

YMCA Victoria

YOUTH PARLIAMENT

2027 Application Information Pack

the Y

FOREWORD FROM OUR **Program Director**



Anna "Scotty" Scott Youth Parliament Program Director 2027 Y Victoria Youth Parliament

Dear young Victorians and their advocates,

In 2027, we will see the 41st year of the Y Victoria's Victorian Youth Parliament program, and the 15th anniversary of the Y Victoria's Youth Press Gallery program. This will continue the program's legacy as the longest-running annual Victorian state forum for young people aged 16-25 to advocate for change.

The programs bring together 140 young people each year to raise their voices and develop skills in civic engagement through hands-on experiences, including drafting and debating Bills or developing articles, and meeting with stakeholders and Members of Parliament. The residential aspect of the program also fosters the development of community through an immersive environment where participants can develop skills in leadership, civic engagement, advocacy and more through experiential learning.

Youth Parliament provides a unique opportunity to learn the very skills used by Parliamentarians, right within the chambers of the Victorian Parliament.

Over the past 40 years, over 70 Youth Parliament Bills have passed into legislation, including mandatory wearing of bicycle helmets, universal accessibility at music and cultural festivals, over-the-counter availability of the morning after pill, container deposit scheme, and, most recently, free public transport for under 18s. Alumni have gone on to work for Government organisations, started their own social enterprises and become elected Members of Parliament.

Applications for Youth Parliament are always extremely competitive. To apply, please read the information and instructions in this Application Pack prior to submitting your application.

Please reach out with any questions or concerns you may have during the application process.

Sincerely,

Anna "Scotty" Scott

Program Director – 2027 Y Victoria Youth Parliament

youthparliament.vic@ymca.org.au

WHAT IS YOUTH PARLIAMENT?

Youth Parliament is an annual program run by the Y Victoria that draws together 20 teams, each comprised of 6 young people aged 16-25, from across Victoria. Over the course of the seven month program, participants will advocate about the issues that matter to them, while learning about the Victorian legislative system, developing advocacy and leadership skills and building community.

The Youth Parliament program is delivered over four blocks:

BLOCK 1: BILL DEVELOPMENT (FEBRUARY - APRIL)

In the lead up to the residential camp, participants will be supported by Taskforce to develop a Bill in an area of interest to the team. Throughout this process, participants will learn about their issue of choice, and develop skills in research, solutions mapping and civic engagement

This will be done through meetings between the team and the Taskforce, as well as independent learning modules. Teams are strongly advised to meet outside of their meetings with the Taskforce in order gain the most impactful experience possible.

Participants will also have the opportunity to engage with stakeholders as facilitated by Taskforce, where they will learn about interacting with industry in meaningful ways.

BLOCK 2: PARTICIPANT TRAINING WEEKEND (21 - 23 MAY)

Participant Training Weekend is a residential program where participants will meet their fellow Youth Parliamentarians, and the Youth Press Gallery participants reporting on their Bills. Participants will develop skills in parliamentary debating and etiquette, learn about engaging with the media, develop skills in advocacy, and participate in community-building activities.

BLOCK 3: DEBATING & SPEECH DEVELOPMENT (31 MAY - 13 JUNE)

Between residential programs, participants will develop their speeches and skills in parliamentary debate, facilitated by Taskforce.

BLOCK 4: SITTING WEEK (28 JUNE - 2 JULY)

The Youth Parliament program culminates in the Sitting Week. Here, participants will debate their Bills in front of Members of Parliament, stakeholders and the public. They will continue to develop personal and professional skills, and build a community of young change-makers.

> “Victorian Youth Parliament genuinely gives me a space where I can connect and share my ideas and insights without judgement. It has allowed me to develop my confidence, meet like-minded young people and learn how I can have a meaningful impact on the issues that matter to my community.”
>
> - 2026 Youth Parliamentarian

RESOURCE PERSON

Each team is managed by a Resource Person, who acts as a contact point between the program and their team of 6 participants. The Resource Person's role is to aid in amplifying the voices of the young people in their team. Bill intention and development must come directly from the young person, not from the Resource Person or their organisation.

