

YOUNG MAYORS



Cairns

2025 Nominee Information Pack





We acknowledge.

FYA acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land throughout Australia on whose unceded Countries we conduct our business. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and those yet to come. We acknowledge that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people continue to live in spiritual and sacred relationships with this Country. This always was and always will be Aboriginal Land.

What is the Young Mayors program?



The Young Mayors program supports young people aged 13 to 17 across Cairns to run for election and form a brand new Cairns Youth Council of 12 members. Elected by their peers, together this Youth Council will set an agenda for their 18 month Term in Office and work with the Cairns Regional Council on specific issues.

With access to training, mentoring and money to run local projects and campaigns, the Youth Council don't just have a voice - but a platform to take action on the issues that young people in Cairns truly care about.

It's free for all young people to apply and participate in Young Mayors.

Who runs the Young Mayors program?

Young Mayors is a pilot program run by the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA), in partnership with Cairns Regional Council and other councils around Australia. Young Mayors is supported by the Electoral Commission of Queensland. FYA is a national non-profit organisation that exists to back young people across the country to beat injustice and create long-lasting change for all.

Message from the Youth Council



Being part of the Cairns Youth Council is an incredible opportunity for young people to create real, lasting change in our community, while gaining essential life skills, building meaningful connections, and grow as individuals.

From the very beginning, the campaigning process was unforgettable. It pushed us to think critically, strategise effectively, and communicate with purpose. It challenged us, and in doing so, helped us discover new strengths and interests within ourselves. Through this journey, we've built lasting confidence, resilience, experience, and a deep passion for representing the voices of young people in Cairns.

This program has opened the door to countless opportunities, with each one contributing to the betterment of the Cairns youth community. The Youth Council is a space where tangible change happens, and young voices are truly heard. But its greatest strength is in how it empowers us to give back.

We've actively contributed to initiatives such as the Towards 2050 Youth Summit, the Cleaner Creeks Project, and the Joint Standing Committee Inquiry into Civics Education and Youth Engagement in Australia. We are also leading our own major projects, each one shaped by feedback and priorities identified through extensive community consultation.

The Young Mayors Program isn't just about what you can give, it's also about what you gain. It's about joining a supportive, inspiring community where your unique perspective matters, and your ideas can shape the future of Cairns. For us, being part of the Youth Council was truly a defining experience and an opportunity that we will always deeply value, and never forget.

So nominate yourself for the Young Mayors Program, and take that first step towards having your voice heard and creating positive change in Cairns.

Cheers!

Antonije, Mayor

Aiden, Deputy Mayor - Spokesperson

Sofia, Deputy Mayor - Secretary.

Message from the Mayor



Thinking about joining the Cairns Youth Council? Do it. Put your hand up. Say yes.

Because your voice matters more than you think.

When I was your age, I didn't see people like me at decision-making tables. That stuck with me. And now, as Mayor, I'm determined to change that.

The Cairns Youth Council is a space for real conversations, real ideas, and real impact.

It's not about ticking boxes. It's about listening, learning, and having a seat at the table where change actually happens. If you care about your school, your street, your mates, your mental health, your future — this is a chance to be part of something that matters.

You don't have to be loud. You don't have to have all the answers. You just have to care enough to show up. And if that's you — I can't wait to see what you bring to the table.

Mayor Amy Eden

What you can expect if you're elected to the Youth Council

Representing your community on the Cairns Youth Council is an important responsibility. It will also be a whole lot of fun. If you're elected, you will:

- Participate in a 2 day induction, held in October 2025
- Participate in workshops and consultations during October - April to establish a Priority Agenda
- Serve a 18 month Term in Office, from 1 February 2026 to 30 June 2027
- Participate in regular meetings. Meetings are held in-person (support to access online meetings provided). For more information about Youth Council meetings, check out the Young Mayors FAQ pack.
- Work with the other members of the Youth Council to select a Youth Council Mayor, Deputy Mayor - Spokesperson and Deputy Mayor - Secretary.
- Together with other members of the Youth Council, develop a priority agenda and get involved in activities led by the Youth Council in the community, as well as contribute towards Cairns Regional Council projects and planning
- Represent your community and celebrate its diversity; share opinions and ideas, learn from others and contribute to creating a better future for your region.

The Youth Council is non-partisan and not affiliated with any political party or ideology. If you're a member of a political party, aligned with a political representative or subscribe to the views of a specific ideology, we'll ask you to not represent any party and participate as an independent candidate.

