

FAQs for Focus Group Participants

Guidelines for the Focus Group:

- **For Zoom Focus Groups:** Keep your camera and mic on to make it easy to jump into the conversation. Make sure you are in a quiet place for call.
- Only one person talks at a time.
- It is important to protect everyone's privacy, so please don't discuss what is said during the focus group.
- There are no right or wrong answers to questions – just ideas, experiences, and opinions, which are all valuable.
- It is important for us to hear everyone's ideas and opinions. You can help by making sure you speak up and making sure you give time for others to speak.
- If you do not feel comfortable answering a question for any reason, there are no consequences for deciding not to participate in all or part of the focus group.

What is the purpose of this focus group?

The Yale Alumni Association is seeking alumni perspectives on a variety of topics that will inform the Executive Director's strategic plan for the organization. We are asking broad questions that we hope will help us understand our alumni community's interests and circumstances that may influence how they engage with Yale throughout their lives. Participants do not need any particular expertise to participate – just a willingness to share their thoughts.

Who is running this focus group?

The focus group will be facilitated by alumni volunteers or YAA staff who will introduce themselves right at the beginning of the focus group. This research project is run by the Executive Director and a small group of YAA staff. We have not engaged any outside partners in this project and your responses will not be shared with anyone outside of Yale.

Will I be paid for my time?

No, participation is on a volunteer-basis only. We are so appreciative of your help with this.

How are you collecting, storing, and using this data?

We will record each focus group and create an anonymized transcript of the session. Recordings will be destroyed once the transcript is complete. YAA staff will then analyze the text and accompanying notes and compile a report with insights and recommendations to the executive director of the Yale Alumni Association.

Is what I say confidential?

This focus group is anonymous and confidential. “Anonymous” means that you will not be identified as an individual in our report of this project. “Confidential” means that what is said in the session should not be repeated outside of the session.

Why focus groups rather than surveys?

While we did run a short questionnaire in January 2025 to determine topics of interest to the alumni community, we determined that focus groups would be the best fit for the kind of data we want to collect. Focus groups allow alumni to discuss topics in their own words and even to answer questions we hadn't thought to ask. We are eager to hear your thoughts about how you want to engage with the Yale Alumni Association in ways that would be most meaningful, useful, and enjoyable.