BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Selected participants (25 fellows) of Cohort Two will gain access to a powerful, affirming, and strategically curated leadership experience that goes beyond training; it's about building trans power, resilience, and long-term solidarity.

As a TFLA fellow, you will receive:

- **Full Participation in the Academy:**

Engage in monthly virtual learning modules between August 2025 and January 2026, covering political education, feminist leadership, narrative change, and practical skills for organizing, advocacy, and care.

- **A Fully-Funded, In-Person Convening:**

Participate in a 2-day in-person leadership gathering in Kampala, Uganda (August 2025), offering a safe space to connect, build solidarity, share learning, and engage in collective strategy building.

- **Ongoing Mentorship & Peer Learning:**

Benefit from tailored support, feedback, and guidance from trans feminist mentors, trainers, and movement leaders throughout the program. Fellows will also engage in small group check-ins to deepen peer-to-peer learning.

- **Community-Led Action Planning:**

Collaborate with your cohort to develop community-specific action plans aimed at addressing issues like gender-based violence, transphobia, digital safety, healthcare discrimination, and legal exclusion.

- **Opportunities for Visibility and Influence:**

Fellows will have the chance to:

- Co-author publications and toolkits alongside TYI-Uganda and national partners
- Contribute to digital campaigns, public events, and strategic convenings
- Represent -the voices of trans and gender diverse youth in national, regional, and global forums, including SRHR spaces, human rights conferences, and policy dialogues.
- A Lifelong Political Network:

Join a growing national ecosystem of trans and gender-diverse feminist leaders, organizers, and change agents who are building power in their communities and across movements.

WHO CAN APPLY?

The Trans Feminist Leadership Academy (TFLA) is designed for emerging transgender and gender-diverse youth leaders who are ready to step into their power, deepen their political consciousness, and mobilize for lasting change.

We invite applications from:

- Transgender youth women, transgender youth sex workers, transgender men, and gender-diverse youth between the ages of 18–35
- Individuals living and organizing in Uganda, with priority given to those from rural, peri-urban, and under-resourced communities
- Young people who are passionate about social justice, gender equity, advocacy, storytelling, healing justice, or community organizing
- Activists with or without formal leadership training, but with a clear commitment to learning, growing, and transforming their communities
- Individuals who are fluent in English or Luganda (interpretation and accessibility support will be provided as needed)

We strongly encourage applications from:

- Trans youth and gender diverse youth living with HIV
- Trans and gender diverse sex workers and survivors of gender-based violence
- Trans and gender diverse persons with disabilities
- Trans and gender diverse youth from refugee, indigenous, and other marginalized backgrounds
- Anyone who has been directly impacted by transphobia, criminalization, or systemic exclusion

No academic qualifications are required. What matters most is your vision, courage, and commitment to building a more just and affirming Uganda for all trans and gender-diverse people.



FELLOWSHIP TIMELINE

ACTIVITY TIMELINE

Call for Applications	10 July – 24 July 2025
Review & Selection of Fellows	25 – 31 July 2025
Notification of Selected Participants	1 – 4 August 2025
Online Induction & Orientation	8 – 10 August 2025
Virtual Learning Modules	August 2025 – January 2026
In-Person Leadership Convening	August 2025 (exact dates TBC)

Note: All selected fellows are expected to commit to the whole duration of the program.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Ready to step into your power and lead from the frontlines of change? Here's how to apply for Cohort Two of the Trans Feminist Leadership Academy (TFLA):

STEP 1: COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM

Fill out the short online application here:

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https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfCnVf5twx3_4WJL7yol90Pez5cAnV9WvltjZkKp1n9GtZvw/viewform?usp=header

Your Application Must Include:

A CV or short bio (maximum 1 page) highlighting your background, community work, or advocacy experience.

ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT:

If you have limited or no access to the internet, or experience difficulties with submitting an online form:

Reach out to us via email for alternative submission formats.

We are committed to ensuring no one is left behind due to access barriers.

Deadline to Apply: **24 July 2025 at 11:59 PM EAT**

For more information or assistance, please contact:

Email: transyouthinitiative@gmail.com

Join us. Let your story lead the way. Your leadership starts here.