

# AYC Specialty Certification Requirements

Continuing-education provider standards across all 30 AYC specialties, organized by type. Release group in parentheses

Categories with subgroupings: Yoga Rx, Yoga for Special Populations, Asana Technique, Teaching Methodology, Other

## BASELINE SPECIALTY STANDARD

### PRIMARY SPECIALTIES

- [Anatomy, Physiology & Biomechanics](#) (1)
- [Ayurveda & Lifestyle](#) (1)
- [Traditional Chinese Medicine](#) (1)
- [Trauma-Informed Yoga](#) (1)
- [Sanskrit](#) (1)
- [Yoga History](#) (1)
- [Yoga Rx](#) (2)

### LINEAGE-SPECIFIC SPECIALTIES

- [Asana Technique](#) (1)
- [Meditation](#) (1)
- [Pranayama / Breathwork](#) (1)
- [Bhakti Yoga](#) (1)
- [Yin Yoga](#) (1)
- [Restorative Yoga](#) (1)
- [Yoga Nidra](#) (1)
- [Yoga Philosophy & Theory](#) (1)

## POPULATION-FOCUSED SPECIALTIES

- [Kids & Teens Yoga](#) (2)
- [Pre/Post-Natal Yoga](#) (2)
- [Accessible Yoga](#) (2)
- [Yoga for Special Populations](#) (2)
- [Chair Yoga](#) (3)

## MOVEMENT & BODY SPECIALTIES

- [Hands-on Assists](#) (2)
- [Nada Yoga & Sound Healing](#) (2)
- [Fitness](#) (2)
- [SUP Yoga](#) (3)
- [Aerial Yoga](#) (3)
- [Embodied Movement](#) (3)

## CLINICAL-ADJACENT SPECIALTIES

- [Somatic Inquiry](#) (2)
- [Bodywork, Healing, & Massage](#) (2)

## TEACHING SPECIALTIES

- [Teaching Methodology](#) (3)

*Reminder: Education is sometimes less effective than lived experience—don't elevate the educational path over the lived-experience path.*

## BASELINE SPECIALTY STANDARD

Applies to every specialty unless overridden by the specialty-specific requirements that follow.

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
<b>ROLE</b>	Practitioner educator	Teacher trainer	Advanced trainer	Subject matter expert
<b>MUST HAVE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>10+ hours</u> of experience teaching specialty</li> <li>• Ability to <u>guide groups of people to practice the specialty</u> in a safe and competent way according to the school's AYC-accredited standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>4 years</u> or <u>400 hours</u> of experience teaching specialty</li> <li>• Ability to <u>coach groups and individuals to develop and refine a personalized specialty practice</u> in a safe and competent way according to the school's AYC-accredited standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>10 years</u> or <u>5,000 hours</u> of experience teaching specialty</li> <li>• Ability to <u>accommodate a wider range of groups and individuals including particular subgroups to adapt specialty practice</u> in a safe and competent way according to the school's AYC-accredited standards <u>with deeper specialized knowledge</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>20 years</u> of experience teaching specialty</li> <li>• Ability to <u>serve a wide variety of individuals with varying needs to adapt specialty practice</u> according to the school's AYC-accredited standards <u>with deeper specialized knowledge</u>.</li> <li>• Recognized as an expert by the community.</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team

### Recognized accreditation bodies

- [Yoga Alliance](#)
- [IAYT](#) (International Association of Yoga Therapists)
- [Yoga Pros](#) (UK, focused on insurance offerings, formerly Yoga Alliance Professionals)
- [Yoga Alliance International Registry](#) (Europe and India)
- [British Wheel of Yoga](#) (UK)

## PRIMARY SPECIALTIES

*These subjects have established certification and accreditation models already in place (via academia or their own organizations)*

[Anatomy, Physiology & Biomechanics](#) (1)

[Ayurveda & Lifestyle](#) (1)

[Traditional Chinese Medicine](#) (1)

[Trauma-Informed Yoga](#) (1)

[Sanskrit](#) (1)

[Yoga History](#) (1)

[Yoga Rx](#) (2)

# Anatomy, Physiology & Biomechanics (AYC-CE-APB)

PRIMARY SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *The structure and function of the human body as it applies to yoga and movement practice—including skeletal and muscular anatomy, joint mechanics, physiological systems relevant to movement and breath, and biomechanical principles of alignment and load. This specialty does not confer authority to diagnose, treat, or prescribe. Content must remain within an educational and movement-guidance framework.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2 (or advanced degree or equivalent education)	CYT-L3 (or advanced degree or equivalent education)	CYT-L3 (or advanced degree or equivalent education)
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed an AYC-accredited or equivalent anatomy CE program covering at least 5 core APB (Anatomy, Physiology &amp; Biomechanics) competencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed 2+ AYC-accredited or equivalent CE programs in APB</li> <li><u>OR</u> certification from an accredited L2 YTT with a documented heavy focus on APB</li> <li><u>OR</u> advanced degree or license (DC, PT/DPT, MD, NP, OT, PA)</li> <li><u>OR</u> relevant training to degree equivalence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive APB education: completed 3+ trainings emphasizing APB</li> <li><u>OR</u> advanced degree or license (DC, PT/DPT, MD, NP, OT, PA)</li> <li><u>OR</u> relevant training to degree equivalence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same as Level 3</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same as baseline</li> <li>Demonstrates ability to apply APB knowledge in group class instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same as baseline</li> <li>Evidence of teaching APB in teacher training or CE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same as baseline</li> <li>Established expertise through writing articles, books, research, or regular advanced study of the subject AND evidence of curriculum development or advanced workshop leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same as baseline</li> <li>Has actively contributed to the APB discourse in yoga through published work</li> <li>Recognized as an established expert in the field by peers, institutions, or professional organizations</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

# Ayurveda & Lifestyle (AYC-CE-AYU)

PRIMARY SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Ayurvedic philosophy, principles, and lifestyle practices as they apply to yoga and personal wellbeing—including the following five domains: foundational theory of the doshas, dinacharya (daily rhythms), seasonal living, food as medicine, and the relationship between Ayurveda and yoga practice. This specialty does not authorize clinical diagnosis, prescription of herbs or treatments, or the practice of Ayurvedic medicine. Content must remain within an educational and lifestyle-guidance framework.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Ayurvedic Yoga Specialist or Health Counselor	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Ayurvedic Practitioner	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Advanced Ayurvedic Practitioner
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2 (or advanced degree or equivalent education)	CYT-L2 (or advanced degree or equivalent education)	CYT-L2 (or advanced degree or equivalent education)
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a minimum 100-hour AYC-accredited or equivalent foundational Ayurveda program with multiple competencies in each of the five domains.</li> <li>Program must include both philosophical/cultural grounding and practical lifestyle application of Ayurveda.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed 600+ hours of Ayurveda training equivalent to an Ayurvedic Yoga Specialist or Ayurvedic Health Counselor qualification, covering all five domains at depth</li> <li>OR Completed a minimum 5-year mentorship with a qualified Vaidya (Ayurvedic physician), with documented scope, content, and supervision throughout.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a 1500 hour advanced Ayurvedic study including supervised clinical hours akin to the Ayurvedic Practitioner Standard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a 4000 hour Advanced Ayurvedic Practitioner program</li> <li>Has actively contributed to the Ayurvedic yoga discourse through published work</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year yoga teaching experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NA</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Formal certification—accredited institutions

