



youth affairs network qld



ANNUAL REPORT 2020 – 2021



**Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc.
Annual Report 2019- 2020**

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YANQ acknowledges support from:

Individual and organisational member as well as other NGO's that have assisted us financially and supported our work in so many ways. YANQ would also like to thank networks and communities that invited, hosted or worked with YANQ in various capacity during the past twelve months. YANQ will also like to acknowledge that the Office for Youth, Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women/Department of Child Safety, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs has provided YANQ with a \$50K per annum interim funding for the past 4 years.

Acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

We believe that the primary culture of Australia is Aboriginal. We recognise that Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islander peoples are 3 separate cultures. We recognise Aboriginal people as the permanent custodians of mainland Australia, including those areas of land whose owners have been wiped out as a result of racist policies and acts. We use the term custodianship in the context of protection and care for the land.



YANQ is committed to respecting Murri communities and individuals. We seek to understand their responses to policies and issues affecting them. We are committed to learning about their understandings of the impact of decisions on them. YANQ apologises for the past and present social mistreatment of Murri and Islander people created by colonisation, and is committed to supporting the healing process.

A Summary of YANQ's Values

At YANQ, we believe that everyone is unique. At the same time, human beings share a lot in common, and are essentially social. We envisage a society where everyone lives in harmony. For this to happen, society must both value every individual and seek the best outcome for the community as a whole. There is the same diversity amongst young people as the rest of the community; like everyone else, young people need to feel respected and valued. When young women and young men are treated as important, the rest of society will gain from their insights and experiences.

We aim to contribute to developing a society that genuinely includes all its members. That's why we are committed to promoting multiculturalism (in its widest sense), and supporting and respecting the wide range of cultures that are part of Australian society. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people always have been, and always will be, the first people of this land. Because of their special relationship with the land, indigenous culture will always have a particular significance in Australian society. Focussing on reconciliation with indigenous people is an important starting point toward creating a more inclusive society. It also provides a model for other areas of action, including strategies toward improving the situation of young people.

We believe that the most effective way to achieve constructive social change is for people to work together. Economic, social and political change is happening all the time, and it is critical that we

constantly assess and reassess our strategies if we are to influence change. Both the process and outcomes of change must be fair if sustained, constructive social change is to occur.

We believe that everybody is entitled to have their basic emotional and material rights met. The central role of governments is to ensure that this occurs. Unfortunately, at the moment, governments in Australia focus on supporting global economic interests. Whilst we believe that everyone is fundamentally equal, some sections of our society do not have access to their fair share of society's resources. This includes young people, whose basic human rights are currently not being met. YANQ is committed to encouraging positive discrimination on behalf of those groups which miss out in society so that this type of social injustice will be overcome. It is only when everyone's fundamental rights are fulfilled, and each has the means to fully participate, that it will become relevant to talk about "mutual obligation" between society and its members.

We believe that a range of strategies is required to achieve constructive social change. Governments in Australia appear committed to stopping the voice of those who challenge their misplaced priorities. YANQ is responsible for being a strong public voice which lobbies and advocates on behalf of those young people who particularly miss out in society and of young people as a whole. To undertake this role effectively, it is crucial that we draw on the expertise of those working most closely with issues affecting particular groups of young people - young women and young men themselves, youth workers and youth organisations. That's why networking is another important social change strategy; it enables the youth sector to participate in collective action.

Ultimately, YANQ's credibility is maintained by practising what we preach. Our whole structure is designed to ensure that our values and vision permeate the organisation. We are committed to maintaining an open, flexible, accountable, consistent, inclusive, valuing approach in all our dealings - within YANQ, and in our relations with our members and the wider community. We are committed to applying our values in everything we say, and everything we do.

About the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland

The Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc. (YANQ) is the peak community youth affairs organisation in Queensland, representing individuals and organisations from Queensland's youth sector.

We promote the interests and well-being of young people across the state by:

- disseminating information to members, the youth sector, and the broader community
- undertaking campaigns and lobbying
- making representations to government and other influential bodies
- resourcing regional and issues-based networks
- consulting and liaising with members and the field

- linking with key state and national bodies
- initiating projects
- hosting forums and conferences
- input into policy development
- enhancing the professional development of the youth sector

We advocate on behalf of young people in Queensland, especially disadvantaged young people, to government and the community.

We promote and support cultural diversity. We encourage the development of policies and programs that respond to the rights and needs of young people.

