



WHITELION

.....
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Whitelion acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which it is situated and we pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across the nation. We acknowledge the sorrow of the Stolen Generations and the ongoing impacts of colonisation and dispossession on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We recognise the strengths and resilience of Australia's First Peoples and champion a reconciled, just and equitable Australia. We believe in the sovereignty and right of Australia's First Peoples to determine their own future.



STATEMENT OF INCLUSION

We are passionate about creating a workplace that promotes and values diversity. We are therefore committed to providing a safe environment for all people, regardless of their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/ or sexual identity.



CONTENTS

Purpose of this strategy	4	Whitelion Youth Engagement: a three-pronged model	13
What is youth engagement?	5	1. Whitelion Youth Council (WYC).....	14
1. Engagement at an individual level... 6		2. Ad hoc engagement	17
2. Engagement at a program level..... 6		3. Secondary consultation.....	20
3. Engagement at an organisational level.....	6	Staff member roles to support the Youth Engagement Strategy	22
Why is youth engagement important?	8	Whitelion's Youth Engagement Action Plan 2020 - 21	24
Research.....	8	References	25
Consultation with young people.....	10		
Strategy 2023	11		
Annual Plan.....	12		
The objectives of youth engagement	12		

No young person

left behind

PURPOSE OF THIS STRATEGY

Imagine a Whitelion where young people are not only active participants in their own care plan but have an active voice at workshops where we develop new programs and improve existing ones. A Whitelion where young people sit beside us at committee meetings and in recruitment interviews and have a meaningful say in our programs, services and who we hire. Imagine a Whitelion where a trained and supported group of young people from our four states influence us and advise us about our organisation, based on their lived experience. And imagine that we can pay these young people for engaging and contributing in these ways. This is the Whitelion we want. And this strategy and annual action plan will help us get there.

This document, the Whitelion Youth Engagement Strategy & Action Plan provides an overview to staff about how we will truly ensure that the voice of young people with lived experience guides and shapes our organisation. When you think about it, how can we develop new programs, improve existing ones or provide youth-friendly forms and information if we have not asked young people what they need and want?

Whilst we do already meaningfully engage with young people in many ways, this strategy and plan aims to take us to the next level. We say in our strategic plan, Strategy 2023, that our “success depends on the voice and lived experience of highly vulnerable, high risk young people; systems around them; and the Whitelion community.” This strategy and plan will help us to achieve that outcome whilst at the same time providing young people with opportunities to have a say, meaningfully contribute and ideally build confidence, self esteem, connections and skills for their future working life.



WHAT IS YOUTH ENGAGEMENT?

Youth engagement is actively and meaningfully involving young people in multiple ways across Whitelion. Engagement is a two-way process of proactive interaction. We note that young people have been involved in many ways throughout the history of Whitelion, and also note that to ensure the voice of young people is embedded across Whitelion for the immediate and long-term future it also takes time and resources. The approach outlined in this plan uniquely enables Whitelion to improve internal services based on the experience of young people while concurrently exploring opportunities for advocacy and systemic change driven by youth voice and experience. To achieve this, engagement needs to occur at three levels:

1. **Individual**
2. **Program**
3. **Organisational**



Diagram 1: The three levels of engagement with young people

1. Engagement at an individual level

This means actively engaging with and involving a young person in their care and will be undertaken as part of participatory youth practice (PYP) that will be rolled out as the practice of youth work at Whitelion. PYP is an ongoing approach or way of working that aims to empower young people to actively participate rather than consider them as passive recipients of a service. It places young people at the centre of their journey, as partners in their care, as experts in their own lives and as having influence over their own outcomes for example, a young person sets their own goals at the start of the relationship with Whitelion based on their needs.

This practice change will begin to be implemented at Whitelion over the next year. Extensive research was conducted by Charlotte Kelberg, Whitelion's inaugural National Practice Lead, with input from senior practitioners and the Executive Team. The draft Whitelion Youth Practice Framework Implementation Plan outlines what PYP is and how we will implement across the country, with the aim of being completed by June 2021

2. Engagement at a program level

Young people will play a critical role in informing program design, review and evaluation of performance and impact. This may include young people helping to design new programs right at the beginning of the process, redesigning current programs, participating on interview panels for new staff and being involved in relevant working groups. Whitelion will call upon young people for these specific purposes and we will reimburse them for their time. It will likely be a mix of current young people and those with lived experience (who would come from the Whitelion Youth Council).

Not all engagement will be paid as there will be times where we will continue to seek feedback via surveys and brief consultation e.g. like what we did for the strategic plan where we embedded consultation within service delivery for young people.

3. Engagement at an organisational level

Engaging young people at an organisational level ensures that their voices are included in advocacy and policy, organisational-wide communication channels such as brochures, flyers, website content, client forms etc. Organisational level may also include: strategic and annual planning and public speaking. In the first instance, the thinking is that most of this engagement would occur via the members of the Whitelion Youth Council.