- Passed a certification exam offered by the National Ayurvedic Medical Association Certification Board (NAMACB)
- or: Graduated from a school accredited by the Ayurvedic Accreditation Commission (AAC) with proof of education equivalent to 600+ hours
- Either pathway is eligible for direct CYS L2 consideration, subject to yoga-specific application and teaching experience

### Vaidya mentorship pathway

- Minimum 5-year direct mentorship with a qualified Vaidya (Ayurvedic physician trained in classical tradition)
- Mentorship must be documented with scope of study, duration, and a letter of attestation from the Vaidya
- Must cover content equivalent to all five specialty domains at CYS L2 depth
- Eligible as a full equivalent pathway to 600 hours of formal training for CYS L2 consideration

### Recognized accreditation bodies

- [National Ayurvedic Medical Association Certification Board](#) and [Ayurvedic Accreditation Commission](#)

# Traditional Chinese Medicine (AYC-CE-TCM)

PRIMARY SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *TCM theory and philosophy five key domains:—including the qi/meridian system, the five elements, yin/yang, seasonal living, taoist philosophical concepts and their relationship to yoga practice—within an educational framework. This specialty does not authorize diagnosis, acupuncture, herbal prescription, or the clinical practice of TCM. CYS L2 requires deep formal training or significant lineage study; active licensure is a recognized fast-track pathway but is not a prerequisite.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	CYT-L3
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed an AYC-accredited or equivalent TCM-CE teacher training program, minimum 30hours with competencies covering each of the five key domains, and including Teaching Skills competencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed substantial formal TCM training—minimum 200 hours across accredited programs, covering all five domains at depth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced formal study beyond CYS L2 level—postgraduate TCM training, classical lineage deepening, or recognized specialization</li> </ul>	
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching yoga or TCM-informed content, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Demonstrates understanding of scope of practice and ability to apply TCM concepts within a yoga instruction context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4+ years teaching TCM content in yoga or wellness education contexts after completing qualifying training, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Evidence of teaching in a YTT, CE program, or mentoring yoga instructors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active TCM or acupuncture licensure strongly preferred</li> <li>Evidence of curriculum development or published contributions</li> <li>10+ years teaching TCM content in yoga or wellness education contexts, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Has trained other teachers in TCM content at a program level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has contributed to the TCM-yoga discourse through published articles, books, research, or widely recognized educational content</li> <li>Recognized by peers, lineage holders, or professional TCM organizations as a senior voice</li> <li>20+ years teaching TCM content in yoga or wellness contexts</li> </ul>
<b>ALTERNATE PATHWAYS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant study within a classical movement lineage with documented TCM theoretical content (e.g., qigong, tai chi, daoist yoga)—minimum 2 years with a recognized teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 5-year documented lineage study within a classical TCM-informed tradition under a recognized senior teacher</li> <li>Active TCM or acupuncture license, subject to yoga-specific pedagogical application</li> </ul>		
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

**Classical lineage pathway (CYS L1 only)**

- Applicant has undertaken substantial study within a classical TCM-informed movement tradition—qigong, tai chi, or daoist yoga—without completing a formal TCM academic program
- Minimum 3 years consistent study with a recognized senior teacher within the lineage
- Must demonstrate foundational knowledge across all four domains through portfolio review or competency demonstration
- Eligible for CYS L1 consideration only—CYS L2 requires formal training, lineage study of 5+ years, or active licensure

**Active TCM or acupuncture licensure (CYS L2 fast-track)**

- Applicant holds an active license as a TCM practitioner or acupuncturist, issued after completing an accredited program and passing licensing exams
- Licensure satisfies the CYS L2 educational requirement—no additional formal training hours required
- Applicant must demonstrate yoga-specific pedagogical experience—licensure alone does not qualify without yoga teaching history

**Sub-grouping note**

*TCM is a classical medical and philosophical tradition originating in China with thousands of years of continuous development. Educators at all levels are expected to acknowledge this context, distinguish classical theory from modern popularizations, and approach the tradition with the care appropriate to a complete system of medicine—not as an aesthetic or metaphorical overlay for yoga.*

# Trauma-Informed Yoga (AYC-CE-TRA)

PRIMARY SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Trauma-informed principles as they apply to yoga instruction—including nervous system awareness, choice-based language, environmental safety, and the impact of trauma on the body and mind. This specialty does not authorize the diagnosis or treatment of PTSD or any trauma-related clinical condition. CYS L2 requires clinical training or equivalent documented experience, recognizing that training other teachers in trauma-informed practice demands a grounded clinical foundation.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L2	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a trauma-informed yoga training from a recognized program (minimum 50 hours)</li> <li>Training must cover nervous system theory, trauma-informed teaching principles, scope of practice, and self-care across all three domains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a trauma-informed yoga training of substantial depth (minimum 100 hours) from a recognized program</li> <li>OR Active credential or documented clinical training in a relevant mental health, social work, or trauma-focused field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active credential in a clinical or mental health field (licensed therapist, social worker, psychologist, counselor, psychiatric nurse) strongly preferred</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has contributed to the trauma-informed yoga discourse through published work—articles, books, research, or widely recognized programs</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4+ year teaching yoga in a professional capacity, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Demonstrates understanding of trauma-informed principles in their own teaching practice</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6+ years teaching trauma-informed yoga in professional contexts, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Evidence of teaching other instructors in trauma-informed content—YTT, CE program, or mentorship</li> <li>Or 7+ years documented experience working in trauma-adjacent contexts with verifiable supervision and demonstrated scope-of-practice literacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equivalent: 7+ years documented work in trauma-adjacent contexts with clinical supervision and scope-of-practice literacy</li> <li>Advanced study in trauma theory, somatic approaches, or trauma-informed pedagogy beyond initial training</li> <li>10+ years teaching trauma-informed yoga in professional contexts, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Has trained other teachers in trauma-informed content at a program level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized by peers, institutions, or professional mental health and yoga organizations as a senior voice</li> <li>20+ years teaching trauma-informed yoga and/or clinical trauma work</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Mental health licensure pathway

- Applicant holds an active mental health license (LCSW, LPC, MFT, psychologist, psychiatric NP, or equivalent) and has completed a trauma-informed yoga training of at least 20 hours

- Clinical licensure satisfies the clinical training requirement at CYS L2
- Applicant must demonstrate yoga-specific pedagogical experience—licensure alone does not qualify without documented yoga teaching history

**Documented equivalent experience pathway (CYS L2)**

- Applicant does not hold a clinical license but has 7+ years of documented work in trauma-adjacent professional contexts
- Must provide documentation of scope, supervision received, and the nature of trauma exposure in their work
- Must additionally have completed a trauma-informed yoga training of at least 40 hours from a recognized program

**Sub-grouping note**

*Trauma-informed yoga is a yoga practice framework—not a therapy modality. Educators at all levels are expected to teach this distinction explicitly and model it in their own work. No level of CYS credential in this specialty authorizes clinical trauma treatment, diagnosis, or therapeutic intervention.*

# Sanskrit (AYC-CE-SAN)

PRIMARY SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** Sanskrit as it applies to yoga—including pronunciation, transliteration, script, the names of asanas and pranayamas, mantra, philosophical vocabulary, and foundational grammatical structures that underlie yogic texts. This specialty does not require fluency in conversational Sanskrit but does require demonstrated study of the language in sufficient depth to teach it accurately, grammatically, and with cultural respect for its living tradition.

