

**YOUNG
MAYORS**

Cairns Youth Council

2025 Frequently Asked Questions





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.

Hello!

Got questions after reading the [Young Mayors Cairns Nominations Information Kit](#)? No problem!

Read on for detailed answers to some of our Frequently Asked Questions or contact us at young.mayors.qld@fya.org.au

Key dates

Important dates

- **9 June 2025** | Nominations open | **21 July 2025** - Nominations close
- **Week of 28 July 2025** | Final list of candidates confirmed
- **31 July 2025** | Campaign phase kick off session
- **29 August 2025** | Meet the Candidates
- **8 - 12 September 2025** | Elections
- **Week commencing 14 September 2025** | Celebration
- **October 2025** | Induction sessions (held over 2 Saturdays)
- **October - December 2025** | Skills development and Priority Agenda planning
- **1 February 2026 - 30 June 2027** | Term in Office

Nominations workshops and info sessions

- **24 June** | Young Mayors 101 | online
- **14 July** | Champions info session (parents and guardians) | online

Campaign workshops

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

What is the nomination process?

To nominate, all you need to do is read and fill out [this form](#). A print version can be downloaded [here](#) and emailed to young.mayors.qld@fya.org.au

To help us understand why you are nominating and the issues you care about, nominees are asked asked 3 questions. You can respond in writing or by a video or audio file*.

You will also be asked to nominate the region you would like to represent. These are North, Central, South and Far South. Pick the one where you spend the most time or feel most connected to.

[View the map here.](#)

After nominations close, applications are de-identified and assessed by a panel of FYA and Cairns Regional Council team members, along with a former Cairns youth councillor.

How are nominees selected?

So we can equip candidates with the skills and resources to campaign, final candidate places are limited. This means not everyone who applies will be selected as a candidate to run for election.

Your responses to the questions help us assess your suitability and readiness to move to candidate phase of the program.

You must also be able to commit to the Code of Conduct and the Term in Office. Details about the Code of Conduct and the Term in Office are on pages 5 and 11.

If a you are not selected, where possible we will provide feedback to help you develop a stronger application next time.

Tips!

You can view the current [Cairns Youth Council Priority Agenda here](#). You don't have to campaign on the same issues, but if elected the youth council may decide continue this work.

*If you submit a video or audio nomination, keep it simple without special effects. We will assess from a transcript.

What can I expect during the campaigning?

Candidates are encouraged to campaign as much or as little as they would like, and are supported by the Young Mayors Cairns Team throughout. We also encourage you to put together a 'campaign crew' of supporters and champions to help you get your message out, brainstorm ideas and cheer you on throughout the process. Not sure how to? Don't worry we have lots of tips to get you started.

Online Workshops

There are 2 campaign skills workshops held in August to build your skills and help develop connections with the other candidates. These run for 1.5 hours and are hosted online. All workshops are after school and are optional, but we really encourage you to attend as it will make your campaign stronger.

In person Workshops

We also run in-person workshops where candidates can get to know each other and get 1:1 support with their campaign planning from the Young Mayors Cairns Team. In-person workshops are held in a central location. They are optional but we encourage you to attend.

Meet the Candidates Forum

Held on the evening of **Friday 29 August** the Meet the Candidates Forum is an opportunity for candidates to speak to the community about issues that matter to them.

It is optional, but is a great way to get your ideas in front of decision makers and community.

Scared of public speaking?

That's okay, we've got you. We'll support you to prepare.

How does the Term in Office work?

**Most meetings are held during school term.
There are 4 meetings per term.**

Priority Agenda meetings

In the first phase of the program, the youth council will be working on establishing their priority agenda. This means working together to identify the key issues facing young people, and the actions you can take to address them. All Youth Councillors need to contribute to these.

Once the Priority Agenda is set, the youth council will move to ordinary and project-based meetings.

Ordinary Youth Council Meetings (min. 2 per term)

Ordinary Youth Council meetings are held during school term. These are where all Youth Councillors workshop ideas and make decisions, or consult on council plans. Meetings are 1.5 hours. When needed, we offer hybrid meetings (in-person with options to join online). All Youth Councillors are expected to contribute to Ordinary Meetings.

Project-based meetings (2 per term)

Youth Councillors will opt into specific project groups. Meeting times are used for project work as it is needed. All youth councillors are expected to contribute to a project group.

Holiday catch ups and project meetings

To support the youth council to continue their project work, additional meetings will be offered over during school holidays to offer an opportunity to complete tasks without the pressure of balancing Youth Council and school commitments.

Other meetings and activities

Leadership team meetings

If your fellow Youth Councillors elect you to a Mayor or Deputy Mayor role you'll need to attend Leadership Team meetings. These are held on alternate weeks to regular meetings, to help develop agendas and work on tasks like consultation planning, media releases, and upcoming opportunities.

Community events

Being a representative is all about showing up for community. As a youth councillor you'll be invited to all kinds of community events and activities. Sometimes in a formal role - like opening an exhibition or speaking at a forum - and sometimes just to take part.

How do we meet?

When and where

Once elected, we'll find a time and day to meet based on everyone's availability as best as possible. The schedule of meetings are reviewed throughout the term in office. Meetings are held at Cairns Regional Council, or another central location. Snacks are provided!

What's the commitment

The Cairns Team works with youth councillors to support meaningful involvement throughout their Term in Office. While meeting attendance is important, when life gets busy contributions can also be made via email or catch-ups with the Young Mayors Cairns Team.

We'll check in with you every six months to support ongoing participation and set personal goals for what you would like to get out of your time as a Youth Councillor.

What can I expect during the Term in Office?

What the Term in Office looks like is really up to the youth council. But here are some things you can expect.