Committee Members

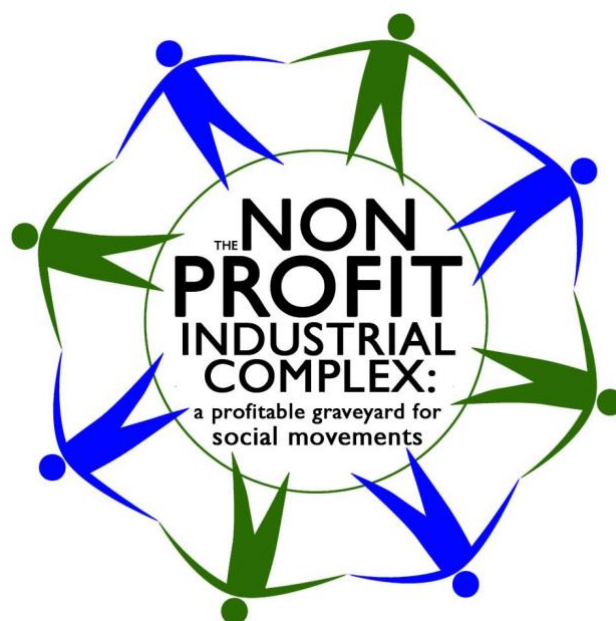
Mr Jude Saldanha (President)
 Mr (Kuot) Elijah Buol (Vice-President)
 Ms Leticia Batista (Treasurer)
 Ms Tanya Genito (Secretary)
 Ms Neta-Rie Mabo
 Mr Jonathan Tapau
 Mr Gavin Tyson
 Ms Deb Kilroy (Ex officio)
 Mr Siyavash Doostkhah (Ex officio)

Staff

Siyavash Doostkhah
Director

Lulu Wren
Bookkeeper

Consultants
 Karen Mitchell (Accountant)



President's report

2020-2021 has been another challenging year. The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to create uncertainty, adding another level of complexity to the work of the youth sector.

The haphazard approach by the State Government to youth policy and total abdication of responsibility for supporting the youth sector continues to have a negative impact on our sector and the quality/scope of services available to young people.

At the same time as the youth sector struggles to meet the increasing demand placed on it to provide quality support services for young people, the level of funding for the sector has decreased. Failure of the government to reinstate YANQ's core funding for the past 8 years has also impacted strongly on the wellbeing of the youth sector across Queensland and the provision of quality of advice to the government.

With young people being disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 crisis and with no specific youth recovery strategy in place, the future for young people is not looking very good. YANQ will continue to highlight these issues to the Government and offer our expertise to assist with formulating and implementing a comprehensive response.

Despite all the limitations, YANQ has been involved in many important projects in the past 12 months. A plethora of work in advocacy, lobbying, research and policy development has been undertaken by YANQ. The following report outlines, briefly, YANQ's core activities. Please contact our Director if you would like any further information and/or clarification about any of the issues documented in this report, or if you would like to engage with any of our ongoing work.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a special thanks to all our members for your ongoing support of YANQ's work. Without its members YANQ will cease to exist. YANQ's membership has now exceeded 700.

Your financial support, as well as your engagement with policy development and collective advocacy strategies has made us a strong force that, even with minimum or no funding, can achieve positive outcomes for young people and the youth sector.

I would like to thank my colleagues on YANQ's management committee who have supported me in my role as the President of YANQ in the past 12 months. I would also like to thank our staff and volunteers who are doing a great job under very difficult circumstances.

Finally, I hope that in the coming year we can continue to build on our strengths in partnership with the sector across Queensland and build YANQ's capacity to become a stronger voice for young people and the youth sector in Queensland.

Jude Saldanha
President
Youth Affairs Network Queensland

Why the government should reinstate YANQ's funding and stop the silencing of young people

In January 2013, the LNP Government ceased funding the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland (YANQ). This has excluded young people, youth workers and youth organisations from most policy debates on youth issues. Despite this, YANQ has continued to maintain some key functions on a shoestring budget.

YANQ is widely engaged with the youth sector throughout Qld. Our membership includes over 700 young people, youth workers and NGO's. We have a proud history as the lead youth sector peak in Queensland for over 30 years.

