



CONSTITUTION OF THE YOUTH AFFAIRS NETWORK OF QUEENSLAND INC.

1. NAME

The name of the incorporated association shall be the **Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc** (in these rules called the "Network").

2. DEFINITIONS

In this Constitution unless the contrary intention appears:

"Network" or **"YANQ"** means the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc formed under and by virtue of the provisions of this Constitution.

"Young People" and/or **"Young Person"** and/or **"Youth"** means anyone between the ages of twelve (12) and twenty five (25) years inclusive.

"Youth Worker" means anyone with the specialist competencies required to work with and for young people, particularly disadvantaged young people, on an individual and/or collective basis, using a rights-based approach.

"Youth Work" means specialist work with and for young people, particularly disadvantaged young people, on an individual and/or collective basis, using a rights-based approach.

"Youth Organisation" means any incorporated or non-incorporated body (or part of a body) which predominantly undertakes youth work or other work with young people.

"Non-government organisation" or **"NGO"** means any incorporated or non-incorporated not-for-profit body (or part of a body) and includes both institutionalised and community organisations.

"Community organisation" or **"CO"** means any incorporated or non-incorporated body (or part of a body) which is driven by and/or accountable to a geographic community or community of interest and retains strong community connections.

"Youth Sector" means the group comprising young people, paid unpaid youth workers, other workers with young people and youth organisations.

"Youth Affairs" means any matter affecting the youth sector.

"Values and Vision" means the document entitled "Youth Affairs Network of Queensland: Our Values, Vision and Priorities", which forms a part of this Constitution.

"Values Summary" means the document entitled "Youth Affairs Network of Queensland: A Summary of Our Values and Vision", which forms a part of this Constitution.

"Management Committee" means the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Management Committee formed under and by virtue of this Constitution.

"Financial Member" means a member who is not indebted to the Network in respect of any annual subscription or levy or other payment whatsoever and membership has been through a process of acceptance by the Management Committee.

"Financial Subscriber" means any individual or organisation interested in the work of the Network, including government, who cannot be a financial member and who is not indebted to the Network.

3. PURPOSE

- 3.1 As the youth sector peak body in Queensland, the Network seeks to influence the agenda in the youth sector. Informed by its members, and consistent with its Values and Vision, the Network aims to establish directions and voice positions that promote interests of the sector and/or its members and thereby contribute to social and cultural change.
- 3.2 The purpose of the Network is detailed in the Values and Vision and summarised in the Values Summary. All decisions of the Network shall be consistent with these documents which are appended to this Constitution and are a part thereof.

4. OBJECTS

The Network may use and employ such lawful methods as the Management Committee sees fit to achieve the Network's aims provided that the members shall not be restricted in any way by this Constitution from making direct contact themselves with Commonwealth, State or Local Governments.

YANQ exists to contribute toward achieving the rights of young people, particularly disadvantaged young people. The Network will have the following objectives.

- 4.1 To engage with Aboriginal communities, learn from their wisdom, and integrate this learning throughout YANQ.
- 4.2 To stand alongside Aboriginal communities to advocate for the rights of their young people.
- 4.3 To work toward achieving equality across Queensland society through empowering the voices of young people.
- 4.4 To challenge laws, policies, systems and structures which unfairly marginalise and disadvantage young Queenslanders.
- 4.5 To advocate for the development and maintenance of Youth Work practice designed to empower young people.
- 4.6 To seek greater recognition of the unique contribution of community organisations to effective youth service provision.
- 4.7 To initiate research to inform policy development in the interests of young people.

8. To be a strong, powerful, unwavering voice for progressing youth issues on behalf of the youth sector.
9. To strive to maintain good relationships with youth sector stakeholders.
10. To feature strong, trusting organisational relationships which enable productive engagement at all levels within YANQ.
11. To contribute to the development of the youth sector.
12. To be accountable YANQ's membership for operating in a manner consistent with its values.

5. POWERS

The powers of the Network are:

- 5.1 To subscribe to, become a member of, or cooperate with any other association, club or organisation, whether incorporated or not, whose objects are altogether or in part similar to those of the Network, provided that the Network may not subscribe to or support with its funds any club, association or organisation which does not prohibit the distribution of its income and property among its members to an extent at least as great as that imposed on the Network under or by virtue of rule 22 (9).
- 5.2 In furtherance to the Objects of the Network to buy, sell and deal in all kinds of articles, commodities, services and provisions, both liquid and solid, for the members of the Network or persons frequenting the Network's premises.
- 5.3 To purchase, take or lease or in exchange, hire and otherwise acquire any lands, buildings, easements or property, real and personal, and any rights or privileges which may be requisite for the purpose of, or capable of being conveniently used in connection with, any of the objects of the Network, provided that in case the Network may take or hold any property which may be subject to any trusts the Network will only deal with the same in such manner as is allowed by law having regard to such trusts.
- 5.4 To enter into arrangements or contracts with any government, or authority, that are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the Objects and the exercise of powers of the Network; to obtain from any such government or authority any rights, privileges and concessions which the Network may think is desirable to obtain, and to carry out, exercise and comply with any such arrangements, rights, privileges and concessions, such contracts should be permitted with any government Commonwealth, State or Local, any authority, organisation or any entity whatsoever.
- 5.5 To appoint, employ, remove or suspend such staff, workers, Management Committee members, Network members and other persons as may be necessary or convenient for the purpose of the Network.
- 5.6 To remunerate any person or body corporate for services rendered, or to be rendered, and whether by way of brokerage or otherwise in placing or assisting to place or guaranteeing the placing of any unsecured notes, debentures, or other securities of the Network, or in or about the Network or promoting of the Network or in the furtherance of its objects.

- 5.7 To construct, improve, maintain, develop, work, manage, carry out, alter or control any houses, buildings, grounds, works or conveniences which may advance the Network's interests, and to contribute to, subsidise or otherwise assist and take part in the construction, improvement, maintenance, development, working, management, carrying out alternation or control thereof.
- 5.8 To invest and deal with the money of the Network not immediately required in such manner as may from time to time be thought fit.
- 5.9 To draw, make, accept, endorse, discount, execute and issue promissory notes, bills of exchange and other negotiable or transferable instruments, and to mortgage or charge any asset or thing.
- 5.10 In furtherance of the Objects of the Network to sell, improve, manage, develop, exchange, lease, dispose of, turn to account or otherwise deal with all or any part of the property and rights of the Network.
- 5.11 To take any gift or property whether subject to any special trust or not, for any one or more of the objects of the Network.