WHY IS YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT?



Youth engagement is critically important to ensure that Whitelion is able to create the change we want to make in the world. Ultimately, we want to ensure that Whitelion programs meet the needs of young people at risk, whilst at the same time ensuring that those with lived experience can influence systemic advocacy. We believe that by taking this approach we will not only achieve these two outcomes, but young people will also have opportunities to build their skills, confidence and self-esteem.

Research

Beyond our own feedback and experience, we also know from secondary research that meaningfully applied youth engagement models are highly effective - solutions are best achieved by young people for young people. Research shows us the following, summarised under six key headings:

1. CO-DESIGN LEADS TO BETTER SOLUTIONS

- When done well, co-design has been proven to improve the quality, impact and reach of the project designed to serve the needs of young people.
- Evidence has demonstrated that participation ensures decisions are responsive to young people's current needs and are more likely to be respected and acceptedⁱ

2. YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK ARE UNDER-REPRESENTED IN ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT / PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

- While there has been significant progress in Australia in recognising and supporting the participation of young people, high risk and vulnerable young people are still an under-represented group when it comes to opportunities to inform, advocate and participate.



3. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT LEADS TO BETTER HEALTH AND WELLBEING OUTCOMES

- Young people who have the opportunity for meaningful participation in their communities are less likely to engage in risky behaviour.
- Young people who participate and engage in their communities have higher self-esteem, are more physically active, have greater connection to family, friends and community and are more likely to experience overall healthy developmentⁱⁱ.
- Research has also linked participation to positive development, confidence and overall health outcomes (including the prevention of 'loneliness' which according to the loneliness report is a significant health issue for young people). Involving children and young people in the decision-making process can profoundly affect their livesⁱⁱⁱ, safety^{iv} and wellbeing^v while addressing dramatic power imbalances between young people and adults.

4. IMPROVEMENT IN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

- Research has indicated that organisations which establish a partnership with young people report higher rates of creativity, staff morale and in some cases, improved retention rates.
- It is suggested that when the status-quo of an organisation is challenged by the voice of young people, there is more scope for dynamic and innovative responses.

5. ALIGNMENT WITH KEY FRAMEWORKS AND STANDARDS

- The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (and other associated conventions and legislation) noting participation as a child's right
- The Child Safe Standards (and National Child Safe Principles) which promote the participation and voice of young people
- The direction of government and funders who are increasingly expecting co-designed projects and innovative approaches to engaging vulnerable young people
- The Human Services Standards which require the meaningful participation of young people
- The 'Best Interests Framework for Vulnerable Children and Youth' which suggests child and youth participation as essential features in meaningful engagement (DHHS 2007)

6. PEER SUPPORT

- The value of peer support models are evident in the research. Whitelion should consider future opportunities regarding this and refer to models such as YACVic's Young Thinker in Residence program.^{vi} A peer support model that should be considered after Year 1 of this strategy is for Youth Council advisors to train advisors.

Consultation with young people

As part of building the voice of young people into the development of this youth engagement plan, a 1.5 hour consultation session with nine young people across four states in June 2020 was conducted. Overall the young people who participated in the consultation were enthusiastic about the model, provided some insightful suggestions and recommendations and highlighted the importance of having a national council, rather than a single state approach. Key themes arising from this consultation session are below. It is important to note that young people may not always know what the scope or possibilities are for their involvement when asked how they could contribute to an organisation. Sometimes they will provide predictable answers that come from the limited opportunities they have seen young people participate in previously. Innovation in this area will come from embedding youth engagement practice within all areas of the organisation so that any task or area can be approached with the mindset of “could young people from the council or my program do this?” This will allow for both innovation within the organisation and genuine and meaningful youth engagement.

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

- It is important to hear the voices of groups that you are supporting or providing a service to
- Young people can tell you what is working and what is not working
- What is the point of being a youth organisation without the voice of young people?

2. AREAS OF INTEREST FOR THE NINE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE ENGAGED IN WERE:

- Events/opportunities: e.g. Schweppes Christmas Party/Cricket games/Three Peaks
- Support programs (and participating in their support path)
- Councils and committees

3. WHY YOUNG PEOPLE WANT TO BE ENGAGED

- Reasons may vary depending on where a young person is at. For example, sometimes it might be “to get the chance to do things I wouldn’t normally do”, whilst for other it is because they want “to be more involved and have a say” or “to be part of something that benefits community and other young people”.
- Participating in opportunities like the council or committees would be an opportunity to gain “skills and experience that could help my career”.