YANQ is a lean, highly networked organisation which can respond rapidly to critical issues affecting young people, particularly marginalised young people (e.g. DFV, LGBTI, ice, child protection, terrorism). We offer a rich source of intelligence for government on the changing experiences and needs of young people in rural, remote and urban Queensland.

YANQ promotes the interests and wellbeing of young people in Queensland through:

- Information to the youth sector
- Government committees and working groups
- Policy advice and submissions
- Campaigns and lobbying
- Regional and issues-based networks
- Research and consultation
- Forums and conferences
- Youth sector development and training.

YANQ is distinguished from many other peaks by our innovative, decentralised model – CPLAN. Our highly regional structure enables all Queensland young people and youth workers to play an active role in identifying youth worker needs; engaging in customised locally-relevant training; undertaking local research and consultation; and actively contributing to state-level policy development.

An investment in YANQ is the most cost-effective means of ensuring government access to sophisticated, evidence-based, solution-focused, practical advice on issues affecting young people across portfolios. Adequately resourced, YANQ could, once again, be a critical conduit of information on all issues affecting young people throughout Queensland.

YANQ At a Glance

Govt invests in YANQ – the Qld peak body for youth issues and the youth sector.



YANQ helps create a vibrant, genuinely state-wide, youth sector which attracts and retains competent youth workers.

Varied groups of youth workers and young people become informed and comfortable engaging in policy processes.



YANQ partners with universities to undertake research on issues affecting young people.

YANQ analyses available research and conducts consultations to provide informed and succinct briefings to government stakeholders.

YANQ leads strategies to strengthen the capacity of the youth sector workforce.



Government youth policies strategies and programs are better able to make informed decisions in the interests of young people from throughout Qld.



Positive outcomes for young people

The year at a glance

Online Forums

As you may be aware, YANQ was going to host a face-to-face youth sector gathering in May 2020 which, due to the COVID-19 pandemic had to be postponed. With the uncertainty around having any form of large gathering, the funding body (Office for Youth) and YANQ consulted with the reference group and decided to cancel the gathering and instead use the funding to host a series of online forums. To this end, YANQ administered an online survey of the sector to find out priority issues for these online forums. 84 people responded and the highest priorities areas identified were Housing/Homelessness, Mental Health and Reengagement with Education. See full report here:

http://www.yanq.org.au/uploads/1/4/1/7/14174316/youth_work_online_forums_survey_results.pdf

The first forum focusing on Mental Health was held on 13th October 2020. The forum title was 'Medicalising distress and ignoring social ills - who benefits and how should we respond'. Professor Jon Jureidini was our guest speaker. Jon is a child psychiatrist who heads Adelaide University's Critical and Ethical Mental Health research group (CEMH), which promotes safer, more effective and more ethical research and practice in mental health; and the Paediatric Mental Health Training Unit. Jon's talk was well received and YANQ is planning to engage Jon to help develop a protocol for youth workers to know at what stage they need to be concerned about young people's mental health and refer them to clinical services. You can watch the recording of the forum here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXTvvjtNMLI>

The second forum was held on 12th November and was titled 'What would it take to re-engage young people with education/learning?'. We had three speakers, Dr Marnee Shay from The University of Queensland, Michelle Kinnane from Deception Bay Flexible Learning Centre and Lisa Love the Director of Youth Engagement/Department of Education. This forum was also well received and you can watch the recording here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AKDIhZFxX8>

The third forum was held on 18th March 2021. The forum was titled: 'Post COVID-19 Recovery, from service delivery to community economic development, what is the role of the youth sector?'. This forum was a timely conversation given the employment challenges in a post COVID environment which have disproportionately affected young people and those facing social disadvantage. This forum was also very well received and you can watch the recording here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCEINNuXiE4>

The fourth and final forum of the year titled 'It takes time but it can be done!' was held on 27th May 2021. This was a conversation with Wally Dethlefs about his experience of doing youth work in Queensland for almost 50 years. Wally has been responsible for establishing many youth services in Queensland including Youth Advocacy Centre, Brisbane Youth Service and the Bay-side Accommodation. Wally has been involved in many campaigns which have improved the lives of young people in the criminal justice system. This forum was also very well received and you can watch the recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKqFC8AwOUs>

Online Forums contd.

