

METHODS IN ACTION: CASE STUDIES

The Australian Government's [Youth Steering Committee](#), established by the Office for Youth, is an advisory body of young Australians, providing guidance on youth-specific policies and programs. Young people take part in discussions about national issues that impact their lives directly. Members of the committee engage in structured dialogues with government representatives, ensuring that their insights shape policies in areas such as education, mental health, and employment. This model demonstrates the government's commitment to including young people at the policy table, supporting transparency and inclusivity in decision-making.

The Australian Government's [Youth Advisory Groups](#) offer structured platforms for young people to engage with different government agencies on specific policy topics. Each group focuses on distinct areas, such as climate change, mental health, or digital safety, and provides feedback that directly informs policy decisions. Through regular meetings and consultations, these groups help ensure that policy initiatives are youth-centred and responsive to young people's needs. Youth Advisory Groups highlight how ongoing youth engagement can lead to more relevant and impactful government actions.

The [National Youth Forum](#), hosted by the Office for Youth, gathers young Australians to discuss pressing issues and provide feedback on government initiatives. This forum supports young people from diverse backgrounds to share their perspectives on a national stage, fostering a sense of shared purpose and collaboration. Participants engage in workshops, panels, and discussions on topics like education, employment, and mental health. The outcomes from these forums are used to refine government programs, ensuring they reflect the priorities and needs of Australia's young people.

The [eSafety Youth Council](#), led by the eSafety Commissioner, brings together young Australians to provide insights into online safety and digital wellbeing. This advisory body helps shape national strategies and campaigns aimed at protecting young people online. By sharing their lived experiences with social media, cyberbullying, and digital privacy, council members play an important role in creating policies that promote safer online environments. The council's input has informed eSafety's youth-targeted initiatives, including educational resources and reporting tools for online harms.

The [CREATE Foundation Youth Expert Advisory Group](#) (YEAG) held a youth-led forum for young people with lived experience in the out-of-home care system to directly influence policy. YEAG is composed of young people who have experienced foster care, kinship care, or residential care, making them uniquely positioned to provide insights into the challenges of the system. The forum was planned by the YEAG over 6 months through 13 workshops. Young people designed everything about the day, including the agenda, guestlist and presentations. The forum brought together young Australians to share their experiences, concerns, and ideas for improving the care system and facilitated dialogue between young people and policymakers in discussions on housing and homelessness, alcohol and drugs, youth justice, education, mental health, and transitioning out of care. The youth-led forum enabled a platform for young people to share their lived experience and concerns about current systems and services to influence national policy to improve the welfare of young people in care.

The [Powerhouse Late: Climate](#) public event, led by the Young and Resilient Research Centre at Western Sydney University in partnership with youth driven organisations, is an innovative example of how cultural institutions can create platforms for youth engagement in climate policy and action. The event brought together young activists, researchers, policymakers and artists, blending science with culture and creativity, using art installations, performances, and workshops to engage young people in thinking critically about climate issues and to take an active role in climate advocacy. Young attendees were not only passive observers but active participants in shaping the conversations. Through workshops and panel discussions, young people had the opportunity to contribute to policy debates, collaborate with experts and lead discussions about the impacts of climate issues on marginalised young people. This event highlights how young people can be engaged in complex policy issues in creative ways to articulate their concerns in public forums.

The [Engine Room](#) is a digital, international intergenerational platform led by young people and the United Nations Foundation's Our Future Agenda to engage young people in reimagining how the United Nations thinks, plans and acts for a sustainable future. The Engine Room facilitates digital events, bringing together UN representatives and young leaders, to create spaces for young people to define issues, share aspirations and co-create solutions and policy actions.

The [Koorie Youth Council](#) engaged with 42 Aboriginal young people through yarning circles and individual interviews to gather stories about lived experience of the youth justice system. Yarns enabled young people to lead conversations to ensure their safety and confidentiality, with discussions enabling a deep understanding of young people's lives, personal experiences and communities. Young people's stories were documented in [Ngaga-dji](#) - a call to action report - that acted on the voices of young people calling for change, to present youth-centred solutions to support Aboriginal young people. Through this and community advocacy work, Koorie Youth Council achieved policy changes including raising the age of leaving care from 18 to 21 and supporting Aboriginal ownership of community infrastructure and gathering places.

The [What Matters? Writing Competition](#), organised by the Whitlam Institute at Western Sydney University, is a national platform that invites young Australians to share their views on contemporary social, political, and environmental issues through creative writing to shape future policies. The competition provides an accessible way for young people to voice their concerns and ideas about what matters most to them, helping to identify emerging youth priorities. By inviting young people to take part, the competition amplifies young people's perspectives on issues often overlooked in mainstream policy debates. Winning entries are shared with policymakers and featured in national media, ensuring that young people's perspectives reach key decision-makers. The competition highlights that young people are not just future citizens, but current stakeholders whose opinions and ideas should inform policy development. Indeed, many of the issues raised by young people reflect broader societal concerns, influencing public discourse and encouraging broader community conversations that can lead to policy shifts.

Foundations for Tomorrow organised an [Intergenerational Town Hall: Engaging young people in sustainability policy](#), which brought together young changemakers, policymakers, and experts aged 16 to 87 to answer how Australia can lead the way in global cooperation and sustainability by 2100. Across a series of discussions and sessions, the event resulted in ambitious visions for 2100, urgent calls for climate action, and a clear path to empower young voices to influence policy.