4. SPECIFIC FEEDBACK ABOUT THE COUNCIL

- Young people responded positively to the idea of an advisory council and commended that all states were represented.
- Recruit new young people every six months in order to maintain a diversity of voices (whilst maintaining the original group – this means one or two new people start every 6 months so that after 2 years you don't have all the same people leaving at the same time).
- Should aim to have more than eight people to ensure diversity (discussed that perhaps 8 could be the starting figure and then we build more)
- Meetings could occur over a different platform (for example Discord – that is apparently more secure; has features like document sharing. Discussed that this could be determined by the council).
- 1 hour monthly meetings rather than 2 hour bi-monthly (discussed that this could be determined by the council once recruited).
- Training and support – it is important for council to be trained in certain areas such as: public speaking; advocacy, awareness about challenges/issues (e.g. mental health), peer support
- With regards to the support that young people may require to participate in the Council, the group were in agreement that a support person for each state would be useful.



Strategy 2023

Alongside the research, throughout Strategy 2023, Whitelion makes clear commitments for giving voice to young people and their lived experience including the following:

- Success depends on the voice and lived experience of highly vulnerable, high risk young people; systems around them; and the Whitelion community.
- We have committed to a dynamic practice approach befitting a learning organisation that is informed by data. Young people's voice and organisational performance against an outcome framework will result in continuous improvement to the Service Blueprint.
- The real measure of Whitelion's success is young people's experience of us. We know that co-design while desirable, is not always possible. Our approach is realistic - working in partnership to find solutions; enabling self-directed solutions; leading and consulting where appropriate; and creating space for peer-led solutions.

Annual Plan

In Whitelion's annual plan for 2020/21 we also clearly articulate our commitment to youth engagement as reflected by the following table:

Table 1: Link to Whitelion's annual plan

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	KEY ACTIVITY	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
Programs - Highly vulnerable young people experience improved connections and pathways to work	Embed mechanisms that give voice to highly vulnerable, high risk young people's needs and aspirations	Youth voice leads and informs at least 3 organisation-wide strategic initiatives
		Annual budget allocated towards youth participation and engagement
		Annual advocacy campaign informed by young people's voice and board endorsed policy positions
		Youth participatory framework is applied across 80% of programs

THE OBJECTIVES OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The objectives of youth engagement and this strategy is to:

- Provide greater opportunity for young people to inform internal operations based on their experience and ideas
- Provide greater opportunity for young people to inform external advocacy based on their experience and ideas
- Provide greater opportunity for learning, development and practical experience for young people
- Provide greater quality, depth and resources for youth engagement opportunities
- Support organisational culture change in regards to youth participation and engagement
- Develop models of best practice involving youth engagement that can be adopted by other organisations and contribute to sector disruption, improvement and innovation

WHITELION YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: A THREE-PRONGED MODEL

As well as youth engagement occurring at three levels (individual, program and organisational), a three-pronged approach is outlined below. This has been designed to provide flexibility and easy access to young people’s voice and lived experience as far as possible. The below table provides a summary of each of the three approaches, with more detail following.

Table 2: The three-pronged approach

	1. WHITELION YOUTH COUNCIL (WYC)	2. 'AD HOC' ENGAGEMENT	3. SECONDARY CONSULTATION
DESCRIPTION	8 young people with lived experience attend bi-monthly meetings.	Involving young people in multiple and varied ways in a once-off or time-limited way.	Accessing the voice of young people and their lived experience through external advisory groups and councils supported by other organisations.
KEY FEATURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people to input into organisational-wide issues. A forum to develop and build capability of young people to participate in engagement activities within their states. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnering either with WYC advisors or engaging with other current service users. Less formal than WYC Are most often paid but some are unpaid e.g. surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert advice from a specific cohort of young people. Helps Whitelion to not reinvent the wheel Young people are already trained and supported.
LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	Organisational	Mainly program, sometimes organisational	Organisational and program



1. Whitelion Youth Council (WYC)

The following outlines key features of the WYC:

RECRUITMENT

- Eight young people (two from each State) are recruited for a two-year term (consideration to be given to recruiting new advisors on a rotating basis i.e. could start with eight and then after six months, move to 10 and then 12 in another six months' time).
- Young people to have previous lived experience (either in Whitelion or elsewhere) and are now stable and ready to participate in a different capacity.
- As part of the recruitment process it is important that Whitelion is equipped to involve and support young people from diverse backgrounds and intersectionalities.
- Young people will be provided with a position description so expectations are clear, and an expression of interest process will be undertaken. Draft WYC Terms of Reference will be written that the council advisors will have input into and will approve at their first meeting.