Following each forum, YANQ administered an online survey and gathered further information from the forum participants. After analysis of the survey findings and forum discussions, a report was produced and shared with the forum participants, broader sector and the Office for Youth. The *Findings of Online Forums Topics Survey September 2020: Enabling Youth Workers and Service Providers to Influence Policy* report can be accessed here:

http://www.yanq.org.au/uploads/1/4/1/7/14174316/youth_work_online_forums_survey_results.pdf

Queensland State Election 2020

In consultation with our members, YANQ developed the following four questions which were sent to all registered Queensland political parties.

1. In Government, would you support an increase of 20% to the funding of existing youth services?
2. In Government, would you provide funding to establish an additional 20 youth services in communities with no existing funded youth service?
3. In Government, would you reinstate core funding of YANQ which was cut 8 year ago leaving the youth sector as the only sector without a funded peak body?
4. In Government, would you roll out a substantial Youth Job Creation Program aimed at engaging marginalised young people who would otherwise have no chance of competing with other young people in the job market?

YANQ then followed up with political parties in regards to state election and questions re youth issues. The Labor party only responded to the Questions the night before the election. This was a strategy Labor used to respond to all peak bodies requesting clear commitments.

One of the more interesting election related activities that YANQ undertook was to participate in a Zoom meeting with a number of One Nation state election candidates!! This was an opportunity to challenge them in relation to the way they had been using youth crime to increase fear in the community and position themselves as strong advocates for victims of youth crime.

Young people and education

During this last year, an increasing number of parents have been contacting YANQ seeking alternative options to mainstream schooling as their children are having difficulty with state schooling systems. The number of young people who have disengaged from education has also risen substantially. These issues to some degree may be related to the COVID-19 lockdowns but systemic problems within the mainstream schools continue to be issue of high concern.

YANQ co-authored an article with the Education Department on the import role of significant adults such as youth workers in supporting young people to maintain their engagement with education. This was published on Education Queensland's website. Here is the link to the article: <https://www.sparktheirfuture.qld.edu.au/trusted-adults/>

YANQ also worked with JSA Designs which is a company contracted by Education Queensland to design and manage their 'We The Differents' website. We have been exploring the following options for future collaboration:

- Article outlines, that JSA Designs can write, and YANQ can review;
- YANQ membership network could write articles, which JSA Designs could edit and publish on the website;
- YANQ to help JSA Designs reach out to some relevant young people who may want to write articles or share their stories;
- Working in partnership to coordinate/facilitate workshops with relevant young people to help shape and review the content they are producing, and look towards the next phase of the site.

COVID-19 Impacts on the Youth Sector

As expected, COVID-19 has occupied a lot of YANQ's work since last year which includes:

- Facilitated three youth sector meetings online
- Set up a Facebook Group (Youth Work Qld)
- Joined Queensland Peaks Network
- Joined Peaks/COVID-19 meetings facilitated by Department of Child Safety, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs
- Met twice a week on Zoom with other State Youth Peaks
- Participated in a Zoom meeting facilitated by Shelter & CSIA focused on COVID-19 learnings

The main issue that the sector has faced, and we still do not have any answer to, is how to connect with highly marginalised young people during lockdowns. The first lockdowns we had in Queensland forced youth sector members to move their work online. This worked with some groups of young people but the highly marginalised cohort which historically youth work focused on were left with no connection or support. Since the lockdowns have stopped, services are trying to reach out and re-establish their links with this group but there are major concerns about what we should be doing if we have another spike in COVID-19 cases and we are forced into lockdown again.

YANQ had a meeting with Di Farmer, Minister for Youth, her youth advisor and the Director of Community & Corporate Partnerships. YANQ provided the Minister with a briefing about key issues faced by young people and the sector in particular relating to the COVID crisis.

YANQ also wrote to Shannon Fentiman, State Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. We sought a meeting so we could discuss what stand-alone programs are needed for marginalised young people who would otherwise have no chance of competing with other unemployed young people but unfortunately we received a standard promotion about existing programs such as Skilling Queenslanders For Work.

Youth Justice

It's been a terrible year on the youth justice front. Following the tragic deaths associated with a number of road incidents involving stolen vehicles, Labor came under siege by the LNP, Police

Union and Murdoch press. Instead of leading the debate and educating the public, Labor bowed to the unethical and relentless campaign on youth crime and made a series of regressive amendments to the Youth Justice Act. In our submission to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee of the Parliament, YANQ warned that the proposed amendments will only increase the number of children in the youth prisons leading to overcrowding, overflow to watch houses and eventually building of more youth prisons. This approach will only act as a pipeline for youth to the adult criminal justice system. Recent data from youth detention centres and police watch houses confirm YANQ's prediction and the devastating impact it is making to the lives of Queensland children.