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has studied IAST transliteration or Devanagari script through a recognized program, course, or documented study with a qualified teacher</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal study of Sanskrit with recognized scholars, a university program, or an accredited Sanskrit certificate program</li> <li>Study must cover both domains at CYS L2 depth—including foundational grammar, mantra, and philosophical vocabulary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Sanskrit study through formal coursework, lineage-based study with a recognized scholar, or equivalent academic program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has contributed to the Sanskrit-yoga discourse through published translations, textbooks, articles, or widely used educational content</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching yoga or Sanskrit content in a professional capacity, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4+ years consistently teaching Sanskrit in yoga teacher training or CE contexts, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Evidence of teaching Sanskrit in a YTT, CE program, or mentoring yoga instructors</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of curriculum development or published contributions to Sanskrit-yoga education</li> <li>10+ years teaching Sanskrit in yoga or academic contexts, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Has trained other teachers in Sanskrit content at a program level</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized by peers, academic institutions, or lineage holders as a senior voice in Sanskrit education for yoga</li> <li>20+ years teaching Sanskrit in yoga or academic contexts</li> <li>Demonstrated mentorship lineage or institutional affiliation at a senior level</li> <li></li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Academic university study

- Applicant has completed university-level Sanskrit coursework (minimum one academic year) through an accredited institution
- Coursework must include script, grammar, and translation—not phonetics or pronunciation alone
- Must additionally demonstrate yoga-specific application of Sanskrit knowledge through teaching history and familiarity with yogic source texts
- Eligible for direct CYS L2 consideration subject to experience requirements

**Traditional lineage study**

- Applicant has studied Sanskrit directly within a traditional yoga or Vedic lineage under a recognized teacher or guru over a sustained period (minimum 3 years)
- Study must have included grammar, mantra, and philosophical vocabulary—not pronunciation and asana names alone
- Must provide documentation of study scope, duration, and a letter of attestation from the lineage teacher

**Sub-grouping note**

*Sanskrit is a sacred and classical language central to the Vedic tradition and the living cultures of South Asia. Educators at all levels are expected to acknowledge this context, teach with accuracy and humility, and approach the language with the respect due a complete and living system of knowledge—not merely as phonetic labeling for yoga postures.*

# Yoga History (AYC-CE-HIS)

PRIMARY SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *The historical development of yoga—including its ancient roots in the Vedic tradition, the evolution of classical, medieval, and modern yoga, the influence of colonialism and globalization on modern postural yoga, and ongoing scholarly debates in the field. This specialty requires a high standard of source literacy and intellectual rigor. Educators must distinguish well-sourced historical claims from popular mythology, communicate scholarly uncertainty honestly, and situate yoga's history within its broader cultural and political context.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive self-directed or structured study of yoga history, South Asian Studies, religious studies, or closely related field</li> <li>Familiarity with key secondary sources—e.g., Singleton's Yoga Body, White's Yoga in Practice, Mallinson and Singleton's Roots of Yoga, De Michelis's A History of Modern Yoga</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holds a graduate degree (MA or PhD) in history, religious studies, South Asian studies, or a closely related field from an accredited institution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced academic or scholarly engagement with yoga history—graduate coursework, independent research, or equivalent sustained study at a scholarly level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has made substantial published contributions to yoga historiography—books, peer-reviewed articles, or widely used academic curricula with documented impact</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching yoga or history content in a professional capacity, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4+ years teaching yoga history in YTT, CE, or academic contexts, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Evidence of teaching yoga history in a formal curriculum—YTT, CE program, or university course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Substantial body of written work demonstrating sustained engagement with yoga historiography</li> <li>10+ years teaching yoga history in YTT, CE, or academic contexts, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized by academic peers, institutions, or professional organizations as an authority in yoga history</li> <li>20+ years teaching yoga history at a professional or academic level</li> </ul>
<b>ALTERNATE PATHWAYS</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has written extensively on yoga history—a substantial body of published or documented work demonstrating mastery across all three domains</li> </ul>		
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Graduate degree pathway

- Applicant holds a graduate degree (MA or PhD) in history, religious studies, South Asian studies, Indology, or a closely related field
- Degree program must have included coursework directly relevant to yoga, Indian philosophy, or South Asian religious history
- Must demonstrate yoga-specific historical knowledge and active yoga teaching experience alongside their academic credential
- Eligible for direct CYS L2 consideration subject to experience requirements and written work requirement

**Extensive written work pathway**

- Applicant does not hold a graduate degree but has produced a substantial, documented body of written work on yoga history demonstrating mastery across all three domains
- Written work must include engagement with primary and secondary academic sources—not only popular or practitioner-facing literature
- Work must be publicly verifiable—published articles, documented lectures, or curriculum materials with citation standards
- Applicant must additionally demonstrate yoga-specific teaching experience in history content

**Sub-grouping note**

*Yoga history is a field in active scholarly development with contested origins, politically charged narratives, and significant gaps in the historical record. Educators at all levels are expected to communicate uncertainty honestly, distinguish popular mythology from documented history, engage with the complexity of yoga's past with intellectual humility, and never present a single narrative as the settled account of a tradition spanning thousands of years and dozens of living lineages.*

# Yoga RX / Special Populations (AYC-CE-YRX)

PRIMARY SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Yoga adapted for populations under active medical management—including individuals with cancer, cardiac conditions, neurological disorders, autoimmune disease, chronic pain syndromes, or other conditions requiring physician oversight. This specialty sits at the boundary of yoga instruction and allied healthcare, and carries the highest clinical bar in the AYC framework. Educators must understand that their role remains that of a yoga instructor working within a medically supervised context, not a clinician; and must be able to articulate and model this distinction clearly in all training they deliver.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed at least 30 hours in a recognized specialty training in yoga for a specific Rx population (e.g., yoga for cancer, cardiac, neurological conditions)</li> <li>Training must cover condition-specific contraindications, adaptive practice, interdisciplinary collaboration, and scope-of-practice principles</li> <li>Completed APB L2 program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed advanced specialty training in yoga for Rx populations — minimum 100 hours beyond CYS L1 training, covering all three domains at CYS L2 depth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced clinical credential or postgraduate training in a relevant specialty field alongside senior yoga teaching experience with Rx populations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has made substantial published contributions to yoga for Rx populations — research, clinical protocols, textbooks, or widely adopted training curricula</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching yoga to the specific Rx population, or 200+ documented teaching hours with that population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years consistently teaching yoga to Rx populations in clinical or supervised healthcare settings, or 500+ documented teaching hours with Rx populations</li> <li>Evidence of teaching yoga in a clinical program (e.g. hospital, rehabilitation setting, oncology center, cardiac rehab)</li> <li>Evidence of training other yoga teachers or healthcare pros in yoga for Rx populations (formal program, CE curriculum, or supervised mentorship)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of curriculum development, published contributions, or recognized leadership in yoga for Rx populations at a program or institutional level</li> <li>10+ years teaching yoga to Rx populations in clinical settings, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Has trained other teachers or healthcare professionals in yoga for Rx populations at a formal program level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized by academic institutions, clinical organizations, or professional yoga bodies as an authority in clinical yoga for Rx populations</li> <li>20+ years teaching yoga to Rx populations at a professional or clinical level</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## LINEAGE-SPECIFIC SPECIALTIES

[Asana Technique](#) (1)