6. MEMBERSHIP

- 6.1 Membership of the Network may be granted to youth organisations, youth workers and young people in the non-government youth sector, who have:
 - 6.1.1 agreed to support the Objects and Values Summary of the Network, and,
 - 6.1.2 paid the prescribed membership fee.
- 6.2 An application requesting membership will be made in writing or electronically via YANQ's website. Applications may be in such form as the Management Committee from time to time prescribes, provided that the membership form will require applicants to sign an agreement to support the Objects and Values Summary of the Network.
- 6.3 Any other individual or organisation interested in the work of the Network is entitled to become a subscriber to the Network.
- 6.4 The fees for membership of, or subscription to, the Network will be:
 - 6.4.1 such sum as the Management Committee determine.
 - 6.4.2 payable at such time and in such manner as the Management Committee determine.
- 6.5 Any fully completed request for membership of the Network accompanied by the relevant fee will be considered by the Management Committee at the meeting following its receipt, and:
 - 1. the Management Committee may determine at this meeting the admission, further investigation or rejection of the applicant.
 - 2. the Management Committee can reject an application for new membership on the basis of disproportionate membership by a particular organisation or interest group, or, a history of behaviour contrary to the interests of the Network.
- 6.5.3 upon acceptance of an application for membership, the Secretary may forthwith give the applicant notice in writing of such acceptance.
- 6.5.4 upon rejection of an application for membership, the Secretary will forthwith give the applicant notice in writing of such rejection clearly outlining the reasons for rejection and the appeals mechanism.

- 6.6 A financial member is a member who is not indebted to the Network in respect of any annual subscription or levy or other payment whatsoever and membership has been approved through a process of acceptance by the management Committee.
- 6.7 Any application for subscription to the Network accompanied by the relevant fee will be automatically accepted, and the Secretary will forthwith inform the applicant of their acceptance.
- 6.8 Financial Subscriber means any individual or organisation interested in the work of the Network, including government, who cannot be a financial member and who is not indebted to the Network.

7. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- 7.1 A member can resign from the Network at any time by giving notice to the Secretary. Such resignation will take effect at the time such notice is received by the Secretary unless a later date is specified in the notice when it will take effect on that later date.
- 7.2 If a member:
 - 7.2.1 fails to comply with any of the provisions of this Constitution, or,
 - 7.2.2 has membership fees in arrears for a period of three (3) months or more, or,
 - 7.2.3 behaves in a manner considered to be injurious or prejudicial to the character or interest of the Network, or,
 - 7.2.4 behaves in a manner inconsistent with the Values and Vision of the Network,

the Management Committee may consider whether the membership will be terminated.
- 7.3 Where the Management Committee is inclined to terminate membership, the Secretary will advise the member in writing accordingly. The member concerned will be given a full and fair opportunity to present their case prior to a final decision on the matter being made by the Management Committee.
- 7.4 If the Management Committee still resolves to terminate the membership, it will instruct the Secretary to advise the member in writing accordingly, clearly outlining the reasons for termination and the appeals mechanism.

8. APPEALS BY REJECTED APPLICANTS AND TERMINATED MEMBERS

- 8.1 Any applicant or member has the right to appeal and have a support person present through the appeals process. The Network may provide an interpreter if required on the request of the applicant or member.
- 8.2 Any person whose application for membership has been rejected or whose membership has been terminated may within one month of receiving written notification thereof, lodge with the Secretary written notice of his/her/the organisation's intention to appeal against the decision of the Management Committee.
- 8.3 Upon receipt of a notification of intention to appeal the matter will be reconsidered at one subsequent Management Committee meeting within three (3) months of the date on which such notice was posted by registered mail to the

applicant or member. At this meeting the applicant or member will be given the opportunity to fully present their case and the Management Committee or those members thereof who rejected the application for membership or supported the termination of membership will likewise have the opportunity to present its/their case. The appeal will be determined by a 2/3 majority vote of Management Committee members present at this meeting.

- 8.4 An applicant or member who remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal to Management Committee is entitled to have the matter reconsidered at a General Meeting of the Network, within three (3) months of the Management Committee meeting. At this meeting the applicant or member will be given the opportunity to fully present her/his/the organisation's case and the Management Committee who rejected the application will likewise have the opportunity to present its/their case. The appeal must be determined by a 2/3 majority vote of financial members present at this meeting and their proxy votes where applicable.
- 8.5 Where a person whose application is rejected or membership is terminated does not appeal against the decision of the Management Committee within the time prescribed by this Constitution or so appeals but the appeal is unsuccessful, the Secretary will forthwith refund the balance of any fee paid.
- 8.6 The Network will not be under any obligation to reconsider an application of membership of a rejected applicant or terminated member for a period of 5 years. The Management Committee may waive the five (5) year period in its absolute discretion.

9. REGISTER OF MEMBERS

- 9.1 The Management Committee will cause a Register to be kept of the following:
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The names, organisational affiliations and email addresses of all individual persons admitted to membership of the Network and the date of their admission.
 - 9.1.2 the organisational names and addresses of all organisations admitted to membership of the Network and the date of their admission.
2. Particulars may also be entered into the Register of deaths, resignations, terminations and reinstatements of membership and any further particulars as the Management Committee or the members at any General Meeting may require from time to time.
- 9.3 The Register will be open for inspection at all reasonable times by any member who previously applies to the Secretary for such inspection.

10. MEMBERSHIP OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 10.1 The Management Committee will consist of not less than six (6) nor more than nine (9) financial members comprising:
 - 10.1.1 the Director of the Network, as a non-voting member, and,
 - 10.1.2 not less than eight (6) nor more than twelve (9) voting members, who shall be financial members of the Network and will be appointed to the Management Committee for a 2 year term.

- 10.2 At each Annual General Meeting, half the positions on the Management Committee will be declared vacant. The 2 year term of between three (3) and five (5) members elected prior to the Annual General Meeting each year, will commence at the Annual General Meeting, provided that::
- 10.2.1 Management Committee members may not be permanently or regularly employed by the Network, and,
 - 10.2.2 the majority of voting Management Committee members shall be at least 18 years of age, and,
 - 10.2.3 no more than two (2) people who are members of the governing body or staff of the same organisation can be members of the Network Management Committee, and,
 - 10.2.4 four positions may be reserved for the following:
 - a young person member,
 - an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander member,
 - a member from a non-English speaking background, and
 - a member living outside Brisbane
- 10.3 The election of Management Committee members will take place in the following manner:
- 10.3.1 The Management Committee will appoint a Returning Officer for the election prior to the Annual General Meeting.
 - 10.3.2 Nomination forms will be posted to all financial members of the Network at least forty two (42) days prior to the Annual General Meeting.
 - 10.3.4 The nomination must be lodged with the Secretary at least twenty-eight (28) days before the Annual General Meeting.
 - 10.3.5 A list of nominations, in alphabetical order within the categories detailed in 10.2.4, including the names of the proposer and seconder, shall be posted in a conspicuous place in the office of the Network for at least fourteen (14) days prior to the Annual General Meeting.
 - 10.3.6 In the event of the Secretary receiving more than one nomination for specific categories, or two general nominations, a ballot for that particular section must take place.
 - 10.3.7 Balloting lists will be prepared, containing the nominations by name in alphabetical order for a young person member, an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander member, a member from a non-English speaking background, a member living outside Brisbane and/or two other members.
 - 10.3.8 The balloting lists, along with candidate profiles, will be posted or emailed with the Ballot Papers to all financial members at least fourteen (14) days prior to the Annual General Meeting.
 - 10.3.9 Ballot Papers must be received by the Secretary prior to 5pm on the working day prior to the Annual General Meeting; any financial member will be entitled to vote for any number of nominations, not exceeding the number of vacancies in each category.
 - 10.3.10 The election will be declared closed at 5pm on the working day prior to the Annual General Meeting.
 - 10.3.11 Vacant positions on the Management Committee will be filled by those nominated candidates securing the highest total number of votes, and will be announced at the Annual General Meeting by the Returning Officer.
 - 10.3.12 In the event of two candidates receiving the same number of votes, the elected person may be determined by lot, except where a vacant position exists in another category for which a candidate qualifies, in which case, both candidates may be declared elected.
- 10.4 Any member of the Network will be at liberty to nominate or second a nomination of any member of the Network to serve as a member of the Management Committee, except that members who have been removed from office or

membership of the Management Committee as provided for in Rules 14.3 to 14.7 of this Constitution shall be ineligible for election.