We do not believe that the health, wellbeing and safety of young people and more broadly that of the community has been adequately considered by our politicians. First and foremost, we believe that socio-economic structures and their shortcomings are the root problem. Children are a product of our society, they are a mirror that reflect to us the health of our families, communities and society as a whole. As such, responses to children's behavior should be informed and implemented within a social health framework.

Contrary to what is needed and despite all contemporary research/evidence, the Government has been fixated on responding to children's cries for help through the Criminal Justice System. This penal colony mentality has cost our community dearly, wasting not only much of the Government's financial resources but more importantly wasting many lives needlessly. This preoccupation with punishment has also made our community less safe.

It is disingenuous of our politicians and public servants to pitch the community against young people by painting vulnerable children as a 'threat to community safety' and passing laws that punish young people for the failing of our social systems.

All children deserve the love and care to flourish and grow up to lead productive lives. For whatever reason when this love and care is not provided by the family it is the responsibility of the community to step in and provide this support. The role of the Government should be to support families and communities to ensure this love and care is provided to all children in a genuine way.

Considering the recent commentary and approach by both of the major political parties, YANQ has called for an independent inquiry and the rewriting the Youth Justice Act to move Queensland out of the dark ages and the punitive penal colony mentality which has been the hallmark of our so-called 'justice system'.

We have recommend that youth sector Government staff should study a report released earlier this year titled *Child First Justice: The Research Evidence-base*.

The report's author, Professor Stephen Case, is an expert in criminology at Loughborough University. Informed by a comprehensive review of international sources of literature, the report presents the research evidence-base for Child First as a complete model of practice and in relation to its four individual, interacting tenets. Each section collates, discusses and evaluates the principle of Child First in terms of their underpinning theories (e.g. causes of offending, programme change mechanisms, their basis in national and international policies/strategies including children's rights instruments), and their related empirical research evidence-bases from the field of youth justice and associated areas (e.g. childhood and youth studies, policing, social work, health). Case studies and operational examples are integrated throughout to illustrate the

research evidence-base in practice. The evidence collected and reported on brings longstanding, multi-disciplinary research evidence-bases related to each tenet and the associated emerging practical (research) evidence-base to support the Child First model of youth justice.

In response to the reactionary approach by the Labor Government, YANQ met with senior policy advisors from the Attorney General's Office and put forward a three point plan that, in our view, has the potential to harness the existing resources available in the community and youth sector and to build on it. The following three strategies have the potential to successfully reduce youth crime rates and allow savings made to be directed towards further prevention programs:

1. YANQ to work on a community education and awareness building strategy focused on alternatives to detention for 10-14 year old children. This is to build understanding and confidence in the broader community in preparation for raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility.
2. YANQ to work with the Government in designing, implementing and evaluating a pilot Youth Primary Crime Prevention program. Last time Queensland had such a program was in mid 90's. YANQ can play a key role in the program design, support of the sector to ensure necessary skill sets are in place for workers engaged by the program, and a participatory action research framework to maximise the success of the program. Once the evidence of the impact of the pilot program can be clearly established, the program can then be rolled out before the next election.
3. YANQ to run training for the youth sector to ensure existing youth workers have the necessary skills to be able to engage appropriately with the cohort of young people who engage with offending behaviour. YANQ to also work with the services to ensure they have the necessary plans and strategies to direct and support youth workers to undertake work with this specific cohort of young people.

Following up from the meeting with policy advisors from the Attorney General's office, YANQ met with senior officers in the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs and tabled our three-point plan. Unfortunately, neither Department showed any interest in the plan and instead responded by outlining a range of initiatives which they have already begun implementing.

YANQ also met with Cheryl Scanlon the head of the Youth Justice Task Force and Michael Drane the Head of Detention Centre operations discussing various Youth Justice issues and gave them details about our three-point plan and how YANQ and its membership can assist them. Unfortunately, our offer was again ignored.

YANQ also lodged a written submission to the Legal Affairs Committee which was reviewing the proposed amendments to the Youth Justice Act. YANQ was asked to give evidence at a public hearing which was held on 22nd March 2021. You can watch the public hearing [here](#). YANQ's evidence starts one hour into the proceedings.

