

Investing in young Tasmanians

BUDGET PRIORITY STATEMENT



About Us

The Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT) is the peak body for young people aged 12-25 years and the Tasmanian youth sector.

Our Vision

A Tasmania where young people are actively engaged in community life and have access to the resources needed to develop their full potential.

Our Mission

To work with young people, the Tasmanian youth sector, the community and all levels of government to increase the participation and contribution of young people in the State.

“As a young person, there is immense stress associated with finding affordable housing. The difficulty with finding a place to live is exacerbated by the lack of employment opportunities for young people. Frequently young people try to apply for job roles where ‘experience is required’, however they don’t yet have that experience and have no way of attaining experience because more and more employers will toss aside the applications of anyone who hasn’t yet worked in that field. Young people spend years at university, only to graduate and end up in the Job Seeker program because there is no work for them.”

—Frances, 22

Introduction

The Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT) welcomes the opportunity to submit this Budget Priority Statement for the Tasmanian Government 2020-21 Budget Community Consultation.

This submission proposes the development of an inaugural Tasmanian Youth Strategy and associated Action Plans to ensure all young people can flourish and live their best life in Tasmania.

Tasmania has experienced strong economic growth, driven by investment, industry, export and infrastructure development¹. Whilst Tasmania is striving forward economically, many young people are being left behind and are not benefiting from a prosperous Tasmanian economy.

Tasmania's population has grown by 16% over the last 30 years², a substantial development for a small island nation. However, it is of great concern that Tasmania's youth population has declined by 11.4% over the same time period. This shrinking youth population places increased pressure on government and industries to plan for the impacts of an ageing population, including aged service demands and a reduced workforce size.

Young Tasmanians account for 16.8% of the total population, approximately 88,500 individuals³, many of whom are facing significant challenges, including economic and social disadvantage.

Hobart is now the least affordable capital city in Australia to rent a home⁴. Young people are being pushed out of the private rental market, and home ownership is no longer seen as a reality for many. Sadly, young Tasmanians are disproportionately represented in the State's homeless population⁵ and currently comprise one-third of our Social Housing register⁶.

Tasmania has the highest overall youth unemployment rate at 14.5%, well above the national average of 11.7%⁷. With almost one quarter of young people aged 15-24 years represented in the total job active caseload in Tasmania⁸, many young people are receiving inadequate income support and are living well below the poverty line. Youth underemployment also remains stubbornly high.

Mental health is a significant concern for young Tasmanians, with suicide the leading cause of death in young people⁹. Young people face waitlists of up to 8 weeks to access early intervention youth mental health services across the State.

Underpinning all of these issues is the financial stress that many young people experience, with 80% of young Tasmanians aged 15-24 years living off less than minimum wage¹⁰. Geographical isolation, poor public transport, intergenerational poverty and barriers to accessing services further disadvantage our young people.

To put it simply, our young people are being left behind with many forced to leave the State to pursue better opportunities. We can, and must, do better to support our most valuable resource.

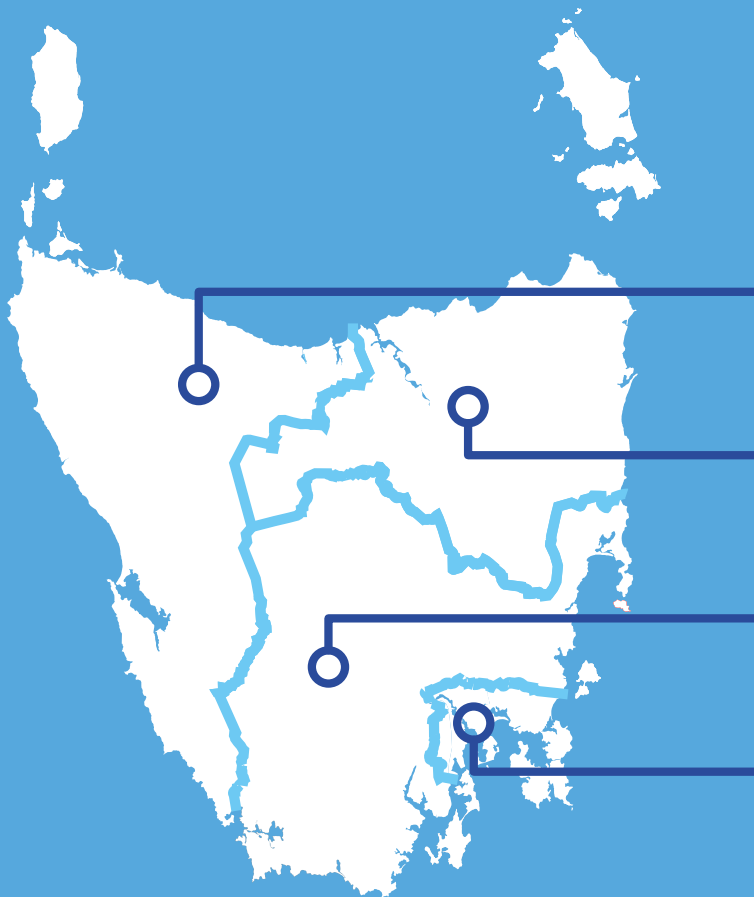
The recently released Tasmania Report outlines why we need a clear strategic plan for our State's future economy and identifies investment in young people as a priority¹¹. We need to not only attract young and skilled people to Tasmania but invest in developing and retaining our own.