- 10.5 All nominations must be in writing and signed by the nominated member, proposer and seconder, and shall:
 - 10.5.1 indicate the category of membership proposed (if any), and,
 - 10.5.2 include the age of the nominee (if under 18 years of age), and,
 - 10.5.3 invite the candidate to include a profile of no more than two hundred and fifty (250) words.
- 10.6 If less than four (4) members are elected to the Management Committee prior to the Annual General Meeting, continuing and newly-elected Management Committee members will be entitled to appoint the required number of additional Network members to the Management Committee, provided that appointed members fit within the categories of Management Committee membership detailed in Rule 10.2 of this Constitution.
- 10.7 Where during the term of the Management Committee the number of voting members falls below eight (8) members, the Management Committee will appoint the required number of additional Network members to the Management Committee to fill these casual vacancies, provided that appointed members fit within the categories of Management Committee membership detailed in Rule 10.2 of this Constitution.
- 10.8 The continuing members of the Management Committee may act notwithstanding any casual vacancy on the Management Committee but if and so long as their number is below the number fixed by this Constitution as the necessary quorum of the Management Committee, the continuing members may act for the purpose of increasing the number of members of the Management Committee to that number or of summoning a General Meeting of the Network, but for no other purpose.
- 10.9 All members of the Management Committee will be required to sign an agreement to work within the Values and Vision, Objects, Charter and policies of the Network before being entitled to vote, and must:
 - 10.9.1 if they are new members, be required to participate in an orientation workshop, which will introduce members to the Values and Vision of the Network and the role and responsibilities of Management Committee members.
- 10.10 Whilst individuals nominated by member organisations can be members of the Network Management Committee, they do so in their own right and not as a representative of the member organisation.

11. ROLE AND POWERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 11.1 Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution and subject to resolutions of the members of the Network carried at any General Meeting, the Management Committee:
 - 11.1.1 will have the general control and management of the administration of the affairs, property and funds of the Network, and,
 - 11.1.2 has the authority to interpret the meaning of this Constitution and any matter relating to the Network on which this Constitution is silent.
- 11.2 The Management Committee will be responsible for:

- 11.2.1 facilitation and organisation of all General Meetings of the Network, and,
 - 11.2.2 calling State Conferences of the Network, and,
 - 11.2.3 employment of waged staff, including determination of job descriptions and terms and conditions of employment, and,
 - 11.2.4 supervision of the senior staff member of the Network, and,
 - 11.2.5 advocating on behalf of the sector to the Government or other relevant bodies, and,
 - 11.2.6 promoting the Values and Vision and Objects of the Network, and,
 - 11.2.7 identification of policy issues and initiation of discussion relating to these issues, and,
 - 8. establishment of working groups or sub-committees on specific issues with such decision making authority as the Management Committee determine.
 - 9. Ensuring that staff sign an agreement to work within the Values, Vision, Objects, Charter and policies of the Network.
- 11.3 All decisions made by any working group or sub-committees established by the Management Committee must be in accordance with the Values and Vision, Objects, Charter and policies of the Network.
- 11.4 The Management Committee may delegate any of its powers to a working group or sub-committee consisting of such members of the Network as the Management Committee thinks fit. Any working group or sub-committee so formed will in the exercise of the powers so delegated conform to any regulations that may be imposed on it by the Management Committee.
- 11.5 A working group or sub-committee may elect a chairperson at its meetings, and may meet and adjourn as it thinks proper.
- 11.6 All acts done by any meeting of the Management Committee or of a working group or sub-committee or by any person acting on behalf of the Management Committee, may, notwithstanding that it is afterwards discovered that there was some defect in the appointment of such member of the Management Committee or person acting as aforesaid, or that the member of the Management Committee or any of them were disqualified, be as valid as if every such person had been duly appointed and was qualified to be a member of the Management Committee.

12. MEETINGS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 12.1 The Management Committee must meet at least eleven (11) times each year to exercise its functions.
- 12.2 The dates of Management Committee meetings will be decided at the preceding Management Committee meeting or by the Executive.
- 12.3 A special meeting of the Management Committee may be convened by the Secretary on the requisition in writing signed by not less than one third of the members of the Management Committee, which requisition must clearly state the reasons why such special meeting is being convened and the nature of the business to be transacted thereat.
- 12.4 Not less than seven (7) days notice will be given by the Secretary to members of the Management Committee of any special meeting of the Management Committee. Such notice must clearly state the nature of the business to be discussed thereat.

- 12.5 At every meeting of the Management Committee a simple majority of the current number of Management Committee members will constitute a quorum, provided that more than half the voting members present are at least eighteen (18) years of age and that proxies are included for the purpose of determining if a quorum is present.
- 12.6 Subject to previous provisions of this Constitution, the Management Committee may meet together and regulate its proceedings as it thinks fit, provided that decisions made at any meeting of the Management Committee may be decided by consensus, in a manner consistent with the Decision Making Policy of the Network.
- 12.7 In case of the Management Committee not reaching consensus, the issue may be held over for further discussion at a subsequent meeting of the Management Committee, provided that if the matter is urgent, the motion may be voted upon.
- 12.8 A motion can be passed by a simple majority of those present at a Management Committee meeting, and the President will have a personal deliberative vote and a casting vote if votes are equal.
- 12.9 Each member of the Management Committee may hold only one proxy from another member of the Management Committee.
- 12.10 A member of Management Committee must declare their interest in any matter in which they are interested, or any matter arising therefrom, and will:
- 12.10.1 not speak on a matter in which they have a pecuniary interest, except at the express request of the majority of Management Committee members present at the meeting, and,
- 12.10.2 not block consensus or vote in respect of any matter in which they have a pecuniary interest.
- 12.11 The chairperson for each meeting of the Management Committee is the President, or in their absence the Vice President, except that the President may appoint another person to chair the meeting.
- 12.12 The President may at their discretion invite people who are not members of the Management Committee to speak, but such persons may not vote.
- 12.13 The Director will act as spokesperson for the Network unless an alternative spokesperson has been appointed by the Management Committee.
- 12.14 A resolution in writing signed by all current Management Committee members will be as valid and effectual as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Management Committee duly convened and held. Any such resolution may consist of several documents in like form, each signed by one or more members of the Management Committee. For the purposes of clarity this resolution is a 'flying minute'.

