



# Environmental Traveling Companions (ETC) Youth LEAD Field Instructor

**Job title:** Youth LEAD Field Instructor  
**Reports to:** Youth LEAD Program Manager  
**Classification:** Seasonal

## Organization & Program Description:

Environmental Traveling Companions (ETC) is a volunteer-based nonprofit providing the joy and challenge of outdoor adventures to people with all abilities and from all backgrounds since 1972. We inspire self-confidence, connection to nature, and community-based environmental stewardship through our accessible Sea Kayak Program, Rafting Program, and Youth LEAD Program.

The Youth LEAD Program (YLP) is one of ETC’s three main programs. We provide life-changing outdoor experiences for youth from historically marginalized cultural and economic backgrounds, focusing on technical outdoor skills, environmental education, socio-emotional growth, and leadership development. Our 14-to-21-day courses incorporate sea kayaking, rafting, and backpacking. Students learn about themselves, their community of peers, natural history, and environmental science through lessons, storytelling, community-building, and adventure in the wilderness.

## 2025 Course Dates & Details:

- **All Field Instructors are required to attend paid 5-day YLP Instructor Training in the San Francisco Bay Area (dates and details below).**
- *Before each course, Field Instructors are required to attend 3-4 preparation days in San Francisco, working alongside co-instructors and ETC staff to organize gear, meals, and lessons.*
- *After the course, Field Instructors are required to attend one post-course debrief day in San Francisco.*

Course	Dates	Activities & Locations
<b>Field Instructor Training (required for all)</b>	June 2 - June 6	June 2 & 3: San Francisco, Subject to change to Oakland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9am - 5pm on June 2nd &amp; June 3rd</li> </ul> June 4-6: Camping at ETC River Camp <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All meals and transportation provided for this portion of Training</li> </ul>
14-Day Access to Adventure Course	Prep: June 10, 11, 13 Course: June 14 – June 27 Post: June 29th	<b>Sea Kayaking</b> to Angel Island and <b>Whitewater Rafting</b> on S. Fork of the American River at ETC River Camp <i>All Prep and Post days will be held at Fort Mason Center in San Francisco</i>
21-Day Sea to Source Course	Prep: June 16, 17, 18, 20 Course: June 21 – July 11 Post: July 13th	<b>Sea Kayaking</b> on Tomales Bay, <b>Backpacking</b> in the Sierra Nevadas and <b>Whitewater Rafting</b> on S. Fork of the American River at ETC River Camp <i>All Prep and Post days will be held at Fort Mason Center in San Francisco</i>
14-Day Sierra Exploration Course	Prep: July 16, 17, 19 Course: July 20 - August 2 Post: August 4th	<b>Whitewater Rafting</b> on S. Fork of the American River at ETC River Camp and <b>Backpacking</b> in the Sierra Nevada <i>All Prep and Post days will be held at Fort Mason Center in San Francisco</i>
14-Day Expedition Course	Prep: July 24, 25, 27 Course: July 28 – August 10 Post: August 12	<b>Sea Kayaking</b> on Tomales Bay and <b>Backpacking</b> in the Sierra Nevadas <i>All Prep and Post days will be held at Fort Mason Center in San Francisco</i>

## Positions:

Each YLP Course has a team of one Lead Instructor, one Instructor, and one YLP Fellow Field Intern. This core Instructor Team is supported by 3-6 ETC Volunteers during the sea kayak and rafting portions of each Course (depending on the activities of the Course).

- The **Lead Instructor** position is for individuals with exceptional technical and interpersonal skills, advanced medical wilderness certification, and previous experience with ETC. Most Lead Instructors have worked a *minimum* of one Youth LEAD course or have extensive experience with another ETC program.
- The **Instructor** position is for individuals with experience and competence in the outdoor education and/or wilderness guiding fields, as well as a wilderness medical certification.
- The YLP Fellow Field Interns are youth who have participated in a YLP summer course and the YLP Fellowship. They are growing towards becoming amazing future Instructors!

## Compensation:

We are committed to equitable, transparent compensation and hiring practices. Compensation offers consider a candidate's certifications, wilderness guiding and/or outdoor education experience, experience working with youth from historically marginalized communities, and previous contact with Youth LEAD programs as an instructor, course participant, or Fellow.

- Range for Instructors: \$140 - \$155/day **for all training, prep, course, and post days**
- Range for Lead Instructors: \$160 - \$175/day **for all training, prep, course, and post days**
- **Early signing bonus:** \$100 per course if contract signed **before February 28th, 2025**
- **Alumni bonus:** Instructors and Lead Instructors who are graduates of a Youth LEAD Course will receive an additional \$200
- **Returner bonus:** previous YLP Instructors or Lead Instructors will receive an additional \$100 (cannot be combined with Alumni bonus)