“Finding a job has been hard for a number of reasons. Before I got my driver's licence getting to and from work was hard as there was no public transport in my area and I would have to rely on other people.”

—Shayna, 21

Young Tasmanians

As of June 2018, there were an estimated 88,574 young Tasmanians aged 12-25 years, representing 16.8% of Tasmania's total population¹². This is where they are located¹³:



West and North West

18,238

Launceston and North East

25,073

South East

5,215

Greater Hobart

40,048

22%



1989

16.8%



2018

The portion of young people in Tasmania has **declined** from **22%** in June 1989 to **16.8%** in June 2018¹⁶.



52%
of young Tasmanians are male



48%
are female¹⁴



however, an estimated **10,000**
young people identify as LGBTI+¹⁵.

ATSI

7.1% of young Tasmanians
15-24 years identify as Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander¹⁷.



8.1% of young Tasmanians are
from a Culturally and Linguistically
Diverse background¹⁸.



31% of young Tasmanians
20-24 years old live on less than
\$300 per week¹⁹.



Suicide is the leading cause of
death for young Tasmanians²⁰.



25% of Tasmanians
experiencing homelessness
are aged 12-24 years²³.



Tasmania has the highest
youth unemployment rate
in the nation at **14.5%**
— well above the
national youth unemployment
rate of 11.7%²¹.



30% of applications on the
Social Housing Register are young
people aged 16-25 years²⁴.



The 2018 retention rate from high
school to year 12 for Tasmanian
students was **74%** compared to
84.5% nationally²².

What is already being done?

The Tasmanian Government has invested in a range of measures to improve outcomes for young Tasmanians in the areas of health and wellbeing, housing and homelessness, education and training and employment. However, a more strategic and coordinated response to addressing youth affairs is required.

Currently, youth affairs sit across multiple portfolio areas with efforts to improve outcomes for young Tasmanians often fragmented, occurring in isolation, with varying degrees of success.

A strategic approach to youth related issues would provide a more integrated and consistent message across government and allow for a more proactive approach to address emerging, established, and often alarming issues affecting young people.

Without a clear strategy that proactively focuses on the economic, social and cultural prosperity of all young Tasmanians, our young people will continue to be left behind.

Why a Youth Strategy?

The development of a Tasmanian Youth Strategy will provide a targeted and coordinated response to youth affairs and will contribute to greater economic, cultural and social participation of young people in Tasmania.

The Youth Strategy will provide a clear long-term vision for young Tasmanians. It will build on the Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework and provide an overarching direction for government and policy makers to proactively address youth affairs.

Importantly it will demonstrate that the Tasmanian Government values young people and is committed to improving outcomes for all young Tasmanians.

The development of this Strategy and accompanying Action Plans, will clearly outline key priority areas and actions, with measurable targets to achieve identified goals.

Why this is a good investment

A dedicated Youth Strategy and accompanying Action Plans are essential to achieving the government's goals and targets to improve the social and economic participation of young Tasmanians.

This work will support the goals of workforce development and youth employment, encourage young people to stay for local opportunities and support the participation and wellbeing of young people in their communities.

A Youth Strategy and Action Plans will harmonise with several key State Government strategies and policies, including the Department of State Growth Population Growth Strategy, Strategic Growth Framework, and the Tasmanian Liberal Government *Building Your Future* policy platform.

Importantly, a Tasmanian Youth Strategy will brand our State as a leader for young people to live, work, learn and invest in their future in Tasmania.