All applications must be administered by the team's appointed Resource Person.

WHO CAN BE A RESOURCE PERSON?

The Resource Person must be engaged in the organization their team represents. This means they are often teachers, youth workers or council staff members.

The Resource Person **must** be over 18 years of age, and may not be a participant in their team. The Resource Person must also be able to meet all Resource Person responsibilities, as outlined below.

Responsibilities of the Resource Person

- Submission of team application
- Recruit and support a team of six participants who are suitable for, and committed to, the program
- Ensuring payments are made in full, in accordance with the timeline outlined in this Information Pack
- Ensuring all participant indemnity forms are submitted correctly and on time
- Facilitating and coordinate communication between their team and the Taskforce, especially in setting meeting times. This includes individual applicants from outside the team's organisation where appropriate
- Being present in all Mentor Meetings between their team and the Taskforce, and Stakeholder Engagement Meetings between the team, Taskforce and stakeholders. Please note these meetings are organised in line with the availability of the team, volunteer Taskforce and approved stakeholders, meaning they are generally outside of regular work hours, and requires flexibility
- Coordinating meetings between the team to work on their Bills and speeches outside of Mentor Meetings
- Supporting their team to feel confident and prepared for all aspects of the program
- Outlining participant expectations to participants and, where appropriate, ensuring participants meet these expectations



PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

Due to the limited number of spaces on Youth Parliament, unfortunately, we have teams and applicants who miss out. Therefore, it is imperative that all participants understand and fulfill the following expectations:

- Attending all 5 Mentor Meetings between the team and Taskforce
- Attending additional meetings at the discretion of the Resource Person
- Completing work assigned by Taskforce and the Resource Person outside of meetings, including Bill development and speech writing
- Attending the residential Participant Training Weekend and Week of Youth Parliament in full
- Participate in all sessions, including Mentor Meetings and residential sessions, to the best of the ability
- Respect the diversity and opinions of fellow participants and understand the Victorian Youth Parliament program is a space to share ideas and learn new things
- Understand Youth Parliament is a non-partisan program and is not affiliated with any political parties or specific ideologies
- Respect the duty of care held by the Y towards all participants, including those over the age of 18
- Youth Parliament is an alcohol, drug and weapons free program. No alcohol, drugs or weapons are allowed onto any aspect of the program

The Y Victoria holds the right to remove a participant who is not meeting expectations at any time.



KEY DATES

Administrative dates

Applications open	16 November 2026	
Applications close	13 December 2026	
Letter of Offer sent	16 December 2026	
Signed Letter of Offer due to the Y	18 December 2026	
Resource Person Information Night	04 February 2027	Online
Confirmation of six team members due	18 February 2027	
Full or first payment due	18 February 2027	
Participant indemnity forms due	25 March 2027	
Final payment due	23 April 2027	
Resource Person evaluation meeting	15 July 2027	Online

Program dates

Mentor Meeting 1	25 February 6-8pm	Online
Mentor Meetings 2 and 3	01 March - 18 April	Online or in person
Bills due to Taskforce	18 April	
Mentor Meeting 4	03 - 16 May	Online or in person
Participant Training Weekend	21 - 23 May	Lake Dewar Discovery Camp
Mentor Meeting 5	31 May - 13 June	Online or in person
Sitting Week	28 June - 02 July	Lake Dewar Discovery Camp

Mentor Meetings

- Mentor Meetings will be scheduled between the Resource Person and the team's Taskforce member. As Youth Parliament is volunteer-led, teams must be able to provide flexible availability, working with the Taskforce to find mutually appropriate meeting times
- Mentor Meetings 2 - 5 shall run for 90 minutes, and may be run online or in person, as agreed upon by the team and Taskforce member

Residential program

- Residential programs are located at Lake Dewar Discovery Camp, 339 Garrards Lane, Myrniong, 3341
- Sitting Week includes travel to Parliament House, Spring Street, East Melbourne, 3002