TIME COMMITMENT

- Meetings are held for two hours every two months via video conference. It is anticipated that these meetings will be held after business hours although noting that there are three different time zones to factor. A decision regarding meeting times will be made once the membership is recruited.
- In the interim months training sessions could be conducted to ensure momentum and skills development. Also, advisors from each state could potentially meet with each other and their staff support person if needed and to also remain connected.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

- Council co-chaired with a young person and Whitelion Co-Founder, Glenn Manton. A co-chair approach ensures that the chairs can support each other and learn from each other e.g. Glenn can coach a young person in chairing a meeting and a young person can ensure that Glenn consistently considers the youth perspective. It helps build capabilities for both.
- Staff in attendance at the meeting will be Director of Operations (DOO), the Youth Engagement portfolio holder and the Youth Engagement Champions. Staff will not be formal members but will be 'in attendance' at meetings and be there to support the running of the meetings and the young people. If it feels like there are too many staff then engagement champions could rotate their attendance at meetings.
- Executive Officer of Council to be managed by the Youth Engagement portfolio holder who will be supported in this role by the DOO. This role develops the agenda, sends papers to meeting attendees beforehand and takes minutes

SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- Young people will be supported by a nominated youth engagement champion in each State. Staff will receive support and training prior to taking on this responsibility.
- Training for young people could include topics such as boundaries, maintaining confidentiality and conflicts of interest but is also essential that the relationship with the council is mutually beneficial. Whitelion will get a lot out of it and whilst the young people will be remunerated for their time, they will only remain engaged if they feel it is worthwhile and meaningful for them. Providing trainings that will be useful in the wider context of their lives will contribute to that. Providing an opportunity where they are able to take the lead on a project/idea or have ownership over something will also allow for greater engagement and benefit for Whitelion.

REMUNERATION

- Young people are paid for attendance at each meeting. They would receive three hours of payment to acknowledge preparation time. In line with Whitelion policy, remuneration will be in the form of payment equivalent to the lowest band and casual rate of the SCHADS.
- The current Whitelion policy will be updated to reflect this.

As the council matures, and if budget allows, there may also be an option for a young person to take on the responsibility of supporting the group, organisational tasks for the meetings and liaising with Whitelion staff who could mentor/support. Remuneration for this could be a higher rate of pay, the same rate for extra hours or an honorarium for the extra responsibilities.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE COUNCIL

- We would bring things like evaluation surveys, assessment forms, draft brochures, posters, flyers, website content etc. to this group for feedback.
- The Council will provide advice to the Whitelion Executive and board including presenting to the board at its biennial strategy days.
- Other suggested agenda items for WYC meetings include advocacy and policy and strategic and annual planning.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Council advisors could also support organisational culture change towards youth engagement through the delivery of training, consultation into practice development etc.
- Council advisors could run consultations/evaluations with the young people who participate in Whitelion service delivery and programs.
- Need to develop an annual calendar of training including what staff training may be relevant for Council advisors to attend.
- Council advisors could also be linked to a professional mentor (or 'workplace buddy') who operates in an area of interest for the young person. The purpose is to provide professional guidance and support beyond their allocated support person. For example- a young person who is interested in marketing and social media may be linked to a professional mentor in the communications team, or a young person who is interested in leadership might be linked to a professional mentor who is a manager. Thought should be given as to whether this may even be able to extend beyond the advisor's tenure to the Council. Thought should also be given to two-way mentoring where young people can teach staff. This could be especially important for our national office staff who do not get the same opportunities as program staff to interact with young people.
- It is recommended that the WYC utilises a robust, creative and participatory monitoring and evaluation model to accurately and meaningfully monitor individual, collective and broader outcomes.
- A communications toolkit should be developed for the Council
- Once the Council is established staff need information about how to add something to the agenda for the Council e.g. contacting the portfolio holder, and also how they can connect with the Council outside of the bi-monthly meetings if required



2. Ad hoc engagement

As Whitelion matures in its approach to and understanding of youth engagement, young people should become more and more involved in multiple ways.

Below are the different 'ad hoc' engagement opportunities for staff to consider. It should be noted that the DOO and Youth Engagement portfolio holder need to develop guidelines and documents to assist with some types of ad hoc engagement e.g. interview panel guidelines and role descriptions. Over time it may also be possible for a WYC advisor to lead some of these engagement opportunities.