With no interest from the Government to work with the sector on Youth Justice issues, we focused on putting some external pressure on the Government. YANQ's Director wrote an opinion piece for the *Saturday Paper* which was published on 27th February 2021. This was followed up by a podcast interview with the 7am Program on 29th February. YANQ received a high level of positive feedback about these from both Queensland and interstate.



YANQ also continued its long-standing campaign for the minimum age of criminal responsibility to be raised. Our work included participating in a meeting aimed at setting up the Queensland chapter of 'Raise the Age'. This group has been working collectively on a campaign in Queensland to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility.

The Council of Attorney Generals met on 27th July 2020 to decide if they are going to raise the minimum age. Despite much lobbying by the youth sector and legal and health bodies, the Council, once again, abdicated their responsibility and deferred the decision for another 12 months. This time they have stated that they need to be clear about what prevention and support programs have to be in place to replace putting kids in prison.

The Council of Attorney Generals was disbanded in 2020 and replaced by the National Cabinet and the issue of Raising of the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility was lost in transition!

State peaks network

YANQ continued to participate in network meetings with other state's youth peak bodies. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the youth sector state peaks have been meeting twice a week on Zoom. This has allowed for stronger relationships to be built which has facilitated a higher level of cooperation, sharing of knowledge and resources.

As a collective we have been in communication with the federal youth minister and the shadow minister on national youth issues. We also have been exploring how we can support one another in our fee-for service strategy.

Youth Housing

YANQ in partnership with the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition (QYHC) have been working with a group of people interested in exploring 'tiny home' options as a response to youth homelessness and generally housing affordability. 'Tiny homes' are becoming more and more accepted in the mainstream and can potentially provide a much-needed alternative for many young people. We are exploring how we could potentially involve a building company that can engage young people in the manufacturing of prefabricated tiny homes and in the process provide education and training for participants.

Another joint initiative of YANQ and QYHC is an online forum planned for later part of 2021. This online forum will explore 'couch surfing' and in particular a successful model in the ACT that supports young people and the host family to turn the couch surfing experience into long term stable accommodation.

YANQ and QYHC also hosted an online practice forum on youth workers' obligation to report sexual offences against children based on new provisions of the Queensland *Criminal Code Act 1899* that relates to fail to report (section 229BC).

Reinstatement of YANQ's core funding and Pre-budget Submission

Despite our continued advocacy, lobbying and ongoing meetings with a range of politicians and public servants, the Labor government has failed to reinstate YANQ's core funding. Queensland continues to remain the only state without a funded youth sector peak body. In Queensland, all other sector peak bodies are funded by the State Government and the youth sector remains the only unfunded one. This anomaly continues to contribute to Queensland falling behind the rest of the states in providing quality services and support to young people.

In late 2020 YANQ was once again awarded a \$50k interim funding (this was the 5th interim year!) for the 2021 calendar year with the view that after the state election YANQ could lodge a prebudget submission and proposal for core funding which we did but unfortunately, we were not successful and the State Government informed YANQ in mid 2021 that there will be no more interim funding either. A letter co-signed by all State Youth Sector Peaks urging Queensland Government to reinstate YANQ's peak body funding was also ignored.

With no department assuming the role of coordination for whole of government youth policy development and delivery, the refusal of government to reinstate YANQs funding and no new investment in the youth sector, the sector continues to suffer which means the quality of support and services to young people suffers. YANQ will continue to highlight these issues and lobby the government to get youth sector support and development back on track.

Queensland Young Achievers Awards

YANQ was once again invited to sit on the executive judges' panel to choose the Queensland Young Achievers. Amazing young people kicking major goals in various categories. YANQ has been an executive judge for the past five years. This year, again, a Murri young person received the overall award. That means three out of five overall young achievers in the past five years have been Murri young people.

Queensland Peaks Network

YANQ joined the Queensland Peaks Network this year and participated in a full planning session. YANQ also contributed to other work of the network including participation on the policy subcommittee of the Network.

Make Renting Fair Campaign

YANQ remained a member of the Make Renting Fair Coalition. With housing continuing to be a major issue impacting on the lives of young people, the work of this coalition is highly important for our sector. Unfortunately, due to strong lobbying by the real-estate/landlord lobby groups, Queensland Labor backed away from some of the reforms originally promised as part of their review of the Tenancy Law Reforms.