[Meditation](#) (1)

[Pranayama / Breathwork](#) (1)

[Bhakti Yoga](#) (1)

[Yin Yoga](#) (1)

[Restorative Yoga](#) (1)

[Yoga Nidra](#) (1)

[Yoga Philosophy & Theory](#) (1)

# Asana Technique (AYC-CE-ASA)

LINEAGE-SPECIFIC SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Advanced technique within a specific asana style or lineage—including alignment principles, sequencing logic, refinement cues, and the philosophical or somatic context of the style. This specialty is style-specific: a CYS credential in Asana Technique applies to a named style or lineage (e.g., Ashtanga, Iyengar, Jivamukti, Forrest), not to asana instruction generally.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a recognized training in the specific style or lineage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced or deepening study in the specific style—authorized training, advanced certification, or recognized senior study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deep lineage study—authorized by a recognized senior teacher in the tradition, or equivalent sustained advanced study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized senior authority within the tradition—lineage holder, authorized senior teacher, or published contributor</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching in the specific style, or 200+ documented teaching hours in that style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years consistent teaching in the specific style, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Evidence of teaching the style in a teacher training context—YTT, CE program, or mentoring instructors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching in the specific style, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Has trained other teachers in the style at a formal program level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching in the specific style</li> <li>Demonstrated mentorship lineage and/or institutional affiliation within the tradition</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Lineage-based study and apprenticeship

- Applicant has trained extensively within a lineage through direct mentorship or apprenticeship rather than a formal certification program
- Must document scope of study, duration, and provide a letter of attestation from the senior teacher or lineage holder
- Eligible for CYS L1 or L2 consideration depending on depth and years demonstrated

### Sub-grouping note

*Applications must name the specific style or lineage. "Vinyasa yoga" or "Hatha yoga" are not sufficiently specific—applicants must identify a named tradition with a documented lineage, founder, or methodology. AYC reserves the right to determine whether a named style meets the threshold for specialty accreditation.*

# Meditation (AYC-CE-MED)

LINEAGE-SPECIFIC SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Meditation practice within a yoga context—including technique instruction, concentration and awareness training, the philosophical underpinnings of meditative traditions in yoga, and practices for cultivating inner stillness. This specialty does not authorize clinical mindfulness-based therapy as a clinical intervention. Educators must have a sustained personal practice and sufficient formal training to teach meditation safely and effectively.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum 20 hours of formal training or mentorship in meditation from a recognized teacher, program, or tradition</li> <li>• Training must include both technique instruction and philosophical/traditional context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced meditation training equivalent to 50-hour training program, lineage study, or recognized mentorship</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced training—extended retreats, advanced study programs, or recognized authorization within a meditation lineage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has contributed to meditation education through published work, recognized programs, or senior lineage affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustained personal meditation practice—minimum 2 years of consistent daily or near-daily practice</li> <li>• 1+ year teaching yoga with meditation integrated, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4+ years consistently teaching meditation in yoga or contemplative contexts, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>• Evidence of teaching meditation in a YTT or CE program, or mentoring other instructors</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10+ years post-training personal practice</li> <li>• 10+ years teaching meditation or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20+ years personal practice and teaching meditation</li> <li>• Recognized as a senior teacher within their tradition or the broader yoga-meditation community</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### AYC L3 with deep meditation lineage background

- AYC L3 teacher who has trained for 10+ years in a yoga style with a strong emphasis on meditation (e.g., Sivananda, Kundalini, Tibetan-influenced traditions)
- Must document the meditation-specific components of their training and practice history

# Pranayama / Breathwork (AYC-CE-PRA)

LINEAGE-SPECIFIC SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Yogic breathing practices, including technique instruction, the physiological and energetic effects of different practices, contraindications, and the philosophical context of breath in yoga. This specialty requires a solid foundation in yoga (AYC Level 1 minimum) and a genuine personal pranayama practice. Educators must teach with awareness of the contraindications and risks associated with advanced breath retention practices.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum 20 hours of formal training in pranayama from a recognized teacher, program, or tradition</li> <li>• Training must cover technique, physiology/energetics, contraindications, and philosophical context</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Pranayama training equivalent to 50-hour training program, lineage study, or recognized mentorship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced pranayama training—extended study programs, intensive retreats, or recognized lineage authorization</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has contributed to pranayama education through published work or recognized senior lineage affiliation</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustained personal pranayama practice—minimum 2 years consistent practice</li> <li>• 1+ year teaching yoga with pranayama integrated, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4+ years consistently teaching pranayama in yoga contexts, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>• Evidence of teaching pranayama in a YTT or CE program, or mentoring other instructors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10+ years post-training personal pranayama practice</li> <li>• 10+ years teaching pranayama or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20+ years personal practice and teaching pranayama</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### AYC L3 with deep pranayama lineage background

- AYC L3 teacher who has trained for 10+ years in a yoga style with a strong emphasis on pranayama (e.g., Kundalini, Iyengar, classical Hatha traditions)
- Must document the pranayama-specific components of their training and practice history

# Bhakti Yoga (AYC-CE-BHA)

## LINEAGE-SPECIFIC SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *The yoga of devotion—including kirtan (call-and-response chanting), mantra practice, devotional storytelling (katha), and the philosophical and theological tradition of bhakti within Indian spirituality. This specialty carries an elevated experience threshold. Educators must have genuine personal connection to the tradition—through lineage, practice, or sustained study—not merely familiarity with popular kirtan. Bhakti yoga is a living devotional tradition rooted in Indian spirituality. Educators at all levels are expected to teach with cultural acknowledgment, theological accuracy, and respect for the living lineages from which these practices come—not merely as "world music" or "feel-good singing."*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrated connection to a bhakti lineage or tradition through direct study, apprenticeship, or sustained involvement in a bhakti community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deep lineage connection—recognized senior study, authorization from a bhakti lineage teacher, or equivalent documented study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deep, sustained lineage connection recognized by a senior teacher or lineage holder</li> </ul>	
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year leading kirtan or bhakti practices in a professional or community context, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4+ years teaching bhakti practices in yoga or community contexts, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Evidence of teaching bhakti in a YTT or CE program, or mentoring other teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classical Raga singing training (5+ years) or equivalent mastery of devotional musical tradition</li> <li>OR 15+ years leading kirtan and bhakti practices</li> <li>OR 10+ years teaching bhakti or 5,000+ documented hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized as a senior bhakti educator by peers, lineage holders, or the broader yoga-devotional community</li> <li>20+ years leading kirtan and bhakti practices</li> </ul>
<b>ALTERNATE PATHWAYS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background in devotional storytelling, classical Indian music, or kirtan with documented study and practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years leading kirtan with demonstrated depth in mantra, theology, and devotional practice</li> </ul>		
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

### Alternate pathways

#### Classical Raga or Indian devotional music training

- Applicant has completed 5+ years of formal study in classical Raga singing or equivalent Indian devotional music tradition
- Must additionally demonstrate knowledge of bhakti philosophy and experience leading devotional practice in a yoga context