13. THE EXECUTIVE

- 13.1 The Executive will comprise:
- 13.1.1 four (4) Office Bearers, elected by the Management Committee at their first meeting following the Annual General Meeting each year, from amongst Management Committee members, and as such may have been appointed for a 2 year term, provided that no Office Bearer position will be held by a person under eighteen (18) years of age; and

- 13.1.2 the Director of the Network, as a non-voting member.
- 13.2 The Officer Bearers shall be:
 - 13.2.1 the President of the Network, and,
 - 13.2.2 the Vice-President of the Network, and,
 - 13.2.3 the Secretary of the Network, and,
 - 13.2.4 the Treasurer of the Network.
- 13.3 At their first Management Committee meeting each year, the Secretary will:
 - 13.3.1 be responsible for ensuring that all communication required under the Association Incorporation Act 1981 is carried out, and,
 - 13.3.2 be responsible for providing for the safe custody of the Common Seal of the Network.
- 13.4 The Executive will be responsible for:
 - 13.4.1 ensuring organisation of regular meetings of the Management Committee, and,
 - 13.4.2 establishing the agenda of regular Management Committee meetings, and,
 - 13.4.3 day to day supervision of the senior staff member of the Network on behalf of the Management Committee, and,
 - 13.4.4 liaison with waged staff of the Network, and,
 - 13.4.5 documenting all staff input to the Executive and ensuring that this is presented to the Management Committee, and,
 - 13.4.6 responding to any urgent issues affecting the Network, which arise between Management Committee meetings.
- 13.5 Staff of the Network may attend Executive Meetings to present and discuss issues of concern.

14. RESIGNATION OR REMOVAL FROM OFFICE OF MEMBERS OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 14.1 A member can resign from membership of the Management Committee or Executive at any time by giving notice to the Secretary. Such resignation will take effect at the time such notice is received by the Secretary unless a later date is specified in the notice when it will take effect on that later date.
- 14.2 If a member of the Management Committee:
 - 14.2.1 ceases to be a financial member of the Network, or,
 - 14.2.2 fails to attend three (3) consecutive Management Committee meetings without the approval of the Management Committee, or,
 - 14.2.3 fails to sign an agreement to work within the Values and Vision, Objects, Charter and policies of the Network, within eight (8) weeks of the commencement of their membership of the Management Committee,

their membership of the Management Committee is deemed to have lapsed. In these circumstances, the Management Committee member has the right to appeal pursuant to clauses 14.4 and 14.5
- 14.3 If a member of the Management Committee:
 - 14.3.1 fails to comply with any of the provisions of this Constitution, or,

- 14.3.2 behaves in a manner considered to be injurious or prejudicial to the character or interest of the Network, or,
- 14.3.3 behaves in a manner inconsistent with the Values and Vision, Objects, Charter or policies of the Network,

the Management Committee will consider whether their membership of the Management Committee will be terminated.

- 14.4 Where the Management Committee is inclined to terminate membership, the voting rights of the Management Committee member may be suspended, and the Secretary shall advise the member in writing accordingly. The member concerned must be given a full and fair opportunity to present their case prior to a final decision on the matter being made by the Management Committee.
- 14.5 A terminated Management Committee member who remains a member of the Network and who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Management Committee is entitled to have the matter reconsidered at a General Meeting of the Network, within three (3) months of the Management Committee meeting at which the decision was made. At this meeting the member must be given the opportunity to fully present their case and the Management Committee or those members thereof who supported the termination of the member's Management Committee membership must likewise have the opportunity to present its case. The appeal will be determined by a 2/3 majority vote of financial members present at this meeting.
- 14.6 A suspended or terminated Management Committee member is automatically deemed to be suspended or terminated from their position on the Executive.
- 14.7 The Network will not be under any obligation to consider the nomination of a terminated member for Management Committee membership for a period of five (5) years. The Management Committee may waive the five (5) year period in its absolute discretion.

15. GENERAL MEETINGS

- 15.1 The Secretary will convene all General Meetings of the Network by giving not less than fourteen (14) days notice of any such meeting to financial members of the Network.
- 15.2 The manner by which such notice will be given may be determined by the Management Committee provided that:
 - 15.2.1 notice of any meeting convened for the purpose of hearing and determining the appeal of a member against the rejection or termination of their membership by the Management Committee will be given in writing, and,
 - 15.2.2 notice of a General Meeting must clearly state the nature of the business to be discussed thereat.
- 15.3 Unless otherwise provided by this Constitution, at every General Meeting:
 - 15.3.1 the Management Committee will appoint a chairperson to facilitate the meeting.
 - 15.3.2 the chairperson will maintain order and conduct the meeting in a proper manner consistent with this Constitution and the policies of the Network.
 - 15.3.3 an opportunity must be made available for the full and fair discussion and exploration of every matter to be decided at the meeting.
 - 15.3.4 only financial members will be entitled subject to the lawful procedure of the meeting to speak or vote upon any motion at any General Meeting of

the Network, except that financial members present at the meeting may vote to allow a non-member to speak.

- 15.4 At a General Meeting the number of members required to constitute a quorum will be double the number of members presently on the Management Committee plus one.
- 15.5 No business will be transacted at any General Meeting unless a quorum of members is present at the time when the meeting proceeds to business. For the purposes of this rule a "member" includes proxies held by financial members.
- 15.6 If within half an hour from the time appointed for the commencement of a General Meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting, if convened upon the requisition of members of the Management Committee or the Network, will lapse. In any other case it may stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the same time and place, or to such other day at such other place as the Management Committee may determine. If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting, the members present shall be a quorum.
- 15.7 The chairperson may, with the consent of the meeting at which a quorum is present (and will if so directed by the meeting) adjourn the meeting from time to time and from place to place, but no business will be transacted at any adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting from which the adjournment took place. When a meeting is adjourned for twenty eight (28) days or more, notice of the adjourned meeting will be given as in the case of an original meeting.
8. Save as aforesaid it will not be necessary to give any notice of an adjournment or of the business to be transacted at an adjourned meeting.
- 15.9 A general meeting includes a special general meeting.

16. VOTING AT GENERAL MEETINGS

- 16.1 Only financial members of the Network can vote at a General Meeting.
- 16.2 Each financial member can hold a proxy for no more than one other financial member.
3. Each financial member present may be able to cast a total of no more than two votes.
4. Each organisational member of the Network will only be entitled to one vote.
- 16.5 Where a financial member is both an individual member and entitled to vote on behalf of a member organisation, the financial member cannot also hold a proxy for another member.
- 16.6 Following discussion, decisions will be made by a simple majority vote of financial members present at the meeting including their proxy votes where applicable, except where otherwise provided in this Constitution.
- 16.7 The President will have both a personal deliberative vote and a casting vote where the number of votes are equal.

- 16.8 Generally voting may be by show of hands, but a secret ballot may be taken if so determined by a simple majority of financial members present including their proxy votes where applicable.
- 16.9 The instrument appointing a proxy must be in writing, in the common or usual form at the hand of the appointment or their attorney duly authorised in writing, or, if the appointer is an organisation, either under seal or under the hand of an officer or attorney duly authorised provided that:
- 16.9.1 a person holding a proxy must be a financial member of the Network, and,
- 16.9.2 the instrument appointing a proxy will be deemed to confer authority to demand or join in demanding a secret ballot, and,
- 16.9.3 the instrument appointing the proxy will be in the following form or a form as near thereto as circumstances permit:

I of being a financial member of the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland, hereby appoint of or failing him/her of as my proxy to vote on my behalf at the (Annual) General Meeting of the Network to be held on the day of and at any adjournment thereof.

Signed this day of (year). (Signature).