KEY CONTACTS

Anna Scott Program Director
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APPLICATION DETAILS

- Due to the public nature of the program, all participants – and parents, guardians and/or carers of participant under the age of 18 – must provide media consent
- A maximum of two of the six team members may be returning participants
- Participants may only participate in the program twice
- Please note that the Youth Parliament program is facilitated by a team of volunteer Taskforce. Whilst Taskforce is comprised of an experienced team and supported by Y Victoria employees, they themselves are not employees. Taskforce is designed as a space to upskill young Victorians, and as such, have flexible availability. Additionally, the team is equipped to provide low-level emotional support, but is not equipped to provide significant or ongoing mental health support. This must be understood by all participants, their Resource People, and their parents, guardians and carers. Should a participant's needs be too significant for the program, the participant will be offered mental health support resources, and asked to leave the program. The Y Victoria holds the right to remove a participant at any time
- Applications for Youth Parliament are competitive and is capped at 20 teams

SELECTION CRITERIA

Each application will be assessed on a uniform criterion to provide a balanced and accurately representative program which includes the vast spectrum of young Victorians. Selection of teams will be based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- Representation of the diversity of Victoria's young people, including but not limited to:
  - Metropolitan and regional young people
  - School, council and community-based teams
- Applications are detailed and submitted on time
- Resource Person's ability/plan to recruit and support a team of 6 young people
- Access to a secure funding source to cover full cost of the team's participation, including initial 50% deposit. This may include funding assistance on offer for eligible teams, outlined on the following page

> "The Youth Parliament program has inspired and empowered me to try and contribute to making change and speaking up about topics and matters that are important to me."
>
> - 2026 Youth Parliamentarian

PROGRAM COST

$6,100 (plus GST) per team of six participants.

Full or 50% payment due 18 February. Final payment due 23 April.

FUNDING ASSISTANCE

We currently have two subsidized funding options for a limited number of Youth Parliament teams or individuals. To apply for funding assistance, please indicate this in your application form.

1.Young people living with a disability:

Financial assistance is available to support individuals or teams of young people that are made up of people with a disability. These funds can go towards making the program more accessible to these young people.

2. Electorally underrepresented communities:

Full or partial sponsorship may be available to teams that are made up of young people from electorally underrepresented communities through the generous support of the Victorian Electoral Commission. Communities that are eligible to apply for this funding include:

- First Nations Young people living with a disability
- Low socio-economic
- Rural and/or regional
- Culturally & linguistically diverse
- Currently experiencing or have previously experienced homelessness

In the past some teams have been able to secure funding assistance by contacting local community organisations like Rotary clubs and local councils, or by contacting their local MP. We encourage any teams seeking partial or full funding assistance to explore these options first, due to the competitive nature of our program and the limited number of funded spots on offer.



HOW TO APPLY

Please read the Application Information pack carefully and in full, and complete the application form: https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/3khDvMZxms

Any questions about the program or application process can be sent to Anna “Scotty” Scott at youthparliament.vic@ymca.org.au

WHAT’S NEXT?

- The Resource Person of successful teams will be sent a Letter of Offer on 16 December, which must be returned by 18 December
- Your 6 team members must be confirmed by 4 February, via the link provided in the Letter of Offer

WHAT IF YOU ARE UNSUCCESSFUL?

Don’t worry- your Youth Parliament journey is not over! Occasionally, teams will drop out of the program. Teams who have applied will automatically be added to our team waitlist, and will be contacted in the event we have extra spaces.

There are also many other ways to engage with the Y! Budding journalists can join our Youth Press Gallery, and individual applicants can apply to fill spaces of any Youth Parliament teams without 6 participants.

To hear about these opportunities, join our mailing list:
https://vicyouth.ymca.org.au/learning-and-leadership/youth-parliament/get-in-touch

INTERESTED IN OUR OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMS?

See our suite of programs here:
https://vicyouth.ymca.org.au/learning-and-leadership/youth-training

For enquiries regarding our youth programs, reach out to us at youthvoice@ymca.org.au

