



Youth Affairs  
Council Victoria

# Strategic Plan

2020-2023



# What YACVic Does

**Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic) is the peak body and leading policy advocate for young people in Victoria.**

We represent all **young people** (aged 12-25 years) and the **youth sector** which works with and for them. We have a particular focus on the issues and voices of young people who face marginalisation.

## Our Vision

The rights of young people in Victoria are respected, and they are active, visible and valued in their communities.

## Our Mission

We propel action that inspires positive change for young people and the youth sector.

## Our Values

We champion young people's: **Equity, Inclusion, Connection,** and **Opportunity.** We act, and support others to act, with: **Authenticity, Empathy, Respect, Curiosity, Optimism, Dynamism,** and **Excellence.**

## Key Services

YACVic works across the state to influence change in the best interests of young people. To do this, we:

Elevate Voices	Promote Solutions	Build Capacity	Nurture Connections	Advance Thinking
Amplify the voices of young people and the youth sector to institutions of power.	Identify and recommend solutions on issues and policy that affect young people.	Resource and promote high-quality youth work, participation, and leadership.	Convene groups and enable platforms for co-ordination, support and collaboration.	Partner on research and consultations on emerging youth issues.

**YACVic Rural** provides a particular focus on rural and regional areas for delivery of our work, aligned to local priorities and in partnership with communities and local services. This place-based work includes projects dedicated to specific local youth issues.

**Youth Disability Advocacy Service (YDAS)** provides advocacy services to individual disabled young people, as well as undertaking systemic advocacy and program delivery to improve participation of, and outcomes for, disabled young people.





## Auspiced Partners

YACVic auspices the **Koorie Youth Council (KYC)** and the **Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC)**, providing oversight and support to their operations. We also partner closely with them for cross-collaboration and inclusion of diverse needs and voices in policy and programming.

## Our Key Stakeholders

We exist to improve outcomes for **young people** in Victoria, ensuring that their rights are respected, and they are active, visible and valued in their communities.

We work with **our members**, both **youth-focused organisations** and **individuals**, to support, connect and elevate them so that their impact is amplified and exponential. The individuals may be young people driving change, youth workers, or others who impact and influence young people's lives.

We have a strong relationship with the Victorian Government, which is our primary funding source, and relies on us to bring youth practice expertise and a diversity of youth voices to impartially and authentically inform policy making and programming.



# A Changing World for Young People

Young people are a vital part of any great society, and everyone benefits when their needs, perspectives and contributions are taken seriously. And yet, young people today are justifiably fearful for their future.

They are likely to be the first generation worse off than their parents. They face great uncertainty in terms of employment and housing security, income inequality is growing, and they are deeply concerned about the existential threat of climate change.

They are navigating, during their formative years, a far more complex world than previous generations, with challenges such as social media, a slowing economy, and political turmoil permeating their lives. At the same time, there are fast changing social norms, less community cohesion, and increased tribalism and identity politics.

Many are also facing additional issues of marginalisation due to geographic isolation, racism and discrimination, disability and economic disadvantage.

While young people have more options than ever to be active and mobilise, they are also competing for political relevance with a wealthy and active older generation, and facing regular negative portrayals in the media.

There is a growing appreciation of the return on investment in early childhood development, but less recognition of the social and economic value of positive interventions at the critical inflection points for young people of entering adolescence and the school to work transition.

There is a need to better appreciate the contributions, leadership and potential of young people, and recognise how amazing they can be when they have respect, support, resources and platforms.

It is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that young people continue to have hope and opportunity, are acknowledged for the positive impact they can and do have on society and the economy, and are empowered and supported to be active, visible and valued in their communities.

We must position the needs and voices of young people at the centre of relevant policy and decision making, valuing their unique perspectives and ideas, respecting their rights, and recognising them as experts in their own lives.

YACVic plays a vital role in achieving this in Victoria, and supports our members, governments and others to do so too.



**Katherine Ellis**  
CEO

**Kerrie Loveless**  
Chair



# Strategic Goals 2020–2023

## Goal 1 – A Robust Policy Environment

Policies affecting young people in Victoria are relevant, inclusive and effective.

Contribute to development and implementation of state and national youth policies.

Clarify, develop and advocate policy positions on issues important to young people.

Provide an expert, trusted, and active voice on matters relevant to young people.

## Goal 2 – Meaningful Youth Participation

A youth lens and youth participation are embedded in the strategies, programs and governance of relevant institutions.

Endorse and actively support youth-led advocacy and action.

Increase institutional prioritisation of, and capacity for, youth participation.

Increase positive recognition and influence of youth voices and perspectives.

## Goal 3 – A Strong Youth Sector

The Victorian youth sector is connected, valued and high-performing.

Connect, support and build the capacity of young people driving change.

Connect, support and build the capacity of youth workers and other youth service providers.

Collaborate on cutting edge research, thought leadership and tools.

# Strategic Goals 2020–2023

## Goal 4 – Social Justice

Young people who face marginalisation are empowered and included, and their rights are protected.

Increase visibility, capacity, agency, inclusion and appreciation of young people who face marginalisation.

Undertake individual and systemic advocacy on issues affecting young people who face marginalisation.

Facilitate and deliver place-based initiatives.

## Goal 5 – A Thriving Organisation

YACVic is relevant, impactful and agile.

Strengthen business model and reputation.

Enhance cohesion, collaboration and performance.

Improve rigour and systems.



## YACVic's Guiding Principles

YACVic's work is guided by the Code of Ethical Practice for the Victorian Youth Sector and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The recognition of young people's human rights underpins everything we do.

We prioritise and promote the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children and young people, modeling and championing the Victorian and National Child Safe Standards.

We promote active participation of young people in all aspects of decision making and community life, ensuring their unique needs, perspectives and abilities are included in policy and programming.

We pursue social justice by advocating for all young people, with a focus on young people who face marginalisation.

We work in collaboration with young people, our members, our partner agencies, the wider Victorian youth sector, and other relevant institutions to achieve our mission.

## Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

YACVic recognises and respects that we live and work on the traditional lands and waters of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, and that these were never ceded.

We also recognise that culture and connection to land and community are vital for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and that they have a right to self-determination and cultural safety.



## Learn more about YACVic

YACVic is an independent, not-for-profit, member-based organisation, and is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, around half of whom are young people. YACVic's core work is funded primarily by the Victorian Government, and our projects and partner agencies' work are funded by a variety of state and national government departments and bodies.

YACVic is also open to partnerships with philanthropic trusts and private sector organisations, especially those with an interest in the wellbeing, empowerment and advancement of young people.

## For more information:

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Visit us: [www.yacvic.org.au](http://www.yacvic.org.au)

Photography of young people: Thomas Feng

Satellite Captures Four Tropical Cyclones from Space: NASA Earth Observatory/Joshua Stevens; NOAA National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service

Lunar Near Side: NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center/Arizona State University



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