## Benefits:

- Lunch stipend (\$10/day) for all Prep and Post days, and June 2 & 3 of Training (all meals provided June 4-6 of Training)
- *If traveling from outside the Bay Area:*
  - Stipends for travel and/or accommodation – [application here](#)
  - Folks within the Bay Area who have travel or lodging needs are welcome to fill out an application, though funds are prioritized for folks traveling from outside the Bay Area
  - *Funds are limited and we will do our best to meet all applicants' needs!*
- Wilderness Medical Certification scholarships – [application here](#)
- YLP Instructors are invited and encouraged to join **ETC's Inclusion Training on May 16-18, 2025.**
  - All meals and camping provided for a weekend of community and professional development at gorgeous ETC River Camp in Lotus CA!
- Spaces available for returning YLP Instructors at ETC Sea Kayak or River Guide School with scholarships available!
  - Sea Kayak guide school
    - April & May 2025
      - 4/4-6, 4/26-27 & 5/17-18
    - Evening sessions (orientation & environmental education) and weekend sessions (on-water training in Sausalito & Tomales Bay)
    - *Opportunity to become a paid Sea Kayak Trip Leader, timeline dependent on experience*
  - River guide school
    - April 19-26, 2025
    - Week-long hands-on training at ETC River Camp in Lotus, CA with camping and food provided
- Instructors must participate in an interview with the Sea Kayak or River Program Manager
- If interested, please email the Program Manager of the program you're interested in:
  - Sea Kayak: [kayak@etctrips.org](mailto:kayak@etctrips.org)
  - River: [riverprogram@etctrips.org](mailto:riverprogram@etctrips.org)

## Responsibilities:

- Attend a *mandatory* paid field staff training from **June 2nd - June 6th** in the SF Bay Area, including an overnight component from June 4th - 6th.
- Work collaboratively and communicate compassionately with the core Instructor Team and 3-6 ETC Volunteer Sea Kayak/River Guides to safely instruct 10-12 high school students on the Course.
- Engage students in meaningful, honest, safe community as a starting point for genuine learning in the outdoors. Hold space for their individual strengths and areas for growth.
- Learn ETC environmental science and leadership lessons during field staff training and deliver engaging lessons and activities in the field.
- Prepare course components including food packing, gear packing, lesson organization, and daily flow (with support from ETC office staff).
- Demonstrate and model excellence in personal organization while living and traveling in campgrounds and backcountry settings for 14-21 days.
- Responsibly operate passenger van while transporting students
- Provide positive and encouraging support and guidance throughout all course activities.
- Instruct technical and interpersonal skills to promote participants safety, leadership growth, and personal development.
- Safely manage and supervise all activities according to ETC operating policies, protocols, and procedures.
- Responsibly handle and care for all gear and equipment.
- Supervise and mentor high school aged YLP Fellow Field Intern who is a crucial member of the instructor team and part of ETC's Youth LEAD Fellowship Program.
- Serve as a positive, authentic role model for participants, Assistant Instructors, and co-workers.
- Participate actively in post-course evaluations.

## Qualifications:

- Age requirement: **20+**
- **Current Wilderness First Aid (WFA) Certification or higher** before course begins; **Wilderness First Responder** certification highly preferred
- Hiring is dependent on criminal background check and DMV driver check
  - **Must have clean driving record**
  - **Must have 2+ years licensed driving experience**
  - Ability to safely drive youth in a van for up to 6 hours with frequent stops
- Previous experience as a leader in a backcountry setting during extended expeditions
- Ability to be present, responsive, and focused with student participants for 14-21 consecutive days
- Comfort navigating both on and off trail in alpine environments
- Previous experience leading equity, diversity, and inclusion activities and/or facilitating programs with racially and socioeconomically diverse groups. **Sensitivity to the needs of folks from historically marginalized groups, especially in the outdoors (a historically white-dominated context), is crucial to this role**
- If identified with a socially dominant group (white, upper class, heterosexual, cis gender, etc): is committed to examining personal power and privilege and self-education about power dynamics
- Ability to communicate positively, value feedback, and excel in a strong team-oriented environment
- Experience with leading outdoor activities and lessons while fostering environmental curiosity, excitement, and stewardship
- Exemplifies patience and adaptability in dynamic outdoor situations, especially when challenges arise
- Open to different leadership styles and collaboration; celebrates individual uniqueness with goal of creating inclusive, safe spaces

### **Additional Preferred Experience:**

- Experience as a sea kayak, backpack, and/or raft guide preferred
- Bilingual (English/Spanish)
- Class B Commercial Driver's License

### **Transportation and Lodging:**

**While on a Course, all meals and camping accommodations are provided.** Instructors must provide their own lodging and transportation to/from Instructor Training in San Francisco on June 2 & 3 for Instructor Training, as well as the 3-4 preparation days before course and one post debrief day at the ETC office in Fort Mason Center (San Francisco).

*If you need support with this, please submit a [Travel and Lodging Stipend application](#) (linked above).*

***\*\* We strongly encourage people of color and individuals identifying as LGBTQIA+ to apply for this position. \*\****

***How to Apply:*** Thank you for your interest! Please send a resume and cover letter detailing your qualifications, related experience, and which course(s) you're interested in to the YLP Program Manager, Yoseline Castillo, at [ylp@etctrips.org](mailto:ylp@etctrips.org). Stipend and/or scholarship applications must be sent to YLP Program Manager for review. Please email or call 415-474-7662 ext.16 with any questions.