Youth Council Induction Workshops

In person workshops designed to help you succeed in your new roles, get to know the other Youth Councillors and start dreaming big for young people in Cairns.



Developing & Refining the Priority Agenda

Workshops and community consultation to test new ideas and create a plan for what the Youth Council aims to deliver in their Term in Office.

Swearing In Ceremony

A special event where Youth Councillors make a formal affirmation before members of Cairns Regional Council and community to uphold their roles and represent young people in Cairns.



Connecting with community

You'll be introduced to community leaders and invited on excursions to connect with community, learn about where we live and the different experiences of young people in the region.

Advocate for young people at forums and meet with decision makers

Youth Councillors are invited to participate in community forums, meet with Cairns Regional Council Councillors/ elected members and represent at schools and community events.



Communications

Young People

Email is used for youth council communications. Text messages are also sent to remind you of important activities.

The Youth Council have access to a google drive for collaborating online.

We ask that parents and carers respect meetings and online collaborations as safe spaces for the Youth Council to collaborate freely.

Email addresses are only shared in limited circumstances and FYA and Cairns Regional Council staff are cc'd in all communications.

Parents and Carers

We occasionally send emails and text messages to parents and carers to keep you up to date on special events or activities.

Parents and carers are always welcome to speak to a member of the Young Mayors Cairns Team if they have any questions or concerns.

Young Mayors Program Assistant - Cairns

Etuina Suavai

etuina.suavai@fya.org.au | 0489 996 347

Cairns Regional Council Community Development Officer – Wellbeing

Shalane Anderson

Shalane.Anderson@cairns.qld.gov.au | 0456 000 979

Young Mayors Program Manager - QLD

Jenna Williams

jenna.williams@fya.org.au | 0489 996 347

How can parents, carers and supporters get involved?

We keep parents and carers informed of all key activity dates, including additional events, and those that require travel. If you miss some meetings and can't be reached directly, we will reach out to your nominated adults.

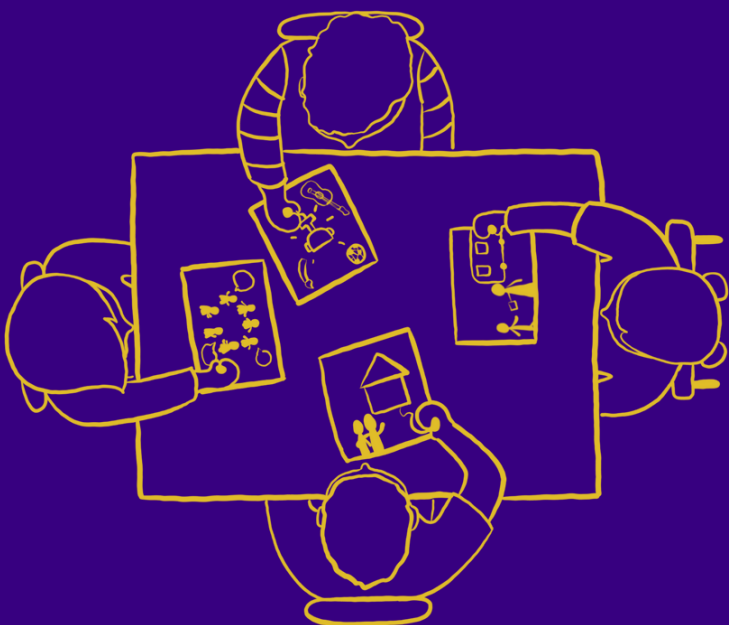
We encourage parents and carers to attend the Champions sessions during the nominations and campaigning periods so they know what to expect and how to support you.

Parents, carers and your campaign supporters are asked to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

Your parents, carers and campaign supporters will be invited to attend key Youth Council events and celebrations

Are Youth Councillors paid?

Youth Council members will be paid a quarterly stipend of \$250 to recognise their time and commitment to contributing.



What if I no longer want to be a part of the Youth Council?

If you are finding the youth council challenging to be a part of, the Young Mayors Cairns team will work with you to resolve the issue, or address any barriers that may be preventing you from participating.

However we understand that sometimes a program or activity may no longer be of interest and that perhaps the youth council isn't the space for everyone. In this instance, we would work with you to support you to leave the program.

We have structured check-ins at the 6 month and 12 month milestones, but are always happy to chat any time.

If a young person disengages from the program by no longer attending meetings or responding to calls and messages, after a reasonable number of attempts we will give a clear deadline for confirming their continued participation.

Depending how far into the Term in Office, the position held may be left vacant, or the candidate with the next highest number of votes in that region would be invited in.

How does the Code of Conduct apply?

The Young Mayors Team is committed to working with young people to resolve any issues that arise.

However, if a young person is found to have breached the Code of Conduct or Rules of Engagement and has not demonstrated a willingness to align with these core requirements, they may be removed from the program.

[You can read the Code of Conduct here.](#)

What safeguarding is in place?

In Cairns, the Young Mayors program works with young people aged 13 to 17 years. We recognise this program puts young people in the public spotlight, and this can create vulnerabilities.

Risk management planning includes, but is not limited to specific actions and support available to keep young people safe, processes to report harm, and clarity on expectations young people can have of each other, partner organisations involved and the general public.

We ask that parents and carers respect the meetings and online communication channels as safe spaces for the youth council to collaborate freely with their peers. We also ask that parents and carers adhere to the Code of Conduct.

FYA and our partners are required to have Blue Cards / Working With Children Checks and adhere to a comprehensive set of safeguarding policies and legislative requirements. Both FYA Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Cairns Regional Council policies inform and underpin the program delivery.

Got more questions?

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