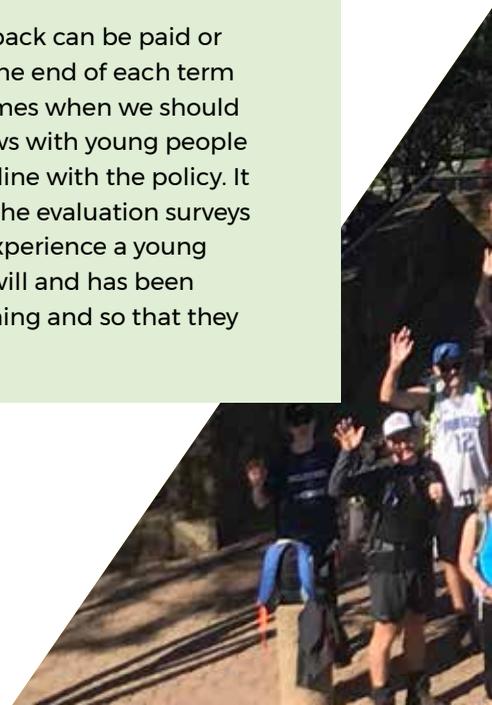
- **In the development of new programs** - we should adopt the thinking that how can we design new programs without knowing what young people need and want? Ideally we would love to co-design but where this is not possible we should consult. Complete co-design is not always possible for the entirety of a new program but it can be possible to design the structure and leave some of the filling in to the young people once involved. Sometimes giving them the basic structure and scope will allow for them to better create within. One example is we could ask WYC advisors to be involved in development of models by attending meetings or we could ask the WYC to host and lead a planning meeting for Whitelion staff. Or inviting them along to our program logic conversations. Whilst they might not have lived experience of every service they will still bring a unique perspective, different to that of staff. Whilst Whitelion is still in early maturity, consultation will be most appropriate and when maturity increases, consideration to involving an organisation like Foundation for Young Australians to help develop a co-design strategy for Whitelion should be considered.
- **Redesigning current programs** - whenever we want to redesign our current programs we should again adopt the mindset of how can we do this without the voice of young people. Like the above, we should include young people in any meetings or workshops we have. One example is that in the last 18 months we have had multiple workshops about Chatterbox - having a young person involved in these types of meetings in the future should be essential.
- **Participating in interview panels** - client involvement on interview panels for staff is not a new thing. Whitelion staff who have experienced this talk about the positive outcomes that are achieved when a young person is involved in the interviewing process. Successful models used previously are two staff members and one client. Essential to this are written and separate guidelines for young people about what their role is and for staff to be clear about the role of the young person. Time and planning needs to occur to ensure the young person receives interview questions, position descriptions and resumes prior to the interviews. A face to face briefing with the young person should occur before interviews start.

It may also be worthwhile to include young people in the decision making around the interview questions as well as delivery. Also in the future young people may be able to influence the actual process for recruitment and Whitelion could lead the way in this area by co-designing aspects of the recruitment process with young people. This could begin with how young people are recruited to programs such as the council and then be extended to volunteer and staff recruitment.

- **Being involved in relevant working groups** – Young people should be considered as members of current and future working groups and committees. It would need to be clear what the role of young people would be and they would need to be fully briefed on the Terms of Reference of the working group. Young people would get linked to a ‘support person’ who is a member of the working group who can check in with young people before and after each meeting and also make sure they receive meeting papers in time and would coordinate their payment. The Executive Team should consider what working groups are ready for the inclusion of a young person. It should also be noted that best practice is to include at least two young people so that there is peer support.

- **Advocacy and policy** – outside of the WYC there will be opportunities for young people to be involved in specific work that occurs regarding advocacy and policy. An example of this is that young people have informed Whitelion’s submissions to the Royal Commission into Mental Health services in Victoria and the Victorian government’s LGBTQI strategy. Whitelion should adopt the thinking that young people could lead these opportunities and Whitelion staff will be supporters as opposed to facilitators of the work. An example may be a role such as YACVIC’s thinker in residence who is engaged because of their specific interest/experience in the area of advocacy that is being pursued.

- **Surveys, focus groups and in-depth interviews** – this kind of feedback can be paid or unpaid. For example, a program might want to survey young people at the end of each term to ask what’s working for them and what’s not. However, there will be times when we should also consider running focus groups, workshops and/or in-depth interviews with young people about their experience. In this instances young people would be paid in line with the policy. It is important to note that this type of engagement is above and beyond the evaluation surveys we currently use. It is when we specifically want to ‘deep dive’ into the experience a young person has of a specific program. It is important to communicate what will and has been done with the feedback provided by these young people to create meaning and so that they don’t feel they have wasted their time.



- **Speaking at events** - there are times we might want to ask a WYC advisor to speak at an event, at other times it might be more appropriate to ask a current client. Young people will be appropriately briefed and supported in the lead-up to and during the event. The below are examples of event opportunities:

- Whitelion staff / internal events – Board meetings, launches, celebrations
- AFL lunch
- Leading the Pride
- Three Peaks (young person speak to the support crew/guide training)
- Bail Out – one in every state
- Funder’s events
- Conferences

- **Other opportunities** - creating workspaces, designing uniforms, advertising, guest speakers at other interagency group meetings, getting on radio and doing cold-calls to mentors to see how they are going.



3. Secondary consultation

We know that peak bodies and other youth, government and not-for-profit organisations have existing Youth Councils. Part of the DOO's role will be to work with State Managers to gain a better understanding of what currently exists and where there are opportunities for Whitelion to connect into these groups. For example, there may be times where it is more appropriate to seek feedback from an existing, external group of young people rather than our own WYC.