- 16.10 Where it is desired to afford members an opportunity of voting for or against a resolution the instrument appointing a proxy, the form may include:

This form is to be used in favour of/against* the resolution (strike out whichever is not desirable). (Unless otherwise instructed the proxy may vote as she/he thinks fit.)

- 16.11 The instrument appointing a proxy will be deposited with the Secretary prior to the commencement of any General Meeting or adjourned meeting at which the person named in the instrument proposes to vote.

17. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 17.1 An Annual General Meeting will be held within six (6) months of the close of the financial year.
- 17.2 The business to be transacted at every Annual General Meeting will be:
- 17.2.1 receiving a report from the Management Committee and the statement of income and expenditure, assets and liabilities and mortgages, charges and securities affecting the property of the Network for the preceding financial year, and,
- 17.2.2 receiving the Auditor's report upon the books and accounts for the preceding financial year, and,
- 17.2.3 announcing the results of the election for the Management Committee for the following year, and,
- 17.2.4 appointing an auditor for the current financial year, and,
5. any other such business as may be determined by the Management Committee.

18. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

The Secretary may convene a Special General Meeting:

- 18.1 when directed to do so by the Management Committee, or,
- 18.2 on the requisition in writing signed by not less than one third of the members presently on the Management Committee or not less than the number of financial members of the Network which equals double the number of members presently on the Management Committee plus one. Such requisition shall clearly state the reasons why such a Special General Meeting is being convened and the nature of the business to be transacted thereat, or,
- 18.3 on being given a notice in writing of an intention to appeal against the decision of the Management Committee to reject an application for membership or to terminate the membership of the Network or the Management Committee of any person as stated in rule 8.4 and rule 14.5.
- 18.4 Rules 15 and 16 above will apply to Special General Meetings.

19. RECORDS OF THE NETWORK

- 19.1 The Secretary will cause full and accurate minutes of all questions, matters, resolutions and other proceedings of every Management Committee meeting and General Meeting to be entered into a book to be open for inspection at all reasonable times by any financial member who previously applies to the Secretary for that inspection. For the purposes of ensuring the accuracy of the recording of such minutes, the minutes of every Management Committee meeting will be signed by the chairperson of that meeting or the chairperson of the next succeeding Management Committee meeting verifying their accuracy. Similarly, the minutes of every General Meeting will be signed by the chairperson of that meeting or the chairperson of the next succeeding General Meeting providing that the minutes of any Annual General Meeting may be signed by the chairperson of that meeting or the chairperson of the next succeeding General Meeting or Annual General Meeting.
- 2. The Management Committee will provide for the safe custody of books, documents, instruments of title and securities of the Network.

20. AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

- 20.1 The Management Committee may from time to time make, amend or repeal By-laws, not inconsistent with this Constitution, for the internal management of the Network.
- 20.2 Any By-law may be set aside by a General Meeting.
- 20.3 Subject to the provisions of the Association Incorporation Act 1981, this Constitution may be amended, rescinded or added to from time to time by a special resolution carried at any General Meeting and approved by the relevant State Department with Administration of the Incorporations Act:
 - 20.3.1 Proposals for amendments must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Network not less than twenty eight (28) days prior to the General Meeting, for circulation to the membership not less than fourteen (14) days prior to the General Meeting, and,
 - 20.3.2 any change to this Constitution shall require a 2/3 majority vote of financial members present including their proxy votes where applicable.

21. COMMON SEAL

- 21.1 The Management Committee must provide for a Common Seal and for its safe custody.
- 21.2 The Common Seal may only be used by the authority of the Management Committee and every instrument to which the seal is affixed must be signed by a member of the Management Committee and must be countersigned by the Secretary or by a second member of the Management Committee or by some other person appointed by the Management Committee for the purpose.

22. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE NETWORK

- 22.1 The financial year of the Network will close on 30 June each year.
- 22.2 The funds of the Network will be deposited in the name of the Network in such Bank or financial institution as the Management Committee may from time to time direct.
- 22.3 Proper books and accounts will be kept and maintained either in written or printed form in the English language showing correctly the financial affairs of the Network and the particulars usually shown in books of a like nature.
- 22.4 The Management Committee will approve an Annual Budget at the commencement of each financial year.
- 22.5 All expenditure requiring a variation to this Annual Budget will be approved in advance by the Management Committee.
- 22.6 The Treasurer will ensure that an accurate report of the financial situation of the Network is presented at each meeting of the Management Committee.
- 22.7 As soon as practicable after the end of each financial year the Treasurer will:
 - 22.7.1 cause to be prepared a statement containing particulars of the income and expenditure for the financial year just ended, and,
 - 22.7.2 the assets and liabilities and all mortgages, charges and securities affecting the property of the Network at the close of that year.
- 8. All such statements must be examined by the auditor who shall present her/his report upon such audit to the Secretary prior to the holding of the next Annual General Meeting following the financial year in respect of which such audit was made.
- 9. The income and property of the network will be used and applied solely in promotion of its objects and in the exercise of its powers as set out herein and no portion thereof may be distributed, paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise by way of profit to or amongst the members of the network provided that nothing herein will prevent in good faith or interest payment to any member in respect of monies advanced by them to the network or otherwise owing the network to them or of remuneration to any officers or servants of the network or to any member of the network or other person in return for any services actually rendered to the network provided further that nothing herein contained shall be construed so as to prevent repayment to any member of out of pocket expenses, money lent, reasonable and proper charges for goods hired by the Network or reasonable and proper rent for premises demised or let to the Network.

23. DISTRIBUTION OF SURPLUS ASSETS

If the Network shall be wound up in accordance with the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 and there remains after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities any property whatsoever, the same will not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Network, but may be given or transferred to some other institution or institutions having objects similar to the Objects of the Network, and which will prohibit the distribution of its or their income and property amongst its or their members to an extent at least as great as is imposed on the Network under or by virtue of rule 22(9), such institution or institutions to be determined by the members of the Network at a General Meeting

24. INDEMNIFICATION OF STAFF AND MEMBERS

24.1 The Network will be responsible for the authorised acts of its employees, officers, agents and Management Committee members and will indemnify them in respect of payments made and liabilities incurred by them, if the acts, payment and liabilities were performed, made or incurred by them within the scope of their authority and:

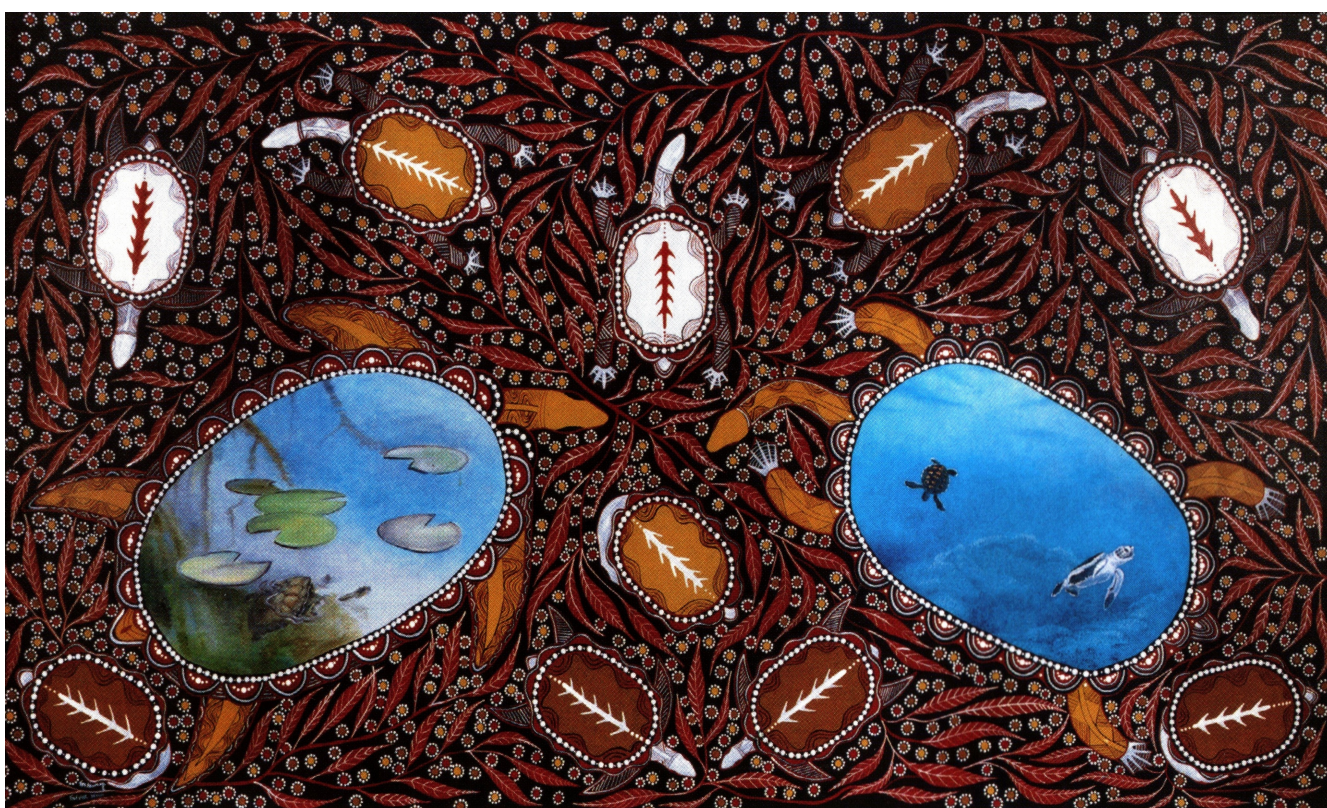
24.1.1 in the ordinary and proper conduct of Network business, and,

24.1.2 in or about anything done by them for the preservation of the activities, property, management or business of the Network.

24.2 The Network may, subject to the provisions contained in Rule 24.1 of this Constitution indemnify any of the persons mentioned in that paragraph against liability for any loss or damage which may occur whilst they are acting in good faith and within the scope of their authority though the loss or damage may have occurred by reason of negligence, a reasonable mistake, error or oversight or omission on their part.

APPENDIX

YANQ: Our Values, Vision & Priorities



Vision for a Sustainable Planet: Our Actions on Lands and Rivers

(by Tex Skuthorp, co-author *Treading Lightly*)

Our Values

YANQ believes that the Traditional Custodians and primary Culture of Australia is Aboriginal.

Aboriginal Lore has always ruled this Land. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) cultures as distinct, separate cultures. We acknowledge Torres Strait Islander peoples as Custodians of the Torres Strait Islands and surrounding waters.

YANQ supports the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to self determination.

We recognise the capacity of communities to generate their own solutions to the problems imposed on them by continuing colonisation and ongoing pressures to assimilate. Further, we value the wisdom and leadership ATSI cultures can bring to addressing the problems faced by Australian society. We can benefit greatly, at an individual, community and social level, from embracing opportunities to learn from ATSI Culture, Lore, Land and Sea.

We recognise the proven credentials of Traditional Owners and Custodians in connecting with and managing this Land. Inter-generational and inter-cultural equity is critical to achieving a healthy long term future for humankind. Young people have a particular incentive to acknowledge the place of humans in the wider ecosystem. We all have the responsibility to function as part of the earth, to connect with Land, and to live responsibly in a way that ensures the ongoing health of the whole. We are all responsible for living so that our children, and their children, inherit a healthy social and physical environment. YANQ is committed to learning from Aboriginal cultures and being guided by their wisdom in finding ways to live more sustainably on this Land.

Australia is made up of people with a wide variety of backgrounds and identities, but remains largely mono-cultural. Australians vary in terms of gender, class, race, age, ability and sexuality. Yet dominant Anglo-Celtic values are considered *normal* and everyone is pressured to conform to these. This generates disharmony within and across communities, making them vulnerable to prejudice and discrimination. It is only when we recognise the cultures of our First Peoples as the basis for genuine multi-culturalism, and value the identities, contributions and rights of all Australians, that we can achieve social harmony in Queensland.

YANQ supports the human rights of all Australians. These include, but go far beyond, access to the basic necessities of survival such as safe food, clean water and secure housing. All young people are entitled to the means to fulfil these rights, achieve their full potential and make choices about their lifestyle. Every young person should have the freedom to choose and express their unique cultural, social, sexual and gender identity. Every young person is entitled to live free of all forms of violence and fear. This includes Aboriginal young people; Torres Strait Islander young people; young women; young people with disability; gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex (GLBTI) young people; and migrant and refugee young people. Every young person has the right to build families and relationships of their own choosing. All have the right to fully and meaningfully participate in their community and at all levels of government decision making. Every young person is entitled to access programs and services which are appropriate to their needs, and to freely choose whether or not to participate in these. Too often, the legitimate human rights of young people are reduced to individualised *needs*.

YANQ recognises that systemic issues contribute to the social exclusion of groups of young people.

Over recent decades, governments in Australia have increasingly seen their role as supporting global economic interests at the expense of community interests. They have sought to silence voices of dissent. This strategy has strengthened the authority, power and privilege of a smaller and smaller group of Australians. It has failed to provide any discernable improvement in young people's quality of life. Increasing numbers of young people are being marginalised by discriminatory cultural, social and economic policies and practices. Of particular concern is the growing number of children and young people in youth, adult and immigration prisons.

Marginalised young people are not a homogenous group. Some disadvantage is culturally-driven; some is socially-driven; some is economically-driven. For example, racism drives the extremely disproportionate

level of criminalisation of Aboriginal young people; sexism drives the appalling rates of violence against young women; homophobia drives the ongoing stigmatisation of GLBTI young people. Young people with disabilities (including mental health issues) and immigrant (particularly refugee) young people continue to be socially and economically penalised. Major social systems, most notably the health, justice and education systems, continue to fail most young people to varying degrees.

Young people have the potential to help or harm society. Their role and contribution, both now and in the future, largely depends upon how they are treated. Young people have the capacity to play an important role in their communities and the wider society. When the voices, creativity and ideas of young people are actively included as part of community decision-making processes, their unique knowledge, experiences and perspectives add value to community life. The greater the participation of young people in social decision-making the healthier the community and society.

