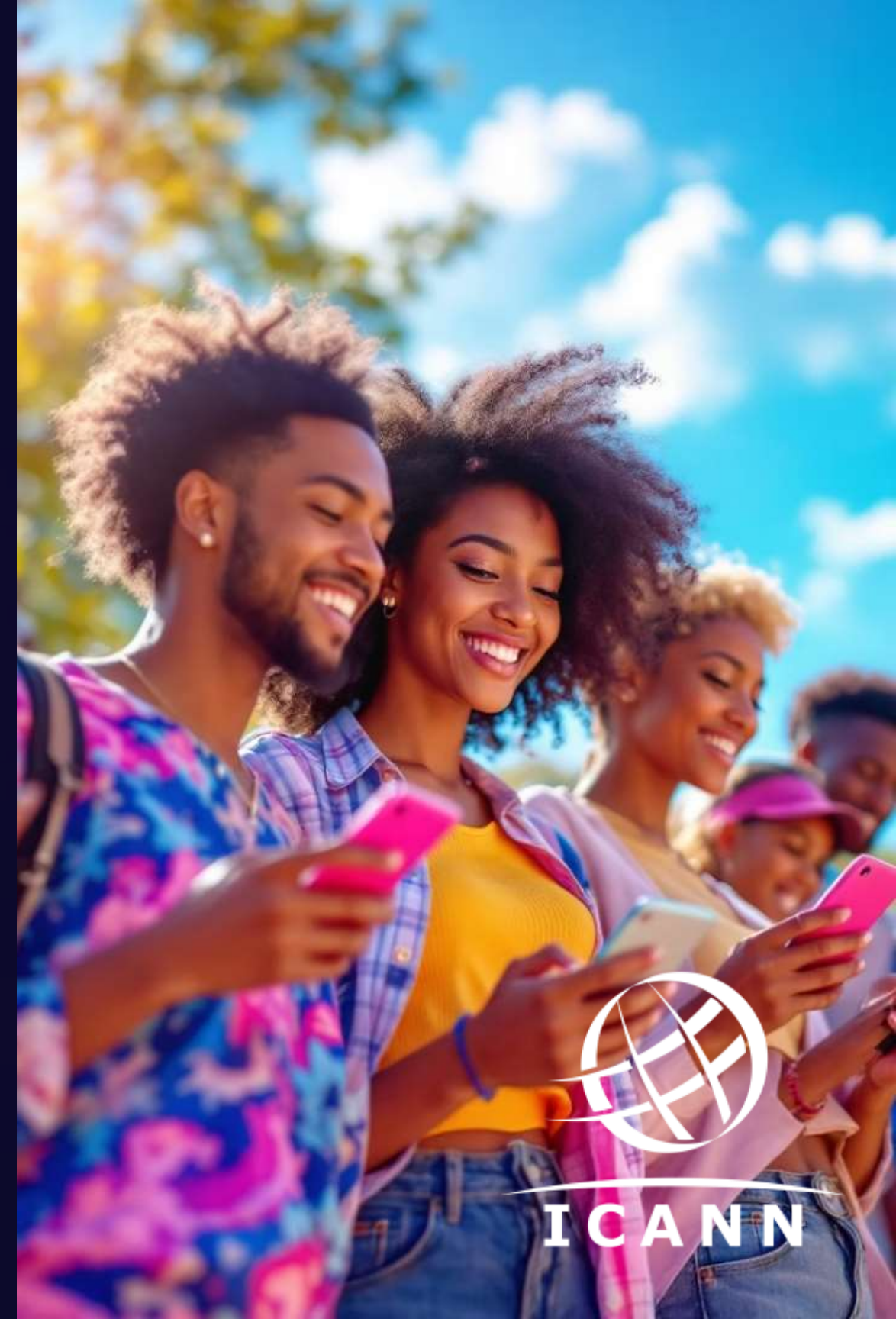


# Bridging the Digital Divide: Empowering Youth Through Inclusive Internet Governance



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# The Digital Divide: A Persistent Challenge

The digital divide is not just about connectivity; it encompasses disparities in:

- **Access** (infrastructure, affordability, devices)
- **Skills** (digital literacy, critical thinking, cybersecurity awareness)
- **Opportunities** (education, jobs, civic participation)
- **Representation** (youth voices in policy-making)



# Why Youth Inclusion Matters in Internet Governance

## Youth as Digital Natives

More smartphones owned by the youth, shaping online behaviors and needs

## Future Opportunities

Youth are expected to take on global roles that require Internet literacy

## Early Adopters & Trendsetters

Gen Z discover new apps/tech before other ages

## Exclusion = Policy Blind Spots

Young people are largely excluded from Internet governance

# Challenges to Youth Participation

- Lack of Representation in Decision-Making
- Financial and Accessibility Barriers
- Age and Credibility Bias
- Lack of Technical Knowledge & Capacity Building

# Case Studies: Successful Youth Initiatives

1

Internet Society Special Interest Group (YouthSIG)

<https://www.internetsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/06-Youth-SIG-Presentation-R.pdf>