As well as this there are often networks for staff. For example, YACVic coordinates the Youth Participation Practice Network which is a network of Victorian professionals who are committed to empowering young people through youth participation, youth engagement and supporting the voice of young people. This community meets regularly in person and every member has the chance to access the group online to share resources and knowledge as well as seek advice and guidance.

YACVic's Participation & Development Coordinator has informed Whitelion of a number of existing youth participation 'councils' that exist which are outlined below. YACVic themselves have positions for young people on their Board and have multiple participation opportunities that they advertise through their 'young members'. They set up short term working groups when needs arise e.g. in preparation for their submission to the Royal Commission into Victorian Mental Health services they brought together a group of young people who met four times. They also have young people on interview panels. They can consult 'young members' for other youth organisations for a fee-for-service but will happily advertise our Council for free and have offered to share the training they deliver for young people who are on interview panels.

- **Berry Street's Y-Change:** Y-Change is a social and systemic change platform for young people aged 18-25 with lived experience of disadvantage. Through training and employment they learn to understand, build on and adapt the skills and knowledge they have gained through their experiences. Their employment then sees them use their expertise in advocacy, leadership, change-making and professional contexts.
- **Create Foundation:** have Youth Advisory Groups that are forums for children and young people aged 10 to 25 to meet regularly, usually at a fun activity, to discuss issues they are facing within the care system. They can also provide input into resource development, programs and general government or organisational policy. They also have a participation portal
- **Koorie Youth Council:** are able to be consulted for issues specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people
- **Frontyard Youth Services:** have a Youth Advisory Committee (members available for consultation) and a Youth Action Group who champion two projects per year aimed at affective positive change in the community.
- **YSAS:** has the CREW, YSAS' Youth Action and Advisory Group; a collective of young people with the goal of taking action and making change. The CREW is about creating pathways for young people to participate in all areas of decision making. Members of the CREW are young people aged 12-25 from across Victoria with a connection to YSAS. They also have other ways for young people to participate including helping with an event, creating artwork and attending focus groups or participating in surveys.
- **Victorian Commission for Children & Young People:** have a Youth Advisory Group and they are co-designing this new group with the four young members.



STAFF MEMBER ROLES TO SUPPORT THE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

There are five key roles that will support Whitelion's youth engagement strategy, as outlined in the diagram and table below. It is noted that these staff will require training and specific skill development in order to most effectively carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Diagram 2: Staff support roles

