



BEST PRACTICES: Writing Your Email

The following best practices will help you as you create emails for YALI Network members – these tips are based on research and analytics from YALI Network emails. By sticking to these email best practices, you will drive the action you desire by effectively reaching and engaging with target audiences.

Identify a Clear Message: Determine the goal of your email first. What message do you want to get across? What action do you want email recipients to take? RSVPing to attend an event, applying for a program or completing a call-to-action in a campaign are most common.

Create an Engaging Subject Line: A subject line should be 30 to 50 characters; create a sense of urgency; and give the reader a good indication of what to expect in the email. YALI Network members respond positively to aspirational subject lines.

Craft Compelling Content: Email content should be interesting, informative, and engaging. Emails do not have to be sent in English - pick the best language for that audience and topic, especially for more complex calls-to-action. For events that will be hosted in a language other than English, translating the invite, RSVP form, and all follow-up information is best.

Keep it Short and Simple: Emails should be no longer than 300-400 words (and ideally shorter!). Break content into multiple paragraphs, with roughly 2-3 sentences in each. This layout makes the email appear less daunting for readers.

Include One Call-to-Action: Make sure your email encourages readers to take only one clear action. The call-to-action should include a link users can follow to register, read, share, etc.

Distribute Strategically: Target recipients based on their attributes, such as their interests, behaviors, demographics, etc., to ensure that content is directly related to the audience. We will guide you through all of the different ways you can target YALI Network members when you fill out the email request form.

Send Emails Early: Many YALI Network members check their email infrequently. Emails that include time-sensitive materials or deadlines should be sent at least a week before an RSVP or other date, with follow-up sent a few days before an event or by SMS. Longer-term campaigns should be sent with a month lead time, when possible.

Follow up and Remind: If you are worried about losing traction with members by giving them too much time to respond to your email, consider sending follow-up and reminder emails. We recommend sending follow-up emails targeted to specific user groups: one email to those who have responded to or engaged with your first email and one to those who have not engaged. If you choose to send follow-up emails, you will need to submit a new email request for each targeted email.

Make it Mobile-Friendly: More than half of YALI Network members read their email on a mobile device. Make your email mobile-friendly by being concise – use short subject lines, scannable content, and clear calls-to-action.