2

Youth IGF

<https://www.internetsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/06-Youth-SIG-Presentation-R.pdf>

3

YOUNGO

<https://youngoclimate.org/>

4

Youth Sounding Board

[https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/youth/youth-sounding-board\\_en](https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/youth/youth-sounding-board_en)

5

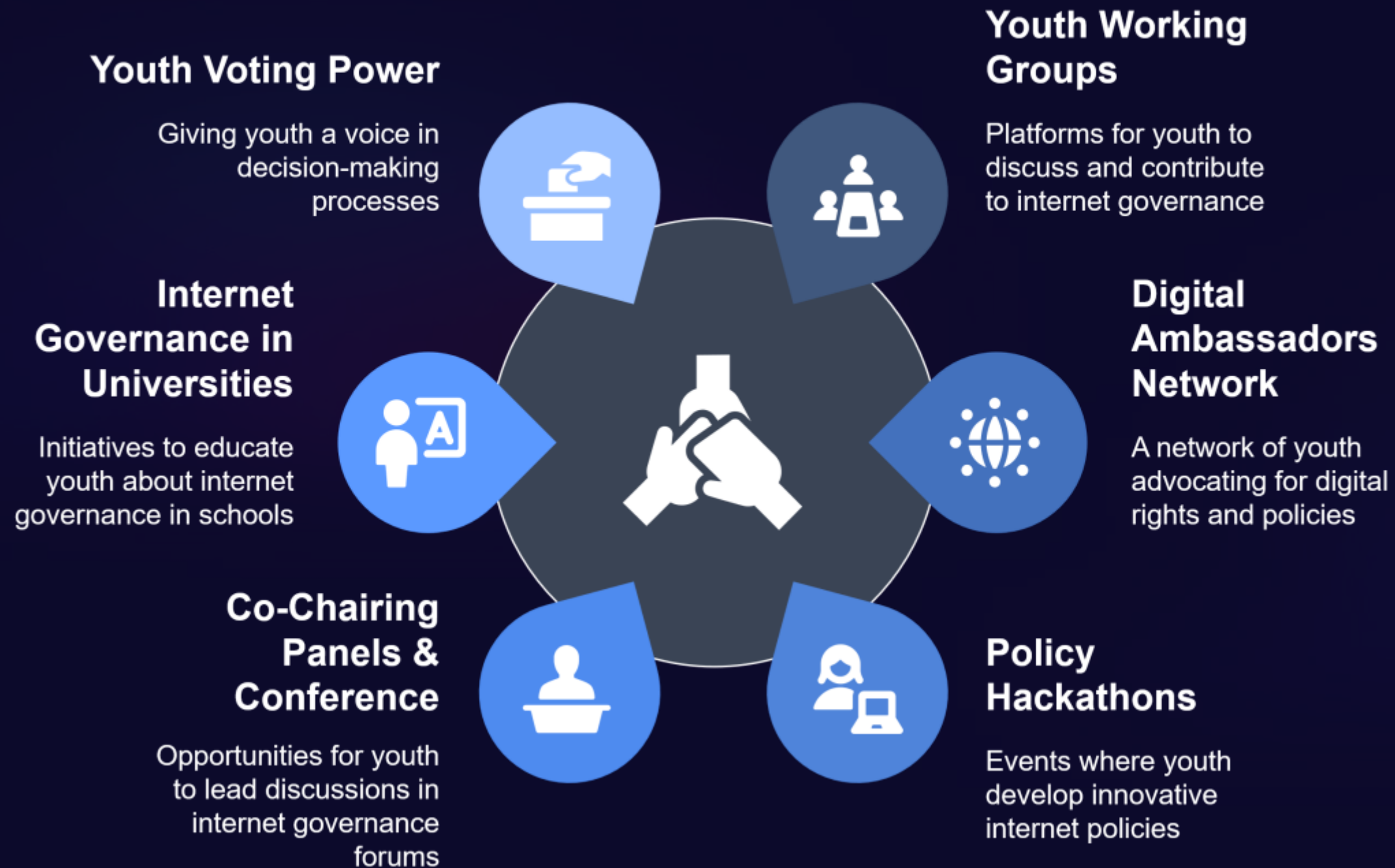
Youth Advisory Group

<https://www.itu.int/en/action/youth/Pages/itu-secretary-generals-youth-advisory-board.aspx>



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# Empowering Youth Through Inclusive Internet Governance



# ICANN's Role in Empowering Youth

- Create Youth Working Groups for policy input
- Build a Youth Digital Ambassadors Network
- Host Annual Youth Policy Hackathons
- Enable Youth Co-Chairs in panels and conferences
- Promote Internet Governance Education in schools
- Support Youth Voting Rights in governance





# Expected Impact

1. Empowering Future Digital Citizens

2. Building Youth Networks & Amplifying Voices

3. Catalyzing Innovation Through Youth Leadership

4. Ensuring Youth Representation in Governance

5. Elevating Youth Leadership in Key Forums

6. Institutionalizing Youth Influence in Policy



“Internet governance thrives with input from its primary users.”

Thank you!



 **Let's connect**