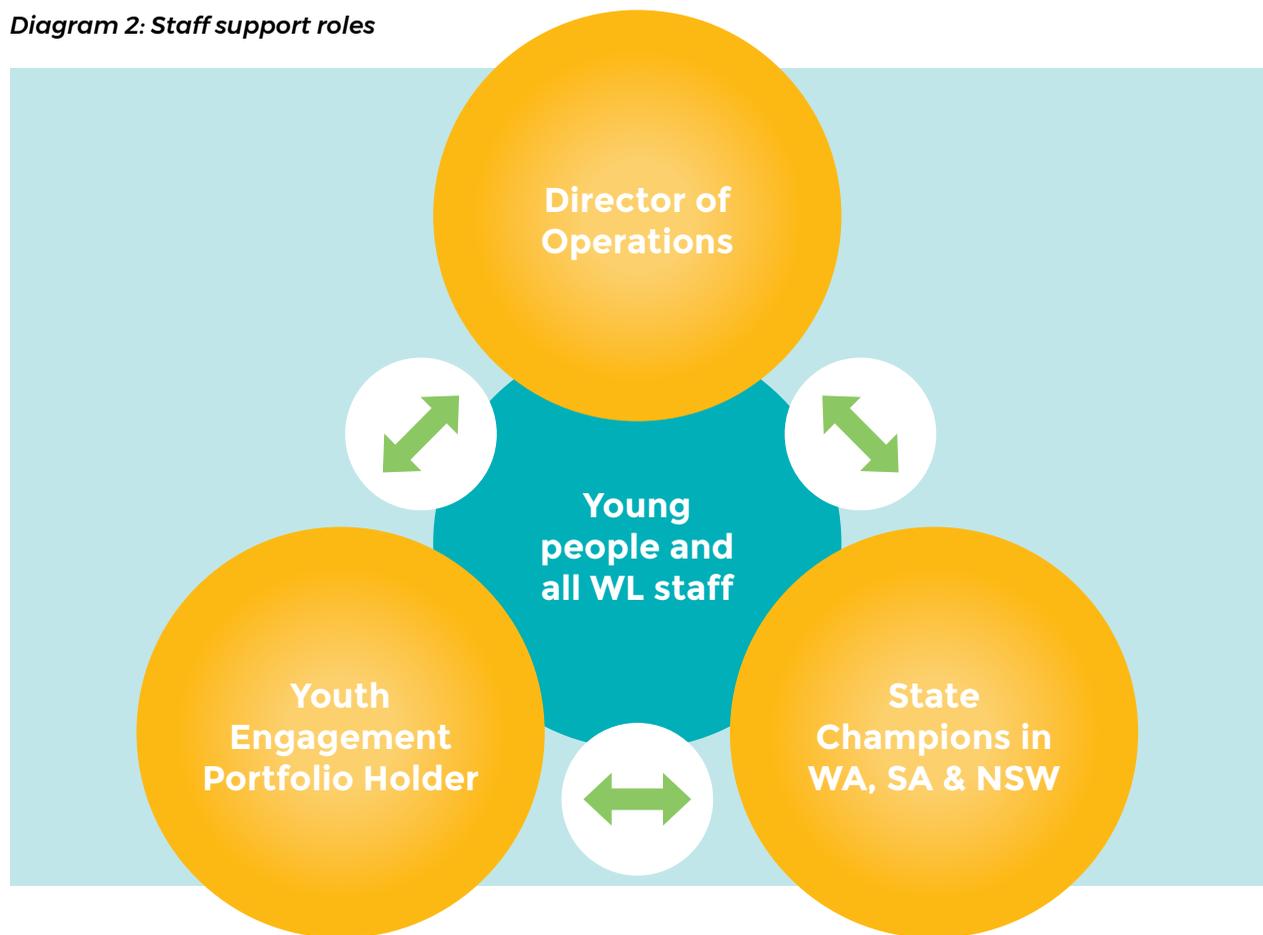


Table 3: Description of staff support roles

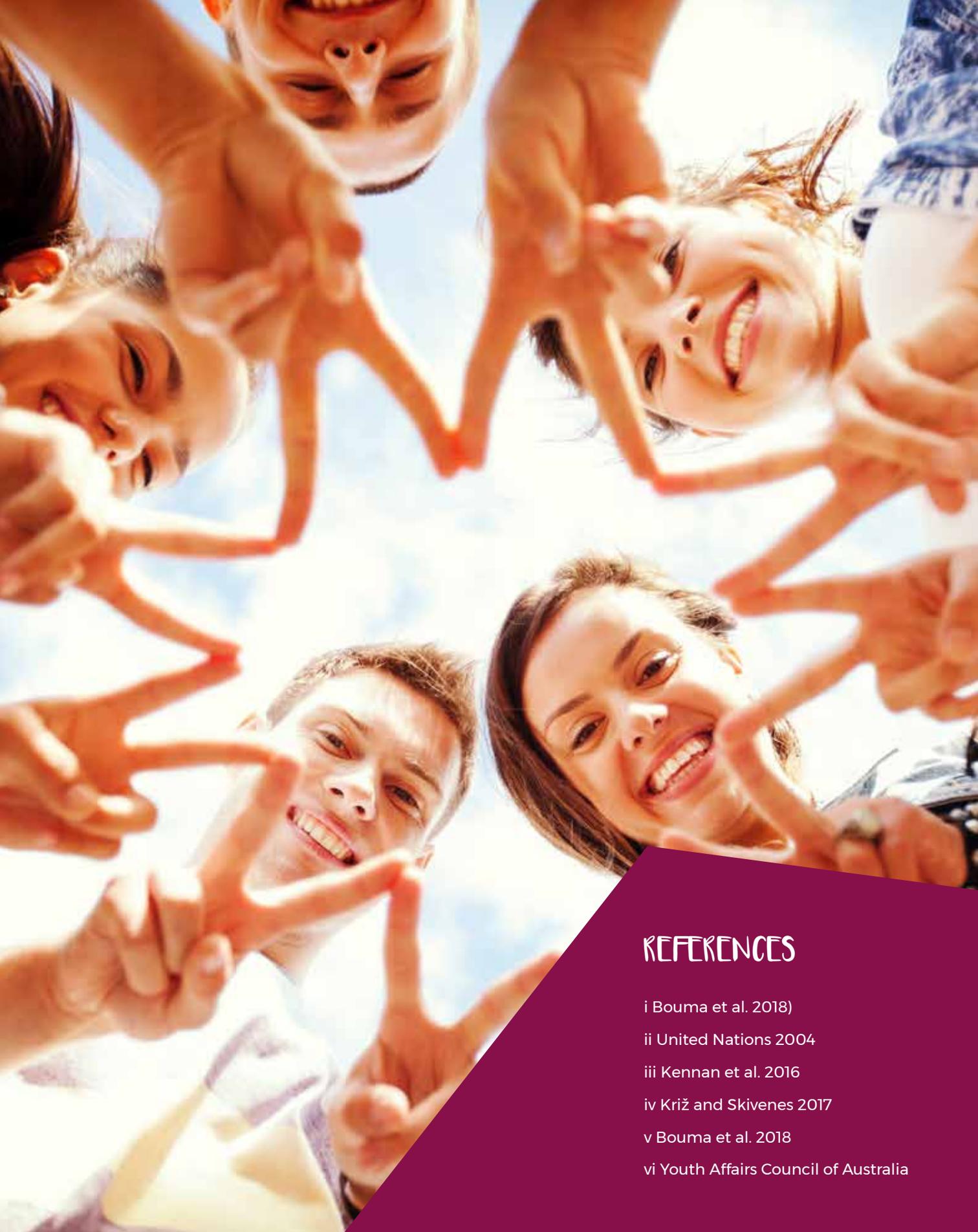
STAFF	KEY RESPONSIBILITIES
Director of Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Executive Sponsor, with delegation of the CEO to drive the implementation of youth engagement at Whitelion at all three levels. ◦ Establish the Youth Council. ◦ Work closely with and provide support to the Youth Engagement Portfolio Holder. ◦ Develop, manage and monitor the centralised budget for youth engagement. ◦ Oversee the development of documents and processes required to enable effective youth engagement at Whitelion. ◦ Build the understanding and importance of youth engagement at Whitelion to all staff so that there is an increase in the number of engagement opportunities for young people. ◦ Connect with specific staff to get regular reports regarding youth engagement and update the youth engagement spreadsheet that documents the engagement opportunities and young people involved.
Youth Engagement Portfolio Holder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Support the youth engagement champions (this will likely include running a Youth Engagement Working Group that would meet every two to three months) ◦ Build the understanding and importance of youth engagement at Whitelion to all staff so that there is an increase in the number of engagement opportunities for young people. ◦ Executive Officer of the Youth Council - this includes developing the agenda, sending papers to meeting attendees beforehand, taking minutes and coordinating payments for young people. ◦ Work with the Executive Sponsor to develop key guidelines, documents and processes to support participation at a program and organisational level. ◦ Attend relevant external youth engagement network meetings and share relevant information with staff. ◦ A more detailed position description has been developed for this role.
Youth Engagement Champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Recruit and support two young people from their State. ◦ These support people will be members of the Youth Engagement Working Group ◦ Build the understanding and importance of youth engagement amongst their state colleagues. ◦ Be a support person for staff in their state e.g. provide advice about ways to engage with young people at different levels, advice about how staff can then support these young people, instructions about paying young people etc. ◦ A more detailed position description is available for these roles.

