



Youth Affairs
Council Victoria

Strategic Plan 2025–2028





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Our purpose

Our purpose is to support young people and the youth sector to tackle the most pressing issues affecting young people and youth services.

We do this through bringing stakeholders together, supporting capability development and taking joint action. We want to help achieve social justice for young people, to ensure their rights are respected, and they are visible and actively valued in their communities.

About us

YACVic is Victoria's peak body for young people and the youth sector. On behalf of our members, we advocate for Victoria's young people and the sector that supports them.

By young people, we mean people aged 12 to 25 years, in all their diversities, across Victoria. YACVic partners with a diverse range of member stakeholders. Our members include:

- young people
- the youth sector, which includes:
 - youth work organisations
 - youth-led organisations
 - youth workers
 - peer workers
- local governments
- civil society organisations
- other values-aligned people and organisations.

We model meaningful engagement with young people and encourage their active participation in decisions that affect them. To achieve this, we maintain and grow strong relationships with:

- government
- donors
- other community sector stakeholders.

We prioritise engagement with and services for the youth sector, and young people.





Listening to our stakeholders

YACVic commits to listening and responding to the needs of the youth sector, young people and our stakeholders.

The 2024 YACVic Listening Tour engaged with youth sector stakeholders and young people through in-person meetings and online consultations. The aims were to:

- gather insights on the issues facing young people and the youth sector
- work out how YACVic can better support and advocate for these needs.

We also ran environmental scans and analysed emerging trends. We consulted with:

- other peak bodies
- policymakers
- YACVic staff and board.

All this data has informed the priorities and goals of this strategic plan. Our intent is to increasingly serve the interests of the youth sector by:

- convening sector collaboration
- supporting the capacity of the sector to better serve our young people.

Our strategic goals

Goal 1: Collective Impact

Goal 2: Systems Reform

Goal 3: Services Young People Need

Goal 4: YACVic as a Partner



Goal 1: Collective Impact

The youth sector in Victoria is aligned, collaborating and achieving collective impact.

To achieve this, YACVic will:

- ✓ mobilise the youth sector to achieve its goals, especially those that will:
 - connect and engage regional, rural and remote Victoria
 - improve the lives of young people who face disadvantage, are marginalised or are equity denied¹
- ✓ improve the ways we support the youth sector based on the sector's needs and opportunities and by building on our skills and expertise
- ✓ coordinate, collaborate and partner with the youth sector and young people to find and respond to common and emerging themes and priorities
- ✓ amplify the sector's experience and expertise to state-level decision-makers
- ✓ advocate on behalf of our members to policymakers.

Goal 2: Systems Reform

Young people and the youth sector are playing an active role in reforming and reimagining systems that affect them the most.

To achieve this, YACVic will:

- ✓ bring together and support young people and the sector to identify issues that affect young people
- ✓ set the agenda for system-wide reform to overcome social injustices and achieve meaningful change
- ✓ lead, where called to do so, systemic advocacy efforts that bring about policy change and sector investment
- ✓ create platforms for young people, the sector and policymakers to take part in meaningful discussions and inform decision-making.

¹ "Equity denied" refers to situations where certain groups experience barriers and discrimination, preventing them from having equal access to opportunities and resources.

Goal 3: Services Young People Need

Young people and the youth sector are supported by the services they need most.

To achieve this, YACVic will:

- ✓ use evidence to identify and actively respond to system gaps affecting young people, youth services and the sector
- ✓ apply our knowledge and data to inform advocacy efforts, resource development and service responses that build on the strengths of young people and complement member services such as training, resources and projects that make a collective impact through partnerships with member services
- ✓ work to understand what services will be most impactful and that are most needed by our members to achieve their goals and that will support YACVic's long-term sustainability
- ✓ develop and deliver a business plan and new set of service offerings for young people, the youth sector and other stakeholders based on clear value for our varied stakeholders
- ✓ streamline our expertise for engaging with young people and supporting the youth sector in partnership with our members, external partners and stakeholders
- ✓ openly share our expertise through targeted advice to help grow the capabilities of our partners, members and stakeholders to influence systemic, structural and behavioural change.

Goal 4: YACVic as a Partner

YACVic is a resourced, respected and vital partner.

To achieve this, YACVic will:

- ✓ engage with our members about our decision-making processes while staying accountable for the outcomes of our decisions
- ✓ openly communicate progress about the impact of our work to show the value of collective action and peak-body participation, leadership and support
- ✓ be a skilled and knowledgeable resource and thought leader on issues affecting young people, using this to upskill others
- ✓ use our platform as a peak body to share data, knowledge and expertise, summarising local and specialised service information to inform sector decision-making
- ✓ strengthen our strong brand and reputation, showing that our stakeholders and the public understand and support what we do
- ✓ diversify our revenue streams and help commercialise our services to ensure the future viability of the organisation while supporting the youth sector to achieve its goals for improving systems
- ✓ adapt our governance structures and systems to best support us to achieve our strategic goals
- ✓ ensure our board and leadership team has the skill sets needed to deliver our strategy.

Our enablers of success

YACVic will invest in creating an environment that helps us achieve our goals by aligning them to our revised purpose. We aim to be:

✓ *An employer of choice*

We invest in and support the development and well-being of our staff, volunteers and workplace. We aim to be an example for other youth organisations.

✓ *Financially sustainable*

We commit to varying our income sources through targeted, purposeful, commercial service models. This complements our government and philanthropic funding so we are better positioned to invest in our future.

✓ *Evidence-based and impactful*

We collect, review and respond to data. We prioritise resourcing areas where it can have the greatest impact.

✓ *Agile and adaptive*

We seek and respond to emerging evidence. We listen to the insights and needs of our members and young people.

✓ *Responsive and accountable*

We listen to and consider the needs of our members. We are transparent about our decisions and actions. This includes what we do and what we cannot or choose not to do.

✓ *Collaborative*

We work in partnership with others to position ourselves as a trusted authority to steer the Victorian youth sector.

Our values and behaviours

Our values are the core beliefs that we aim to apply to everything we do. They are more than aspirational words – they are intentional ways of being that we must actively practice and build on to achieve our purpose.

Values we aspire to:

We model allyship →

We model collective action →

We are intersectional →

We are practice leaders →

We are bold →

We are hopeful →

Behaviours that will help us live our values:

We support and uphold the rights of young people.
We promote youth participation and engagement to the standard we aspire to see across all services and systems.

We work in partnership with our members towards shared goals. We put the growth of young people and the sector ahead of our own organisation.

We address systems of power that discriminate against or disadvantage people in our own operations and in the ways we advocate. We enable inclusion and equity in all we do.

We model and communicate about emerging practice and evolving standards for youth engagement.

We are brave and daring in our decision-making.
We act with courage, curiosity and determination for what is right over what is easy.

We are excited and optimistic about what the sector can achieve for and with young people.



Our progress and continual improvement

YACVic has developed a performance framework. Our board regularly reviews this framework, which tracks our progress against the strategic plan.

The framework outlines:

- where we are starting from (**benchmarks**)
- how we will know we are making change (**progress indicators**)
- how we will know we've reached our goals (**measures of success**).



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