We want all young Tasmanians to flourish

The Tasmanian Government has a vision for Tasmania to be the best place in the country to live, work, invest and raise a family²⁵. This cannot be achieved without investing in our young people.

Many young Tasmanians do not see a future for themselves in Tasmania and are actively exploring opportunities to live their best life in other parts of the country. For some the barriers and challenges that they face in Tasmania seem insurmountable.

For the government to achieve its strategic growth goals and to provide a stable and skilled workforce to support a growing population and economy, young people must be at the forefront of government thinking. Young people have an important role to play and should be excited for the opportunities Tasmania has to offer.

By investing in and supporting our young people to flourish, Tasmania will benefit economically, socially and culturally. Young people should be able to choose to live in Tasmania and not be forced to leave to pursue a better life.

Why the time is now

Tasmania is the only State in Australia without a Minister for Youth, Office for Youth or a dedicated Youth Strategy. Young Tasmanians experience some of the worst education, social and health outcomes in the nation. This is clearly unacceptable.

Young people are looking to the Tasmanian Government for strong governance and leadership to address the challenges they face. Young Tasmanians have demonstrated that they are socially and politically engaged and want to be a part of the solution to addressing issues that impact their life.

The establishment of the Premiers Youth Advisory Council demonstrates that it is essential for good government in our State that young people have formal opportunities to connect with the people that represent them. This is an important first step for government to better understand the issues important and relevant to young people and the context in which young Tasmanians are growing, developing and emerging into adulthood.

Young people are an invaluable resource that we need to harness for our future growth. Now is the time to capitalise on their passion to be heard and valued, and importantly to support them to thrive.



“ Living on youth allowance while having to move away from my hometown of Launceston has been a struggle. This is because my chosen degree is only offered in Hobart, where the rent is astronomical. ”

— Jacinta, 21

Our Project

YNOT proposes that the Tasmanian Government invests in the development of the Tasmanian Youth Strategy 2021-2031 and Youth Action Plan One 2021-2026. We envisage that this would occur in three phases from 1 July 2020 to 31 October 2021.

1 PHASE ONE: Informing the Strategy and Action Plan

1 July 2020 – 31 March 2021

1. Undertake a comprehensive review of existing youth strategies, action plans and community consultation models.
2. Engage with a diverse range of community members including young people, the community sector, local government, education sector, industry and government to identify solutions to challenges facing young Tasmanians, including social and economic disadvantage.
3. Analyse data collected to inform the development of the Tasmanian Youth Strategy and Action Plan.

Key Deliverables:

1. An evidence-based report identifying contemporary best practice frameworks and models.
2. Identification of innovative strategies and solutions to address barriers to youth participation in local communities.
3. A comprehensive report outlining key findings from the consultation and literature review to inform the Tasmanian Youth Strategy and Youth Action Plan One.

2 PHASE TWO: Developing the Tasmanian Youth Strategy 2021-2031

1 April 2021 – 31 July 2021

1. Develop the Strategy in partnership with young Tasmanians and key stakeholders.
2. Disseminate the Strategy for targeted consultation and feedback.
3. Refine the Strategy based on feedback.

Key Deliverables:

1. Deliver the Tasmanian Youth Strategy 2021-2031.

3 PHASE THREE: Creating the Youth Action Plan One 2021-2026

1 August 2021 – 31 October 2021

1. Develop the Action Plan in partnership with young Tasmanians and key stakeholders.
2. Disseminate the Action Plan for targeted consultation and feedback.
3. Finalise the Action Plan based on feedback.

Key Deliverables:

1. Deliver the Tasmanian Youth Action Plan One 2021-2026.
2. Actions and outcomes to be costed in future budget submissions.

Investment

The cost of investing in this project is approximately **\$155,000 (excl. GST)** to inform and deliver the Tasmanian Youth Strategy 2021-2031 and Youth Action Plan One 2021-2026.

This cost includes YNOT Project Management, employment and external consultancy, on-costs and administrative overheads.

YNOT is committed to providing in kind support when this proposal is successful.

“ I have a fear of no income, I haven't had government support and I don't want it. This impacts my identity. I want to work. I feel hopeless and I don't know where to go now. My life is on pause until I know if I will have a job next year. ”

— Joe, 22

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“ People usually tell me to “just go and get a job if you can’t afford to live”, but that is unreachable. This is because I am only based in Hobart for 9 months of the year, and I am in class up to five days a week and I still need to find approx. 40 hours for studying. I don’t know where I’m meant to fit in a job. ”

— Jacinta, 21



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