# Yin Yoga (AYC-CE-YIN)

LINEAGE-SPECIFIC SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *A slow, floor-based practice targeting connective tissue through long-held postures—including its physiological principles, its philosophical roots in Taoist and TCM frameworks, and its practical application for a range of bodies and populations. Educators must have a clear lineage or mentorship connection and understand the key differences between Yin yoga and other slow or passive yoga styles.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a recognized Yin yoga teacher training (minimum 20 hours) with a lineage-connected teacher or established program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Yin yoga training equivalent to 50 hours through a recognized lineage program, extended mentorship with a senior teacher, or equivalent deepening study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior-level study—direct study with a Yin yoga founder or first-generation senior teacher, or equivalent advanced lineage deepening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized senior voice in Yin yoga—published work, recognized senior teaching status, or institutional affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching Yin yoga, or 200+ documented teaching hours in Yin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4+ years consistently teaching Yin yoga, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>Evidence of teaching Yin in a YTT or CE program, or mentoring other instructors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching Yin yoga, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching Yin yoga</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Lineage mentorship study

- Applicant has trained directly with a recognized senior Yin yoga teacher over a sustained period (minimum 2 years) outside a formal training program
- Must document scope, duration, and provide a letter of attestation from the senior teacher

## Restorative Yoga (AYC-CE-RES)

LINEAGE-SPECIFIC SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *A supported, passive practice designed to activate the parasympathetic nervous system, promote deep relaxation, and support recovery and healing. This includes skilled prop use, posture selection, sequencing, and an understanding of the physiological and psychological effects of restorative practice. Educators must have sufficient personal practice depth to hold long, quiet spaces effectively.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a recognized Restorative yoga training (minimum 20 hours) from an established program or lineage-connected teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Restorative training equivalent to 50hours through a recognized lineage program, extended mentorship with a senior teacher, or equivalent deepening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior-level study—direct study with Judith Hanson Lasater or equivalent first-generation Restorative senior teacher, or advanced lineage deepening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized senior Restorative educator—published work or senior lineage standing</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching Restorative yoga, or 200+ documented teaching hours in Restorative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4+ years consistently teaching Restorative yoga, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching Restorative yoga, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching Restorative yoga</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

### Alternate pathways

#### Lineage mentorship study

- Applicant has trained directly with a recognized senior Restorative teacher over a sustained period (minimum 2 years) outside a formal program
- Must document scope, duration, and provide a letter of attestation

# Yoga Nidra (AYC-CE-NID)

## LINEAGE-SPECIFIC SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *The yoga of conscious sleep—including technique instruction, the stages of the practice, sankalpa (intention), the classical tantric foundations, and the application of Yoga Nidra for relaxation, stress management, and self-inquiry. Educators must have substantial personal experience and be trained in a recognized Yoga Nidra lineage or program (e.g., iRest, Bihar School, Satyananda tradition).*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a recognized Yoga Nidra yoga training (minimum 20 hours) from an established program or lineage-connected teacher</li> <li>OR Completed a recognized Yoga Nidra training (e.g., iRest Level 1, Bihar School program, or equivalent—minimum 20 hours)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Yoga Nidra training—Level 2 or teacher certification in a recognized program (e.g., iRest Level 2, advanced Bihar study, or equivalent)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior-level training—advanced certification in iRest, Bihar School, or equivalent program; or recognized lineage authorization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior affiliation with a recognized Yoga Nidra lineage or program, or published contributions to the field</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year leading Yoga Nidra sessions, or 200+ documented sessions led</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4+ years consistently leading Yoga Nidra in yoga or wellness contexts, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years leading Yoga Nidra, or 5,000+ documented sessions or teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching Yoga Nidra</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

### Alternate pathways

#### Deep personal practice and lineage mentorship

- Applicant has a sustained personal Yoga Nidra practice of 5+ years with a recognized teacher, without completing a formal training program
- Must document the scope and nature of mentorship and provide a letter of attestation

#### Recognized accreditation bodies

- [iRest](#)
- Bihar School
- Satyananda

# Yoga Philosophy & Theory (AYC-CE-PHI)

LINEAGE-SPECIFIC SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *The major philosophical texts (Yoga Sutras, Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads), the key concepts of Samkhya, Vedanta, and Tantra as they apply to yoga, and the ethical framework of the yamas and niyamas. This specialty is distinct from Yoga History (which focuses on historical development)—it focuses on philosophical content, textual study, and the application of yogic philosophy to life and practice.*

	LEVEL 1 Practitioner educator	LEVEL 2 Teacher trainer	LEVEL 3 Advanced trainer	LEVEL 4 Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum 20 hours of formal training in Philosophy from a recognized teacher, program, or tradition</li> <li>• Demonstrated sustained study of yoga philosophy—through formal coursework, lineage-based study, or equivalent self-directed study with documentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced study of yoga philosophy equivalent to 50 hours—academic coursework, graduate-level study in Hindu philosophy or religion, or recognized advanced training program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduate-level coursework in Hindu philosophy, religion, or South Asian studies; or equivalent advanced lineage-based study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has contributed to yoga philosophy education through published work, recognized programs, or senior lineage standing</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1+ year consistently teaching yoga philosophy in a professional capacity, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4+ years consistently teaching yoga philosophy in YTT or CE contexts, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10+ years teaching yoga philosophy in YTT or CE contexts, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20+ years teaching yoga philosophy at a professional level</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Academic coursework in Hindu philosophy or religion

- Applicant has completed coursework in Hindu philosophy, religion, or South Asian studies at the undergraduate or graduate level
- Must additionally demonstrate yoga-specific application of philosophical knowledge through teaching history

### Lineage-based philosophical study

- Applicant has studied yoga philosophy within a recognized lineage or with a senior teacher over a sustained period (minimum 3 years)
- Must document the scope, depth, and primary texts studied, and provide a letter of attestation

### Sub-grouping note

*Yoga Philosophy & Theory (AYC-CE-PHI) focuses on philosophical content—texts, concepts, and applied ethics. Yoga History (AYC-CE-HIS) focuses on historiography and the developmental arc of the tradition. These are distinct specialties with different competency standards and educational requirements.*

## POPULATION-FOCUSED SPECIALTIES

[Kids & Teens Yoga](#) (2)

[Pre/Post-Natal Yoga](#) (2)

[Accessible Yoga](#) (2)

[Yoga for Special Populations](#) (2)

[Chair Yoga](#) (3)

## Kids & Teens Yoga (AYC-CE-KID)

### POPULATION SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Yoga to children (ages 3–12), adapting physical practice, philosophical content, and classroom management for child development stages. This specialty is accessible without a prior base AYC Level 1 credential, recognizing that many qualified children's educators come from education backgrounds. Educators must have genuine experience working with children in a structured setting.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a dedicated kids yoga teacher training (minimum 20 hours) from a recognized program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced kids yoga training or teacher training certification from a recognized program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced child development study, early childhood education credentials, or equivalent alongside senior kids yoga teaching experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized as a senior voice in kids yoga through published work or institutional affiliation</li> <li></li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2+ years working with children in any professional capacity</li> <li>1+ year teaching yoga to children, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years consistently teaching yoga to children, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching yoga to children, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching yoga to children</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

### Alternate pathways

#### Early Childhood Behavioral Specialist or equivalent credential

- Applicant holds a professional credential in early childhood education, child psychology, OT with children, or equivalent
- Must additionally have completed a kids yoga training of at least 20 hours and have experience teaching yoga to children

#### Sub-grouping note

*All educators working with children must comply with applicable safeguarding and child protection requirements in their jurisdiction. AYC requires evidence of current safeguarding training or equivalent clearance as a condition of CYS accreditation in this specialty.*