Community organisations provide a unique pathway to optimising young people's social participation. Community organisations (and programs) are those which maintain an ongoing and genuine connection with a community of interest or geographic community. Communities are the best placed to identify the individual and collective needs, and human rights breaches, of young people. Community organisations play a key role in educating community members and empowering otherwise alienated young people. These organisations are uniquely placed to facilitate trust building between young people and supportive community members. Mutual trust is essential to communities' ability to engage with young people, enable their social participation, redress some of the injustices they face and advocate for their rights more widely. Genuine, influential participation is rare within Queensland society. Community-based organisations contribute toward addressing this problem. They play an invaluable civic role, through facilitating participatory democracy.

Community organisations are uniquely positioned to provide sophisticated, responsive youth services. Increasingly, governments are funding large non-government organisations at the expense of community-driven organisations. Governments should respect the sovereignty of independent community organisations and recognise the central role they play in concurrently responding to young people's multi-faceted needs, building more inclusive communities and, ultimately, contributing to a more harmonious society. Community organisations offer the most efficient and effective means of responding in a comprehensive way to young people's rights and needs. Valuing the expertise of community organisations, and resourcing them to take the lead in addressing the rights and needs of young people within their particular community, can only improve Queensland society.

YANQ believes that the roles and responsibilities of government and non-government organisations should be clearly distinguished. All Australian governments are obliged to meet young people's internationally-agreed human rights. Increasingly, governments are funding non-government organisations (NGO's) to undertake government-determined priorities and fulfil governments' statutory obligations. Governments should take responsibility for meeting these obligations toward young people, particularly young people in their care.

Youth Work provides an alternate approach to engaging with young people, particularly disadvantaged young people. Most marginalised young people have experienced a variety of interventions and are resistant to any attempt to impose further limitations over their lives. Social control strategies generally serve to further alienate these young people and contribute toward ongoing (often multi-generational) disadvantage. It is only when these young people are voluntary, active participants in addressing their own rights and needs, that they become willing to engage with community and achieve positive change in their lives. Competent Youth Workers have the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills required to work effectively with young people and their communities, using a rights-driven approach.

The youth sector makes a unique contribution to Queensland life. A healthy society is one in which individuals, families and communities are inter-connected; where a culture of equity and mutual respect generates resilient communities that meet the rights and needs of all their members. Communities, and society as a whole, are strengthened when they value every member. Communities and societies are enriched when they embrace differences and work toward social equality. Failure to meet the rights and needs of all members of society can be expected to generate fear and instability, and serve to criminalise

and alienate some members. YANQ values and supports positive connections between young people, their communities and the wider Queensland society.

Our Vision

Ultimately, YANQ aspires to a world which recognises the interdependence of all species on this planet. As human beings, we will collectively acknowledge that we are all one and that our future depends on harmonious co-existence – within and between both humankind and other species. We envisage a world where every person has the opportunity to contribute their own unique gifts and talents; where resources are equitably shared; where the human rights of all are met; where everyone commits to caring for, and living sustainably on, the Land. We look forward to universal recognition that the First Peoples of the world, with their established credentials in caring for Land, are the key to our collective survival, and a sustainable future.

We envisage a future where Australia is in a position to benefit from Aboriginal Culture. Non-Aboriginal Australians will have recognised their privilege and racism, and ways in which they continue to benefit from the power imbalance between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and will have committed to redressing this imbalance. We will collectively acknowledge the strengths of one of the world's oldest surviving cultures and embrace Aboriginal tradition, Lore and practices which have been sustained since time began. All Australians will recognise that Aboriginal Culture is highly evolved, and will enthusiastically learn from Aboriginal wisdom in building our families, communities and society. Non-Aboriginal Australians will be committed to building trustworthy relationships with our First Peoples, learning from Aboriginal best practice and integrating Aboriginal wisdom into exploration of wider social problems.

Young people will be active participants in Queensland society. Their ideas on how to change the world for the better will have been taken seriously. Many will be in the leadership roles required to continue to secure a sustainable future for Queensland (and Australia, and the world). They will be in a position to value the (now outspoken) voices of Aboriginal people, young people, and all the other voices which will contribute to maintaining a fair and equitable society. As a result, Queensland will be a dynamic, diverse state, which is a bastion of human rights. Every Queenslander will have their human rights met, and feel a valued part of their family, community and society. Queensland will be strong, rich and resilient, with the capacity to deal with any challenges we may need to face in the future.

Queensland will have a thriving youth sector, which enthusiastically stands alongside Aboriginal people and young people. We will support Aboriginal initiatives to continue to improve the world. Non-Aboriginal Youth Workers will recognise the personal and professional benefits of embracing Aboriginal cultures. Youth Workers will take responsibility for lifelong learning about Aboriginal Culture, Lore and Land. Non-Aboriginal Workers will move outside their comfort zone; challenge their fundamental thinking; and develop an appreciation of Aboriginal ways of doing things and the underlying reasons for these. This learning will be reflected in their inclusive, rights-driven approach to working alongside young people.

YANQ will assist the youth sector, communities and Queensland society more widely, on this journey. We will model integrating Aboriginal wisdom at all levels of the organisation. YANQ will be sought after as a source of valuable advice on the rights and needs of young people. Our commentary will be informed by strong and articulate community organisations which will be our primary source of advice. We will be true to their collective wisdom in all our dealings at a local, state and federal level. YANQ will have a powerful voice and credibility as a legitimate advocate for young people, within government and the community more widely.

Our Priorities

YANQ exists to contribute toward achieving the rights of young people, particularly those who are disadvantaged and marginalised. As an autonomous peak body, we seek to achieve this goal through a combination of strategies - advocacy and lobbying; research and policy development; consultation and networking; information dissemination and education; and youth sector development. Our priorities to the Year 2020 are driven by this central motivation.

YANQ commits to engaging with Aboriginal communities and continuing to challenge dominant cultural thinking and assumptions. We will lead the youth sector in taking responsibility for learning about, and embracing, Aboriginal cultures, values, knowledge and community practices. We commit to exploring ways to integrate this learning at all levels in the organisation and sector. Our internal processes will be modelled on Aboriginal ways of working together. We will continue to build meaningful relationships with Aboriginal communities, advocate best practice in working with Aboriginal young people and support the social change initiatives of Aboriginal organisations.

YANQ stands alongside Aboriginal communities to lobby for the rights of their young people. We will name racism and social power imbalances in all its forms. We will collaborate with communities to challenge destructive structures that contribute to poverty and racism in Aboriginal communities. We will seek to reduce disparities in health outcomes, criminalisation and other systemic disadvantages faced by Aboriginal young people. YANQ commits to continuing to take responsibility for understanding more about Aboriginal Lore, and learning about the past and present experiences which contribute to the continuing marginalisation of Aboriginal peoples.

YANQ works toward achieving equality across Queensland society, through empowering the voices of young people. We will encourage *whole of community* decision making that equally values the creativity and ideas of young people and the wisdom of elders; that optimises the inclusion of young people within their own communities. We will advocate the genuine participation of young people in all decisions affecting their lives. We will lobby for young people's rights and needs to be met in a manner which empowers young people to take control of their lives. We will challenge and correct misleading public images of young people, and focus on representing the interests of the most marginalised young people.