National and international work

In regards to national youth issues, YANQ has been working with other State Youth Peaks to raise with the Federal Government the need for specific strategies for young people in their COVID recovery plan. We are highly concerned about the staggering youth unemployment rate and the fact that most of the unemployed young will probably be without a job for a long time. We successfully prioritised this issue for action by AYAC which has undertaken a fundraising campaign and raised \$30K. The idea is to produce a report highlighting the unemployment problem and offering a number of solutions that could possibly either create jobs or to give young people meaningful things to do when unemployed.

YANQ collaborated with a youth worker from WA who has set up a website for professional development of youth workers in Australia and New Zealand. YANQ presented as part of a national panel on an online Youth Work Summit. There was much interest in YANQ's presentation and as a result we were invited to do a stand-alone session. On 2nd December 2020 YANQ facilitated an online training session for youth workers across Australia and New Zealand about

Youth Work and Activism. The session was well received by workers from across the country. A recording of the session is available online via this link: <https://www.youthwork.io/>

YANQ and our sister peak bodies from other states lodged a pre-budget submission to the Federal Government seeking resources for state peaks to contribute to the Federal Government's youth agenda by facilitating consultations with young people and the youth sector in each state. The Youth Peaks Network had a positive meeting with the policy advisor Alan Tudge, the Federal Youth Minister.

On the international front, a joint statement was submitted by YANQ, African Network of Youth Leaders for Peace and Sustainable Development, Girls' Power Initiative (GPI), International Relations Students' Association of McGill University, Youth Foundation of Bangladesh, Youth Path Organisation, and Young Power in Social Action. These are the nongovernment organisations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of United Nations to the 65th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. Here is the link to the submission:

http://www.yanq.org.au/uploads/1/4/1/7/14174316/african_network_of_youth_leaders_for_peace_and_sustainable_development_girls_power_initiative_international_relations_students_association_of_mcgill_university_youth_affairs_network_of_queensland_youth_foun-2.pdf

YANQ also:

- Submitted YANQ's quadrennial report to the United Nations;
- Attended the AGM for our national youth peak body, Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC);
- Had an online meeting with the advisor to Amanda Rishworth, the Federal Shadow Minister for Youth;
- Participated in a Zoom meeting with Terri Butler and Amanda Rishworth, the Federal Shadow Minister for Youth. We focused on the impact of COVID-19 on young people and the need for a recovery plan;
- Collaboration with other state youth peaks from across Australia to lodge a joint letter to the Senate on Job Security;
- Participated in a Zoom meeting with Tanya Plibersek and Amanda Rishworth focusing on the proposed legislation by the Federal Government to increase various university fees including youth work degrees;
- Co-signed a letter from state youth peaks to the Federal Government about increases to university fees and in particular to youth work degrees;
- Had a meeting with the newly appointed Executive Officer of Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC), discussing Queensland priorities and also strategy for AYAC to operate till next year's federal budget; and,
- Lodged a submission to the National Strategy to prevent child sexual abuse.

Key meetings

YANQ continued to meet with key legislators and policy makers including several meetings with the Minister for Youth and her advisors, the Director General of Department of Child Safety, Youth

and Women, the Director General of Department of Youth Justice, members of Parliament and ongoing meetings with the Office for Youth.

After the State election in October 2020 and the changes to the machinery of the Government that ensued, YANQ met with the Ministers and Director Generals of the Departments of Environment, Science and Youth and Department of Child Safety, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs. Neither department accepted responsibility for whole of government youth policy issues and each referred YANQ to the other department. Despite our ongoing contact with these two departments to clarify this issue, this void continued to the end of the reporting period of June 2021.

Other activities:

- Assisted Urban Utilities to recruit a young person to join their community reference group;
- Gave a three hour lecture to third year Social Work students on policy and advocacy at QUT;
- Held discussions about possible work with FRANK (a Sydney training provider organization);
- Participated in a four day online Youth Futures national forum;
- Participated in a Community Services Industry Alliance online event about service adaptation;
- Participated in an online forum 'The myth of child criminals';
- Ongoing contact with the conveners of Youth Interagencies.

YANQ's communication

YANQ's membership has increased to over 700. The majority of our members are from outside of South-East Queensland.

YANQ continued to have a significant presence in print and digital media. YANQ is highly respected by various media outlets and is the number one organisation for media to approach on most youth issues.