#### Recognized accreditation bodies

- [Rainbow Yoga Training](#)

# Pre/Post-Natal Yoga (AYC-CE-NAT)

POPULATION SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Yoga adapted for pregnancy and the postpartum period—including safe modifications, contraindications, pelvic floor awareness, breath adaptations, and the emotional and physiological context of pregnancy and early parenthood. This specialty carries a higher base level requirement (AYC L2) given the clinical adjacency of the content.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a minimum 20-hour pre/post-natal yoga training from a recognized program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced pre/post-natal training equivalent to 50-hours, or equivalent clinical credential</li> <li>OR Active credential as a Doula, Midwife, Childbirth Educator, Pelvic Floor Physiotherapist, or equivalent strongly preferred</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced clinical background in obstetric care, pelvic health, or perinatal mental health alongside senior yoga teaching experience</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized senior voice in pre/post-natal yoga through published work or institutional affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching pre/post-natal yoga, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equivalent: 5+ years documented professional practice in pre/post-natal support with verifiable clinical supervision</li> <li>OR 5+ years consistently teaching pre/post-natal yoga, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching pre/post-natal yoga, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching pre/post-natal yoga</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Clinical perinatal credential pathway

- Applicant holds an active credential as a Doula, Midwife, Childbirth Educator, or Pelvic Floor Physiotherapist
- Must additionally have completed a pre/post-natal yoga training of at least 30 hours

### Sub-grouping note

*Sub-grouping into (1) Prenatal Yoga and (2) Postnatal Yoga is recommended, as the physiological and pedagogical considerations of each phase differ significantly. A provider may hold accreditation in one or both sub-groups.*

# Accessible Yoga (AYC-CE-ACC)

POPULATION SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Yoga adapted for people with disabilities, limited mobility, chronic illness, or other accessibility needs. Educators must have genuine experience working with people who have accessibility needs, and must understand the principles of inclusive design, disability justice, and trauma-aware practice.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a recognized accessible or adaptive yoga training (minimum 20 hours)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced accessible yoga training or equivalent professional credential in disability services, occupational therapy, or related field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional credential or advanced training in OT, physiotherapy, disability studies, or equivalent alongside senior accessible yoga experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized senior voice in accessible yoga through published work or institutional affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years professional background in accessible-needs work—nursing, PT, OT, social work, disability services, or equivalent</li> <li>OR 1+ year teaching accessible or adaptive yoga, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years consistently teaching accessible or adaptive yoga, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching accessible or adaptive yoga, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching accessible or adaptive yoga</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Allied health professional credential

- Applicant holds an active credential in occupational therapy, physiotherapy, nursing, or disability services
- Must additionally have completed an accessible yoga training of at least 20 hours

### Sub-grouping note

*Accessible Yoga (AYC-CE-ACC) focuses on adaptive practice for people with disabilities. Chair Yoga (AYC-CE-CHA) focuses on the seated format. Yoga for Special Populations (AYC-CE-SPE) addresses a broader clinical range. These may overlap but carry distinct competency standards.*

# Yoga for Special Populations (AYC-CE-SPE)

POPULATION SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Yoga adapted for groups with distinct physiological, psychological, or social needs—including older adults, people with chronic illness, mental health conditions, addiction recovery, incarcerated individuals, or other defined communities. This specialty requires a professional background in the relevant population area. The credential must name the specific population.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a minimum 20-hour pre/post-natal yoga training from a recognized program</li> <li>OR 5+ years professional background in relevant work—nursing, PT, OT, social work, mental health, corrections, or equivalent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active professional credential in a relevant field (healthcare, social work, mental health, corrections) strongly preferred</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior professional background in the relevant field alongside advanced yoga teaching experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized senior voice through published work or institutional affiliation</li> <li></li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching yoga to the specific population, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equivalent: 7+ years documented professional work with the specific population alongside a clear teaching record</li> <li>5+ years consistently teaching yoga to the specific population (minimum once a week), or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching yoga for this specific population, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching yoga for this specific population</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Lived experience pathway

- Applicant has lived experience as a member of the population they seek to teach
- Must additionally complete a specialized yoga training (minimum 20 hours) and have documented teaching experience with the population
- Lived experience does not replace professional scope-of-practice literacy—applicants must demonstrate understanding of referral thresholds and ethical boundaries

### Sub-grouping note

*CYS credentials in this specialty are population-specific. Applications must name the specific population (e.g., Yoga for Older Adults, Yoga in Addiction Recovery, Yoga in Correctional Settings). A teacher may hold CYS credentials for multiple populations.*

# Chair Yoga (AYC-CE-CHA)

POPULATION SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Yoga using a chair as the primary prop—enabling participation for people who cannot practice on a mat due to age, disability, injury, or other physical limitations. Chair yoga is most commonly delivered in senior care, workplace wellness, and rehabilitation settings.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a recognized chair yoga training (minimum 20 hours) from an established program or experienced teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced chair yoga training or professional background in occupational therapy, gerontology, physiotherapy, or related field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional background in OT, PT, gerontology, or equivalent alongside senior chair yoga teaching experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized senior voice in chair yoga through published work or institutional affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching chair yoga or seated accessible yoga, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years consistently teaching chair yoga in community, senior care, or clinical settings, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching chair yoga, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching chair yoga</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Allied health professional credential

- Applicant holds an active credential in occupational therapy, physiotherapy, gerontology, or related field
- Must additionally have completed a chair yoga training of at least 20 hours

### Sub-grouping note

*Chair Yoga (AYC-CE-CHA) focuses specifically on the chair as a practice vehicle. Accessible Yoga (AYC-CE-ACC) covers a broader range of adaptive approaches. These specialties may consolidate into a single Adaptive Yoga track in a future AYC policy review.*

## **MOVEMENT & BODY SPECIALTIES**

[Hands-on Assists](#) (2)

[Nada Yoga & Sound Healing](#) (2)

[Fitness](#) (2)

[SUP Yoga](#) (3)

[Aerial Yoga](#) (3)

[Embodied Movement](#) (3)

# SUP Yoga (AYC-CE-SUP)

MOVEMENT SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Yoga on a stand-up paddleboard (SUP) in open water or controlled aquatic settings. This specialty carries mandatory safety prerequisites at both CYS levels—active ACA Stand Up Paddling certification, Cold Water Rescue certification, and current CPR/First Aid. These are non-negotiable entry requirements, not alternates.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current ACA Stand Up Paddling certification or recognized equivalent</li> <li>• Current Cold Water Rescue certification</li> <li>• Current CPR/First Aid certification</li> <li>• Completed a recognized SUP yoga instructor training from an established program</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets all CYS L1 educational and safety prerequisites (all certifications must remain current)</li> <li>• Advanced or instructor-level ACA certification or equivalent water safety qualification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior-level on-water safety training or equivalent advanced aquatic qualification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognized authority in SUP yoga through published work or senior affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1+ year teaching SUP yoga, or 200+ documented teaching hours on water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5+ years teaching SUP yoga across varied conditions and populations, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> <li>• Experience managing on-water group instruction and safety protocols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10+ years teaching SUP yoga, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20+ years teaching SUP yoga</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

**Sub-grouping note**

*ACA Stand Up Paddling certification, Cold Water Rescue certification, and current CPR/First Aid are prerequisites at both CYS L1 and CYS L2—not alternate pathways and not subject to equivalency review. All certifications must be current at time of application and renewed before expiry.*