Read more about our Code of Conduct at
fya.org.au/youngmayorscodeconduct

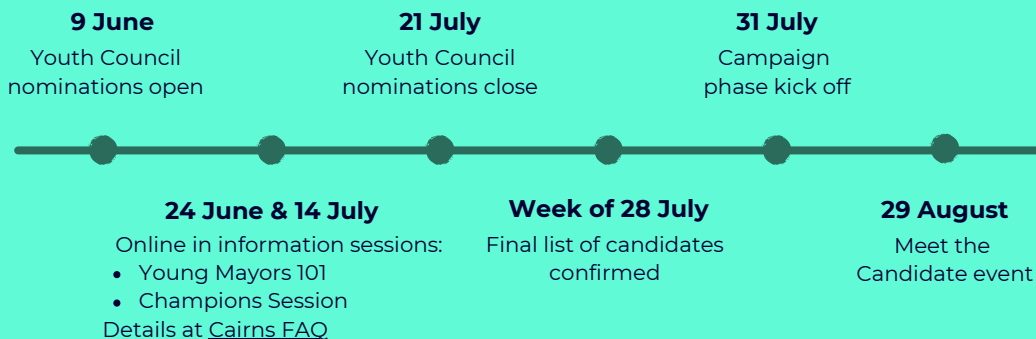


What you'll get access to

If you're selected as a candidate to run for election, you'll get access to:

- **Online and in-person workshops** to prepare you for campaigning
- A small **budget for campaign materials and 10 t-shirts** for you and your supporters to promote your campaign
- The opportunity to **speak to your constituents** through a 'Meet the Candidates' community forum (with support to prepare)
- **Coaching and well-being support** from the Young Mayors Program team throughout your campaign

2025 Key Dates

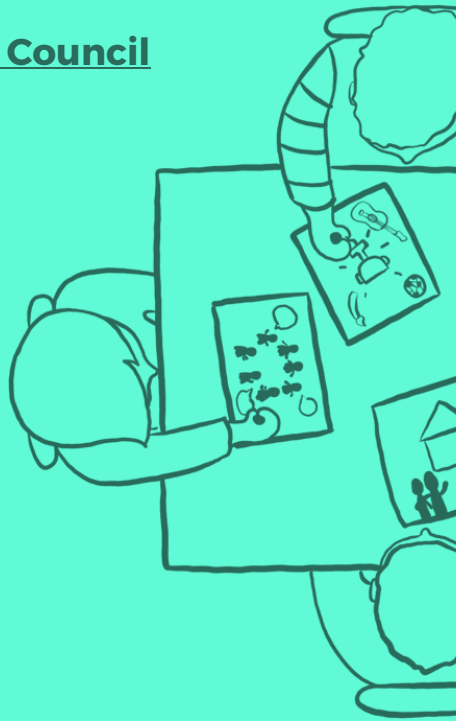


Workshops during campaign period:

- 31 July | Welcome and kick-off session | City Library
- 4 August | Being an elected representative | Online
- 7 August | Campaign Support | City Library
- 11 August | Campaigning 101 | Online

If you're elected to the Youth Council you'll get access to:

- **Workshops and training** during your induction and throughout your Term in Office
- **Support for transport** to and from meetings and events, where possible
- **Coaching and mentoring** by experts from Foundation for Young Australians, Cairns Regional Council and community organisations
- The chance to **connect and collaborate with young people** on Youth Councils in other parts of the country.



8 -12 September
Cairns Youth Council
Elections

4 October & 11 October
Youth Council
Induction parts 1 & 2

February 2026 - June 2027
Youth Council
Term in Office

**Week commencing 14
September**
Celebration Event

October - December 2025
Skills development &
priority agenda setting

- 14 August | Campaign support | City Library
- 21 August | Meet the Candidates Prep | City Library
- 1 September | Election week ready for Champions | Online
- 3 September | Election week ready for candidates | City Library

We also host an online drop in sessions during the campaign period.

Who can apply?

Keen to nominate? Excellent choice.

Nominees must meet the following criteria:

- live in the Cairns Regional Council local government area
- aged between 13 and 17 years at the time of nomination
- be able to commit to attending induction days and meetings
- submit your own nomination

We encourage young people with a diversity of lived experience of life in Cairns to nominate, including First Nations people, LGBTQIA+ people, disabled people / people with disability, women and non-binary people, young people from low-income households, people from diverse cultural backgrounds and people of colour.

You do not need to be an Australian citizen to nominate yourself.

What is the nomination process?

To nominate, all you need to do is read and fill out this form:

fya.org.au/CairnsNominations

After nominations close, your application will be assessed by a panel of FYA, Cairns Regional Council team members and a young representative from the community. Not everyone who applies will be selected as a candidate to run for election. Candidates will be selected based on their application and availability to commit to the Term in Office.

If you're not selected, we will provide feedback to help you develop a stronger application if you want to apply again in future years.

Note: You are campaigning to be a youth councillor. Once elected, the Youth Council will elect a Mayor and Deputies.

More information

If you have a question check out Young Mayors Cairns FAQ: fya.org.au/CairnsFAQ

For any other questions, or if you'd like support to fill out your nomination form, please email Etuina Suavai at young.mayors.qld@fya.org.au