

Youth Advisory Committee

Consultation Guidelines

Introduction

This is a guide for external bodies undertaking consultations with the City of Darwin Youth Advisory Committee (YAC). They relate to consultation processes and also aim to ensure recommendations from consulting with YAC are seriously considered in decision making. Adhering to such processes will give all stakeholders a clear sense of the standards of consultations that should be expected from bodies consulting with members of YAC.

While not designed as a prescriptive list, the guidelines aim to set out effective and appropriate strategies to consider when engaging in consultation with YAC.

Having a consultation framework for consulting with YAC ultimately will ensure that external bodies undertake a considered and transparent consultation process that links outcomes of YAC consultation with respective decision making processes.

Background

The YAC undertakes a range of functions within City of Darwin Municipality. Members are aged between 12 and 20 years and come from different backgrounds and experiences, from various local high schools, community and youth agencies, education, training, employment and recreation groups. A core function of YAC is to advise Council and Community on a range of issues and aims to make meaningful recommendations on issues that affect young people locally.

Who are these guidelines for?

These guidelines have been produced for government, non- government, private sector and community groups who wish to consult with City of Darwin YAC.

These guidelines will also inform YAC members who wish to respond or participate in consultations. They are aimed at giving all stakeholders a clear sense of the standard of consultations that should be expected from consultants.

YAC members have also had input in the development of these guidelines and consultation form.

Policy /Strategy Framework

Consultation with YAC should align with the following objectives and policy statements of City of Darwin's **Community Consultation Policy No. 025**

- City of Darwin recognises that community consultation and participation processes are a vital part of local democracy. Effective consultation is critical to good governance.
- Encourage active community participation by encouraging involvement and inclusion.
- Community consultation is a two way process, providing opportunities to clarify information, raise issues, discuss ideas, options and views.
- Consultation will be structured to maintain a focus on the issues being addressed.
- The best interests of the community will prevail over the individual or vested interests.

Consultation_Style

In order to ensure effective consultation with YAC, consultants must be clear on the mechanisms they wish to use. Is the consultation one off or ongoing? Is the objective to get feedback on decisions already made or to seek opinions before decisions are reached? Below are some examples of types of consultations –

- a) Passing information and receiving comments?
- b) Seeking opinions and options before decisions are reached?
- c) Seeking to increase the involvement of young people in important decisions that impact them?
- d) Ongoing?
- e) One Off?

In preparing your consultation please consider the following:

- Do you have a clear purpose and objectives of consultation?
- What format you would like the feedback provided in eg a formal letter, anecdotal discussion, video
- Are you looking to consult only with YAC? Or are you interested in engaging YAC to facilitate access to other groups of young people in the Darwin area eg skate community, sporting community, creative community?
- Are your questions clear and in youth friendly language?
- Use of youth friendly methods of consultation.
- Are you allowing sufficient time to give YAC opportunity to consider issues fully?
- How will you consider recommendations given from YAC consultation?
- How will you inform YAC of consultation outcomes?
- Have you planned to evaluate your consultation process and ensure that lessons for the future are learned?

Checklist

- Contact YAC convenor to discuss and book in consultation date.** The YAC convenor can be contacted on **8930 0635**.
- Allow sufficient time to plan and undertake consultation.** YAC requires at least **two weeks** planning and preparation time before a consultation. Any correspondence or information needed for YAC members to undertake informed discussion must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the consultation.
- Fill out and return the Consultation Outline** (following page) to youthprojects@darwin.nt.gov.au at least **two weeks prior** to the scheduled consultation. Please ensure that the information you want YAC to engage with, is digestible and youth-friendly. Documentation should avoid use of complicated jargon and be easy for the average 12 -20 year old to understand.
- Your timeframes allow for YAC to undertake a closed group discussion after conclusion of consultation.

Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) Consultation Outline

Consultation Title			
Organisation			
Contact Person		Phone #	
Position		Email	
Ochre Card #		Expiry	

Background to the consultation

Purpose of consulting with the YAC

Format for the consultation

How feedback from the YAC will be used

Questions to be considered in the consultation

How will the YAC be informed of consultation outcomes?

Is there anything else you think YAC or the convenor should be aware of?