# Aerial Yoga (AYC-CE-AER)

MOVEMENT SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Yoga using aerial apparatus—hammock, silks, trapeze, or equivalent—suspended from overhead rigging. This specialty carries mandatory safety prerequisites including current CPR/First Aid certification and demonstrated knowledge of rigging safety and load-bearing standards. Sub-grouping by apparatus is recommended.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a recognized aerial yoga teacher training from an established program (minimum 50 hours)</li> <li>Current CPR/First Aid certification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced aerial yoga training beyond the initial 50 hours</li> <li>Current CPR/First Aid certification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background in circus arts, aerial performance, or physical therapy alongside senior aerial yoga teaching experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized senior authority in aerial yoga through published work or institutional affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2+ years consistent aerial yoga practice with personal proficiency on the apparatus</li> <li>1+ year teaching aerial yoga, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years teaching aerial yoga with a verifiable safety record, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching aerial yoga, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching aerial yoga</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Circus arts or aerial performance background

Applicant has 5+ years professional training in circus arts, aerial performance, or physical theater and holds current CPR/First Aid certification  
 Must additionally complete a recognized aerial yoga training of at least 30 hours covering yoga integration and teaching methodology

### Sub-grouping note

*Sub-grouping by apparatus is recommended: (1) Aerial Hammock / Cocoon, (2) Aerial Silks, (3) Aerial Trapeze and other apparatus. A provider may hold accreditation in one or more sub-groups. Safety prerequisites apply across all sub-groups.*

# Fitness (AYC-CE-FIT)

MOVEMENT SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Pilates, Barre, or Sculpt within a yoga context. This specialty is modality-specific: a CYS credential applies to a named modality. Pilates has a deep certification ecosystem (PMA, BASI, Stott, etc.) and CYS L2 in Pilates requires comprehensive certification. Pilates may be elevated to a protected-adjacent specialty in a future AYC review.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a recognized certification in the specific modality (e.g., PMA-accredited Pilates mat training, recognized Barre or Sculpt certification)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For Pilates: comprehensive (mat + apparatus) certification from a PMA-accredited or equivalent program</li> <li>For Barre/Sculpt: advanced or teacher-training level certification from a recognized program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced or senior certification within the modality alongside sustained teaching experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized authority in the modality through published work or institutional affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2+ years consistent teaching experience in the specific modality, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years teaching the specific modality, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching the specific modality, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching the specific modality</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Existing modality certification

- Applicant holds a recognized certification in the specific modality from an accredited or widely recognized program
- Must additionally demonstrate yoga-specific integration and teaching experience within a yoga context

### Sub-grouping note

*CYS credentials in this specialty are modality-specific (Pilates, Barre, or Sculpt). A teacher may hold credentials in more than one modality. Pilates may be elevated to protected-adjacent status in a future AYC policy review.*

# Embodied Movement (AYC-CE-EMB)

MOVEMENT SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Somatic, expressive, and awareness-based movement approaches that prioritize felt experience over prescribed form. This includes methodologies such as Continuum, Body-Mind Centering, 5Rhythms, Movement Medicine, and Authentic Movement. This specialty is lineage-specific: the credential must name the methodology.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a training in the specific embodied movement methodology (minimum 50 hours) from a recognized program or lineage teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced or ongoing study within the recognized lineage—advanced training program, mentorship with a senior practitioner, or lineage authorization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior-level lineage study—recognized by a lineage elder or first-generation teacher in the tradition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized senior voice through published work or senior lineage affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2+ years consistent personal practice in the methodology</li> <li>1+ year facilitating embodied movement in groups, or 200+ documented facilitation hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years facilitating the specific embodied movement methodology with groups, or 500+ documented facilitation hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years facilitating the methodology, or 5,000+ documented facilitation hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years facilitating the methodology</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Lineage authorization

- Applicant has been authorized or recognized as a teacher by a senior practitioner or first-generation teacher within the specific methodology
- Must document the scope and nature of authorization and provide a letter of attestation

### Sub-grouping note

*"Embodied movement" alone is not sufficiently specific. Applications must name the specific methodology (e.g., CYS L1—5Rhythms, CYS L2—Body-Mind Centering). AYC reserves the right to determine whether a named methodology meets the threshold for specialty accreditation.*

# Hands-on Assists (AYC-CE-HAN)

BODY-BASED SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *The principles and practice of hands-on assists in yoga—including consent-based protocols, anatomical awareness, common assist patterns for foundational postures, and the ethical and relational dimensions of touch in a yoga context. This specialty requires AYC L2 base credential and a strong anatomy background. CYS L2 requires significant bodywork or manual therapy experience.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a recognized hands-on assists training (minimum 20 hours) from an established program</li> <li>Completion of AYC-CE-APB (Anatomy, Physiology &amp; Biomechanics) or documented equivalent anatomy background required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active licensure as a massage therapist, bodywork practitioner, or equivalent manual therapy credential</li> <li>Equivalent: 5+ years documented professional bodywork practice with verifiable lineage and scope-of-practice literacy</li> <li>Completion of AYC-CE-APB or equivalent strongly required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior bodywork or manual therapy background alongside sustained assists teaching experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized authority in yoga assists through published work or widely used curricula</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1+ year teaching yoga with hands-on assists integrated, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years teaching yoga with hands-on assists, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching yoga assists in YTT or CE contexts, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching yoga assists at a professional level</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Bodywork or manual therapy licensure

- Applicant holds an active massage therapy, physiotherapy, chiropractic, or equivalent manual therapy license
- Must additionally have completed a yoga-specific assists training of at least 20 hours and have experience teaching assists in yoga contexts

### Sub-grouping note

*Completion of AYC-CE-APB (Anatomy, Physiology & Biomechanics) at CYS L1 or higher, or documented equivalent anatomy training, is required before applying for CYS accreditation in this specialty.*

# Nada Yoga & Sound Healing (AYC-CE-NAD)

MOVEMENT SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *The yoga of sound—including the use of voice, instruments (singing bowls, gongs, harmonium, etc.), and vibrational principles in yoga and wellness contexts. Educators must have a background in music, vibrational healing, or sound therapy alongside their yoga teaching.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated background in music, vibrational healing, or sound therapy through formal study, performance experience, or recognized training</li> <li>• Completed a recognized sound healing or Nada Yoga training (minimum 20 hours) from an established teacher or program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced sound healing or Nada Yoga training beyond the foundation level—extended program, recognized lineage study, or senior teacher mentorship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior-level study in a recognized sound healing tradition or advanced Nada Yoga lineage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognized senior voice in sound healing or Nada Yoga through published work or senior lineage affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1+ year facilitating sound healing or Nada Yoga practices in yoga or wellness contexts, or 200+ documented facilitation hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5+ years facilitating sound healing or Nada Yoga in yoga or wellness contexts, or 500+ documented facilitation hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10+ years facilitating sound work in yoga or wellness contexts, or 5,000+ documented facilitation hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20+ years facilitating sound healing or Nada Yoga</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Professional musician or sound practitioner background

- Applicant has formal training or extensive professional experience in music, sound therapy, or vibrational healing (5+ years)
- Must additionally have completed a yoga-specific sound healing or Nada Yoga training of at least 20 hours

## CLINICAL-ADJACENT SPECIALTIES

[Somatic Inquiry](#) (2)

[Bodywork, Healing, & Massage](#) (2)

# Somatic Inquiry (AYC-CE-SOM)

CLINICAL-ADJACENT SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** Awareness-based, body-centered approaches to self-knowledge and regulation within a yoga context. This includes methodologies such as Somatic Experiencing, Hakomi, Body-Mind Centering, and others. Educators must have a clear understanding of scope of practice: somatic yoga facilitation is not therapy. CYS L2 carries a strong preference for an active credential in somatic therapy, counseling, or bodywork.