YANQ's Facebook page Likes have increased from 1216 to 1309 and has 1581 followers this year. YANQ also manages two other Facebook pages for specific campaigns. They are 'Celebrate Don't Medicate' and 'Prison Not Suitable for Children'. We also have a Facebook Group Youth Work Qld which has provided a platform for the youth sector to have direct communication on various youth issues. The group so far has 268 members.

YANQ's web page continues to be classed as Tier One which is the category for sites with the highest traffic and is equivalent to the websites of large national organisations. During the year YANQ's website had approximately 15,000 page views by over 7,500 unique visitors.

YANQ also continues to send out periodic email bulletins to over 1000 recipients.

Here are the links to YANQ's website, three Facebook pages, the new Facebook Group and Twitter feed:

- www.yanq.org.au
- <https://www.facebook.com/youthaffairsqld/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/youthworkqld>
- <https://www.facebook.com/Celebrate-dont-Medicate-1770560583170393/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/Prison-not-suitable-for-children-1728727917243786/>
- https://twitter.com/news_yanq?lang=en

Media Coverage

YANQ continued to use media as a way of highlighting key issues which impact on the lives of young people. Our work with the various media outlets includes:

- Coverage on a range of issues including ‘over representation of ATSI young people in the Youth Justice system’ and ‘chroming’;
- Worked with JJJ Hack program and participated in an interview about marginalised young people and post COVID employment opportunities;
- ABC TV News and [ABC News Print](#) on youth justice issues;
- An [opinion piece in the Saturday paper](#);
- A [podcast interview](#) with the 7am Program.



Treasurer's Report 2021

It is with great pleasure that I present our Accountant's Report for the year ending 30th June 2021.

Our financial records show that the association has book keeping processes in place to adequately record the association's income and expenditure and dealings with its assets and liabilities.

The interim funding that we have been receiving from State Government will run out in December 2021 and so far, we have not received any assurances that YANQ's core funding will be reinstated. Operating without core funding or any funding at all for the past eight years has had a detrimental effect on YANQ's work and more broadly on the work of the youth sector.

However, despite the funding situation YANQ continues to be a strong voice for the rights of young people in Queensland and has led many important campaigns which are outlined earlier in this Annual Report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all YANQ members and subscribers for their financial contribution to YANQ. Our current membership stands at over 700. I would also like to thank everyone who has contributed to the work of YANQ. Your support has helped maintain an independent voice for the youth sector in Queensland.

If you would like further any information, please contact our office.

Leticia Batista
Treasurer



Statement by Members of the Management Committee

For the year ended 30 June 2021

In the opinion of the committee members:

Non-Reporting Entity

The Committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements and is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporations Act (Qld) 1981* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

True & Fair View

The accompanying financial report presents a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the financial year ended on that date.


Going Concern

The association is primarily dependent upon core funding from the State Government to fund the association's operation and activities. In 2020 the association secured additional State Government funding for the year ending 30 December 2021. The association has submitted a funding proposal to and will continue to liaise with State Government in respect of securing renewed funding from January 2022. The Management Committee prepares an annual budget, regularly reviews the financial position of the association, and continues to seek additional funding and income in order to maintain the solvent operation of the association. As a result, at the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.


Signed in accordance with a subsection 60-15(2) of the the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*:



Signed



Print Name



Date

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the members of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc.

Report on the Financial Report

I have audited the accompanying financial report of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc., which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the income statement and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by members of the management committee.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial report Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc. is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the registered entity's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance for the year ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis of Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of my report.

I am independent of the registered entity in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the ACNC Act and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

I draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the registered entity's financial reporting responsibilities under the ACNC Act. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Emphasis of Matter – Government Funding

I draw attention to the Statement by the Management Committee disclosing the dependence of the association on state government funding for its ongoing operation. During the year the association secured additional government funding for the year ending 31 December 2021.

Management Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Management Committee of the association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and has determined that the basis for preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) 1981* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Act 2012*.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REVIEW REPORT...continued

To the members of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc.

The management committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the management committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the members of the management committee are responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the management committee either intend to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibility

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the responsible entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the responsible entities use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the association to express an opinion on the financial report. I am responsible for the direction supervision and performance of the association audit. I main solely responsible for my audit opinion.

I communicate with the association regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



Karen Mitchell FCA

27th October 2021

Beware



the non-profit
industrial complex.