

PERSONAL IDENTITY & EMPLOYABILITY CONFERENCE FOR YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS 2026

CONCEPT NOTE

Theme: *From Self-Awareness to Employability: Building Young People Who Know Who They Are and Where They Are Going*

Date: 30th September 2026

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Venue: Area 10, Garki, Abuja

Organised by: The Nature–Nurture Initiative

In Collaboration with: Mind The Gap Foundation, FCT Youth Secretariat and the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC)

1. Background and Rationale

Nigeria's young population represents one of the country's greatest assets. However, the transition from education to productive adulthood remains challenging for many young people. Beyond access to education and technical skills, young people require adequate opportunities for self-discovery, career guidance, personal development and employability preparation to enable them make informed choices about their education, careers and future.

The Personal Identity & Employability Initiative was developed by The Nature–Nurture Initiative in response to this need. It is a youth development and career guidance programme designed to strengthen self-awareness, personal agency, career readiness and future preparedness among adolescents and young people. The programme recognises that sustainable employability begins before the point of seeking employment: young people who understand their strengths, interests, values and abilities are better positioned to make intentional educational and career choices and develop the competencies required to participate productively in society.

The Personal Identity & Employability Conference for Youth and Adolescents 2026 will serve as the inaugural event of the Initiative. As indicated in our communication to the Ministry, the conference will bring together policymakers, youth development practitioners, educators, psychologists, employers, career development professionals, NYSC members and students to examine the connection between identity formation, career guidance and young people's preparedness for the world of work.

2. Conference Objectives

The conference seeks to:

1. Create awareness among young people on the importance of self-awareness, personal identity and agency in making informed educational, career and life decisions.
2. Strengthen conversations around career guidance, employability, emotional intelligence, leadership and future readiness for Nigerian youth.
3. Facilitate meaningful interaction between young people and professionals across youth development, education, psychology, human resources, career development and related sectors.
4. Introduce the Personal Identity & Employability Initiative and its Extracurricular & Career Counsellors Programme as a sustainable model for providing structured personal development and career guidance within secondary schools.
5. Build partnerships among government institutions, NYSC, schools, civil society and the private sector towards strengthening career guidance and youth employability interventions.

3. Programme Approach and Conference Activities

The conference will adopt an interactive and youth-centred format rather than a conventional lecture-based event. Activities will include a keynote conversation, expert roundtable/panel discussions, interactive personal identity and career exercises, youth-focused conversations, practical employability sessions, networking and the formal introduction of the Personal Identity & Employability Initiative.

A major component of the Initiative is the proposed Extracurricular & Career Counsellors Programme, through which interested NYSC members, particularly those serving within schools, will be recruited and trained to support structured extracurricular and career development activities. The counsellors will receive training in areas including self-awareness, emotional intelligence, leadership, career exploration, employability and future readiness before supporting participating secondary schools.

This approach seeks to utilise the existing NYSC structure to develop a pipeline of young people equipped to contribute to youth development while simultaneously expanding access to structured career guidance and personal development support for secondary-school students.

4. Target Participants

The conference will primarily engage secondary-school students, NYSC members and young people, alongside representatives of relevant government institutions, educational institutions, youth-focused organisations, employers, human resource professionals, psychologists, career development practitioners and other stakeholders working within the youth development ecosystem.

5. Expected Outcomes

At the conclusion of the conference, the Initiative expects to achieve increased awareness among participants of the relationship between personal identity, career choices and employability; improved exposure of adolescents and young people to career and personal-development guidance; registration of interested NYSC

members for subsequent training as Extracurricular & Career Counsellors; strengthened collaboration between participating institutions; and the establishment of a foundation for the rollout of the Personal Identity & Employability Initiative within participating secondary schools.

6. Strategic Relevance and Proposed Ministry Engagement

The Initiative complements the mandate of the Federal Ministry of Youth Development in promoting youth development, empowerment, employability and meaningful participation in national development. It also provides an opportunity to strengthen preventive and developmental interventions that prepare young Nigerians for the transition from education into productive adulthood.

The Nature–Nurture Initiative therefore respectfully seeks the Ministry's institutional support and strategic participation in the conference and the broader programme. Specifically, we would be honoured to have the Ministry represented at the conference, deliver a goodwill message highlighting the Federal Government's priorities for youth development and human capital advancement, and explore opportunities for longer-term collaboration as the Initiative is implemented and scaled. This builds directly on the request presented to the Ministry for participation and strategic support beyond the inaugural conference.

The ultimate vision is to contribute to a generation of young Nigerians who are self-aware, purposeful, emotionally intelligent and adequately prepared to make informed choices about education, careers and productive participation in the economy.

The Nature–Nurture Initiative

Developing Identity. Strengthening Agency. Preparing Young People for the Future.