This strategy was drafted by Tanya Hendry, Director of Operations with significant input from Charlotte Kelberg (previous National Practice Lead), Mim Hamel-Green (previous Youth Engagement portfolio holder and Hang Vo, CEO.

WHITELION'S YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN 2020 - 21

Every financial year a new action plan will be created to ensure ongoing momentum in the space of youth engagement. The aim of the action plan is to also provide clarity to all staff regarding their role in youth engagement. The below is the FY21 action plan.

ACTION	WHO	WHEN
INDIVIDUAL LEVEL		
Lead the implementation of Youth Participatory Practice across Whitelion, with the framework applied across 80% of programs	National Practice & Research Lead	Nov 20 – Jun 21
Review the ways that young people currently provide individual feedback e.g. feedback forms and processes, feedback surveys etc.	Tanya Glivar, Tanya Hendry & Ro Middlemiss	As per Quality Plan timeframes
PROGRAM LEVEL		
Develop process for involving young people on interview panels	Tanya Hendry & Brett Ison	Mar 2021
Develop guidelines for interview panels (for both staff and young people)	Brett Ison	Mar 2021
Determine what current committees and working groups could involve young people	Tanya Hendry	Nov 20
Develop template for role descriptions for young people on working groups	Brett Ison	Dec 20
ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL		
Establish process for recruiting to Youth council	Brett Ison	9 Oct 20
Write a position description for Council advisors	Brett Ison	9 Oct 20
Write a Terms of Reference for the Council	Brett Ison	9 Oct 20
Write a position description for youth engagement champions	Brett Ison	9 Oct 20
Write a position description for youth engagement portfolio holder	Tanya Hendry	2 Oct 20
Update the payment of young people policy	Tanya Hendry	23 Oct 20
Develop training calendar for WYC in consultation with advisors	Brett Ison	Feb 21
Youth voice leads and informs at least 3 organisation-wide strategic initiatives (as per annual plan)	Tanya Hendry	By 20 June 21



REFERENCES

- i Bouma et al. 2018)
- ii United Nations 2004
- iii Kennan et al. 2016
- iv Križ and Skivenes 2017
- v Bouma et al. 2018
- vi Youth Affairs Council of Australia





No young person
left behind



No young person
left behind

Feedback and questions

We welcome your feedback and any questions you may have.

Please contact us on:

✉ whitelion@whitelion.asn.au

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