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a somatic training program in a recognized methodology (minimum 100 hours)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active license or credential in a relevant field—somatic therapy, counseling, physiotherapy, bodywork—strongly preferred</li> <li>Equivalent: 7+ years documented practice with clinical supervision and demonstrated scope-of-practice literacy across all domains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior credential or advanced training in a recognized somatic tradition alongside sustained teaching experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized senior voice in somatic yoga through published work or institutional affiliation</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3+ years personal somatic practice with a qualified practitioner or supervisor</li> <li>1+ year facilitating somatic practices in groups, or 200+ documented facilitation hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years teaching somatic practices to groups with a clear pedagogical framework, or 500+ documented facilitation hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years facilitating somatic practices, or 5,000+ documented facilitation hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years facilitating somatic practices</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Clinical somatic credential pathway

- Applicant holds an active license in somatic therapy, counseling, physiotherapy, or bodywork and has completed a yoga-specific somatic training of at least 30 hours
- Clinical licensure satisfies the L2 clinical experience requirement

### Documented equivalent experience pathway

- Applicant does not hold a clinical license but has 7+ years of documented somatic practice with verified supervision and scope-of-practice literacy
- Must additionally have completed a recognized somatic yoga training of at least 100 hours

### Sub-grouping note

*Somatic inquiry in a yoga context is a facilitation practice, not a therapy modality. Educators at all levels are expected to teach and model this distinction explicitly. No level of CYS credential in this specialty authorizes clinical assessment, diagnosis, or treatment of trauma or psychological conditions.*



# Bodywork, Healing, & Massage (AYC-CE-BHM)

CLINICAL-ADJACENT SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *Bodywork and massage principles as they integrate with yoga instruction—including informed touch, myofascial awareness, therapeutic applications of hands-on work, and the relationship between bodywork and yoga practice. CYS L2 carries a strong preference for active massage therapy or bodywork licensure. Scope of practice must be a central component of any curriculum at both levels.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a recognized bodywork or massage training (minimum 100 hours)</li> <li>Completion of AYC-CE-APB (Anatomy, Physiology &amp; Biomechanics) or documented equivalent anatomy background required</li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active licensure as a massage therapist or bodywork practitioner in their jurisdiction strongly preferred</li> <li>Equivalent: 7+ years documented professional bodywork practice with verifiable training lineage and scope-of-practice literacy</li> <li>Completion of AYC-CE-APB or equivalent is required at this level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior bodywork credential or advanced training alongside sustained teaching experience in yoga bodywork education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognized authority in yoga bodywork through published work or widely used curricula</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2+ years applying bodywork in yoga or wellness contexts, or 200+ documented practice hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years teaching or training others in bodywork within yoga contexts, or 500+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+ years teaching bodywork in yoga or wellness education contexts, or 5,000+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20+ years teaching bodywork in yoga or wellness contexts</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

### Massage therapy or bodywork licensure

- Applicant holds an active massage therapy or bodywork license in their jurisdiction
- Must additionally have completed a yoga-specific bodywork integration training of at least 30 hours and have teaching experience in yoga contexts

### Documented equivalent experience pathway

- Applicant does not hold a license but has 7+ years of documented professional bodywork practice with verifiable training lineage
- Must additionally have completed yoga-specific bodywork training and have teaching experience in yoga contexts

### Sub-grouping note

*Completion of AYC-CE-APB (Anatomy, Physiology & Biomechanics) at CYS L1 or higher, or documented equivalent anatomy training, is required at both CYS levels in this specialty.*

## TEACHING SPECIALTIES

[Teaching Methodology](#) (3)

# Teaching Methodology (AYC-CE-TME)

TEACHING SPECIALTY

**Scope of specialty:** *The craft and science of yoga instruction itself—including adult learning theory, pedagogical design, curriculum development, YTT program architecture, mentorship frameworks, and assessment and feedback practices. This specialty is distinct from any content-area specialty: it focuses on how yoga is taught, not what is taught.*

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Practitioner educator	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Teacher trainer	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Advanced trainer	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Subject matter expert
<b>AYC LEVEL</b>	CYT-L1	CYT-L2	CYT-L3	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated study in pedagogy, adult education, or teacher training methodology via formal coursework, a recognized YTT program with strong pedagogical content</li> <li>• <u>OR</u> equivalent self-directed study with documentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substantive formal study in pedagogy, adult education, curriculum design</li> <li>• <u>OR</u> equivalent via a graduate program, recognized professional development pathway</li> <li>• or AYC-accredited training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduate-level study in education, curriculum theory, adult learning,</li> <li>• <u>OR</u> equivalent field alongside senior YTT design and delivery experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has made substantial published contributions to yoga pedagogy — books, curricula, research, or widely recognized frameworks used by other teacher trainers</li> <li>• Recognized by peers, institutions, or professional organizations as a senior authority in yoga teacher education</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE / COMPETENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1+ year teaching yoga in a professional capacity with documented attention to pedagogical craft, or 200+ documented teaching hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4+ years designing and delivering yoga teacher training programs (YTT or CE) as a lead trainer or program director</li> <li>• <u>OR</u> 500+ documented teacher training hours</li> <li>• Demonstrated experience designing and delivering teacher training programs, not merely teaching yoga classes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10+ years designing and delivering YTT programs with a documented record of graduate outcomes, or 5,000+ documented teacher training hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20+ years designing and delivering yoga teacher training at a professional level</li> </ul>
<b>ALTERNATE PATHWAYS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive documented YTT design and delivery experience that demonstrates mastery across all four domains, subject to portfolio review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognized senior standing in the yoga teacher training field—multiple programs designed and delivered over 10+ years with a documented legacy of trained teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>VERIFIED BY</b>	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	AYC accreditation team	Peer advisory group (to be created Q4 2026) nominates and votes
<b>CAN OFFER</b>	Practitioner programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs	Practitioner or Teacher programs

## Alternate pathways

Formal education background in adult learning or curriculum design

- Applicant holds a degree or professional qualification in adult education, instructional design, curriculum theory, or a closely related field
- Must additionally have completed a yoga teacher training with substantive pedagogical content and have experience teaching yoga to teachers—not only to students

**Extensive YTT design and delivery portfolio**

- Applicant does not hold a formal education qualification but has 7+ years of documented YTT program design and delivery as a lead trainer
- Must submit a portfolio demonstrating mastery across all four domains—including program curricula they designed, assessment frameworks they developed, and documented graduate outcomes

**Sub-grouping note**

*Teaching Methodology (AYC-CE-TME) focuses on the craft of teaching yoga to teachers—pedagogy, program design, mentorship, and assessment. It is not a substitute for content-area depth. A CYS L2 in Teaching Methodology does not qualify a teacher to train others in a specific specialty (e.g., anatomy, trauma-informed practice) without the relevant content-area credential. The two credential types are complementary and often used together.*