YANQ challenges laws, policies, systems and structures that unfairly disadvantage young Queenslanders. We are committed to positive discrimination in favour of disadvantaged young people. We will endeavour to reduce institutionalised racism, ageism, sexism, homophobia and all forms of structural oppression. We will particularly value the hidden voices of those young people who are silenced by being in prison or care, lobby for alternatives to imprisoning young people, and actively promote the participation of these young people in their communities and society. We will stand up and speak out for those young people who are currently penalised and silenced by governments and other institutions which serve government interests.

YANQ advocates for the development and maintenance of Youth Work practice designed to empower young people. We will disseminate information about YANQ's activities and provide educational opportunities to the youth sector. We recognise the isolation experienced by many Youth Workers, and will advocate for additional resources and support progressive Youth Work practice wherever possible. We will continue to seek to position Youth Work as a unique occupation which requires specific expertise to work with young people in an empowering, rights-based manner.

YANQ seeks greater recognition of the unique contribution of community-driven organisations to effective youth service provision. We affirm the importance of community having a genuine role in government decision making. We support grassroots organisations which are community-driven and maintain ongoing community connection. We value organisations which network with like-minded services and build the relationships required to accurately and successfully advocate for the rights and needs of young people. We particularly respect those organisations which prioritise listening to the voices and needs

of young people and providing holistic services, over the pressure to provide inappropriate, prescribed or limited services. YANQ will represent the interests of these services, including lobbying to protect their funds, programs and intellectual property. We will advocate for equitable distribution of funds, to ensure that the rights and needs of young people in rural and remote areas and other disadvantaged groups of young people, are equitably addressed.

YANQ initiates research to inform policy development in the interests of young people. Research and policy development will underpin the work of YANQ, and ensure that our advocacy for young people is current and evidence-based. We will build the relationships essential to ensuring the currency of our policy initiatives and responses. We will consult with our membership to identify issues being faced by young people within their communities. We will treat community organisations, Youth Workers and young people as experts in the issues facing young people – both individually and collectively. We will gather our members' experiences, insights and advice, and value this data as informed evidence. We will work with the youth sector to develop policy proposals which proactively address young people's rights and needs, based on the available evidence.

YANQ is a strong, powerful, unwavering voice for progressing youth issues on behalf of the youth sector. We will value young people's contributions at all levels within YANQ. We will build strong links across the youth sector to enable us to advocate for those who cannot act on their own behalf due to funding, organisational or other structural constraints. We are committed to speaking out against injustices and ensuring that the perspectives of excluded and silenced groups in the youth sector are heard, and their issues and needs kept on the policy agenda.

YANQ strives to maintain good relationships with youth sector stakeholders. We will build collaborative, consultative and cooperative relationships with like-minded individuals and organisations—across the community services industry and beyond. We will affirm and support any initiatives that have a positive impact on young people. We will be generous in our efforts to educate the wider community about issues affecting young people, and seek the resources to extend this work. We will play a key role in keeping governments accountable for policies and programs affecting young people. Wherever possible, we will collaborate with other peak bodies to challenge decisions which negatively impact on young people's rights and lobby to bring about change in the interests of young people.

YANQ features strong, trusting relationships which enable productive engagement throughout the organisation. Ultimately, YANQ's credibility depends on *walking our talk*. Internally, we will prioritise maintenance of relationships, value alternate points of view, encourage robust debate and support each other through difficult conversations. YANQ staff will connect and consult with members throughout Queensland to build a cohesive, sustainable organisation in which our members inform all our work. We will encourage members to support each other to speak out at a community level and challenge fears of loss of funding when acting in the interests of young people. Our growth will depend on maintaining a culture of openness and respectful discussion.

YANQ will contribute to the development of the youth sector. We will model community development approaches through building networks which optimise our capacity to gather feedback on member needs and address these. Wherever possible, we will provide training and professional development activities and support the legitimate aspirations of Youth Workers for decent working conditions. We will use a variety of tools to enable our members to learn from the available research, develop their critical analysis competencies and see the wider implications of their work with young people. In short, YANQ will seek to build a healthy, sustainable youth sector which is equipped to deal with challenges, take up opportunities and strategise for a better future for the sector and young people.

YANQ is accountable to its membership for operating in a manner consistent with its values. YANQ brings together community organisations, programs and individuals who share our values. Members are required to support these *Values, Vision & Priorities*. We will foster collaboration between our members to maintain and promote these values. Other individuals, programs or organisations in the youth sector will be able to subscribe to YANQ and have access to all our public resources. Ultimately, YANQ will support our members to individually and collectively optimise young people's access to their rights across Queensland.

YANQ: A Summary of Our Values & Vision

YANQ believes that the Traditional Custodians and primary Culture of Australia is Aboriginal. We support the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to self determination, and recognise their capacity to generate their own solutions to the problems imposed on them by continuing colonisation and ongoing pressures to assimilate. We recognise the proven credentials of Aboriginal Traditional Owners and Custodians in connecting with and managing this Land. We value the wisdom and leadership Aboriginal cultures can bring to addressing the problems faced by Australian society.

We aspire to a world which recognises the interdependence of all species on this planet. We envisage a future where Australia is in a position to benefit from Aboriginal Culture; where Australians collectively acknowledge the strengths of one of the world's oldest surviving cultures and embrace highly evolved Aboriginal tradition, Lore and practices. This would play a critical role in achieving a sustainable future for humankind.

YANQ supports the human rights of all Australians. These include the necessities of survival; everyone's right to achieve their full potential; and their right to make choices about their lifestyle, and express their culture, without fear of penalty. Everyone has the right to meaningfully participate in their community and decisions that affect their lives.

We recognise that systemic issues contribute to a failure to meet young people's rights, and the social exclusion of groups of young people. Most young people are disadvantaged – culturally, socially and/or economically. Major social systems continue to fail the majority of young people. Further, socially excluded young people face ongoing pressure to conform to dominant Anglo-Celtic values. This generates disharmony within and across communities, making them vulnerable to prejudice and discrimination. It is only when we recognise the cultures of our First Peoples as the basis for genuine multi-culturalism, and value the identities, contributions and rights of all Australians, that we can achieve social harmony.

Young people have the capacity to play an important part in their communities and the wider society. Young people's social role and contribution, both now and in the future, largely depends upon how they are treated. The greater the participation of young people in social decision-making, the healthier the community and society.

Community organisations provide a unique pathway to optimising young people's social participation. They can facilitate genuine participatory democracy and respond to young people's needs in an alternate, holistic way. Young people are entitled to access services which respond to their rights and needs, and freely choose whether or not to use these services. Competent Youth Workers have the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills required to work effectively with young people and their communities, using a rights-driven approach.

Australian governments are obliged to meet young people's internationally-agreed human rights. Governments should take full responsibility for meeting these obligations toward young people. Governments should value the expertise of community organisations in providing complementary services, and resource them to take the lead in addressing the rights and needs of young people within their particular community.

Ultimately, YANQ envisages a future where young people are seen as equal, active participants in Queensland society. As a result, Queensland would be a fair, equitable diverse state; a bastion of human rights. It would be a healthy society in which individuals, families and communities are inter-connected; where a culture of mutual respect generates resilience and genuine social inclusion. Its thriving youth sector would enthusiastically stand alongside Aboriginal people and young people, to continue to improve the world. The powerful voice of YANQ would be seen as an invaluable social asset.

The Flower of Law (by Tex Skuthorp)

