



fya

YLab

2024
Annual Report



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FYA and YLab acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we all work and live. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community and pay respects to Elders past, present and those yet to come. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded. This always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

Throughout this report the term 'First Nations' is used to refer to both Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. Unless noted otherwise, the term should be considered inclusive of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Our Partners

We are exceptionally grateful to our co-investors and pro bono supporters in 2024.

CO-INVESTORS



Nethmi
Young Mayors



Photographer: Bek Bearham



A message from the FYA CEO

This year has been a significant chapter in FYA's journey — one defined by deep listening, bold action, and a firm commitment to young people's leadership. 2024 has been a year of both reflection and momentum.

Young people across the country have led critical movements, from fighting for First Nations justice, to economic security, climate action and anti-war. At FYA, we've been proud to work alongside them, backing youth-led organising, advocacy, and leadership.

Our 2024 strategy focused on resourcing grassroots movements, embedding young people in decision-making, and strengthening our impact. We've also deepened our commitment to accountability, both within our organisation and to the communities we work with. This year, we undertook an internal Listening & Truth Telling Process, an important step in First Nations led truth-telling and addressing the historical and structural inequities within FYA, including the colonial foundations it was built on. While this work has been challenging, it is vital in ensuring we build an organisation that reflects the justice and equity we advocate for.

We know that creating lasting change means not only supporting young people to lead but also transforming the systems around them. As we look ahead, we're embarking on our 2025

strategy, taking the lessons from previous years and applying them with clarity and ambition. This next phase will build on what has been impactful, while also implementing the recommendations from our Listening & TruthTelling Process. We are expanding our funding and support for youth-led movements, advocating for systemic shifts, and continuing the work of building a more just and sustainable organisation.

Thank you to the FYA team for their commitment to our work, and to Roxanne Moore for their role as Acting CEO in October so I could take long service leave.

To the young people we work with, our dedicated team, our funders, and community, thank you. Your voices, your vision, and your energy continue to drive this work forward. We're ready for another year of collective action, and we hope you'll join us to back young people.

Molly Whelan
Chief Executive Officer

A message from the FYA Chair

2024 has been a year of reflection, learning, and strengthening our foundations to better support young people leading change. Across the country and around the world, young people continue to organise, advocate, and build movements for justice, their leadership remaining powerful and necessary as ever.

In 2024 we backed youth-led movements driving tangible change, supporting grassroots campaigns that secured commitments from local governments on climate policy, strengthened protections for renters, and led resistance against damaging youth justice changes in the Northern Territory. Young people we've worked with have influenced key policy decisions, built powerful public campaigns, and mobilised their communities around issues that matter. Through training, funding, and strategic support, we've helped amplify their voices in the media, in decision-making spaces, and on the ground, ensuring that youth leadership isn't just recognised, but resourced and embedded in shaping the future.

At the same time, we took an important step in looking inwards through an organisational Listening & Truth Telling Process, an opportunity to reflect honestly on our culture, power structures, racial dynamics and ways of working. We heard from current and former staff, partners, and young people about where we are strong and where we

need to do better. This process was not just about listening but about committing to real change, ensuring we are living our values internally as much as we champion them externally. While this work is ongoing, it has already shaped how we think about race, power, leadership, decision-making, and accountability within FYA.

We've also continued to strengthen our governance. This year, we welcome new board members who bring fresh insights and expertise, and we extend our deepest thanks to those who finished their terms for their contributions and dedication to our goals.

As we look ahead to 2025, we do so with renewed focus, not just on what we do, but how we do it. With the Listening Process shaping our next steps, and our commitment to young people at the centre of everything we do, we are ready for the next chapter.

To our team, funders, partners, and most importantly, the young people who continue to trust us to back you, thank you. We're looking forward to another year of collaboration and impact.

Jason Glanville
Wiradjuri
Chair

Logan
Young Mayors

Our 2024 Strategy

Photographer: Bek Bearham

Our 2024 Strategy

Our vision is that young people have the power to beat injustice and transform the future.

Having proudly backed young people to lead change for 48 years, we've seen firsthand the power of young people when they have the resources, networks, and support to turn ideas into action.

Today's young people have grown up empathising with people all over the world, and are uniquely vulnerable and inclusive in what they say. They're coming up with creative, courageous solutions to structural issues that they've watched older generations not take action on.

Yet, too often, their leadership is unrecognised, their voices are dismissed, and the systems around them aren't built to support their vision. That's where we come in.

FYA exists to back young people.

We back them into decision-making and leadership positions by removing barriers and scaling projects where individual young people are put in decision-making and leadership positions.

We back them to create solutions, including them as equal partners in the design of systems and services.

We back them to change the world, by building the strength and sustainability of youth-led movements to progress and win campaigns.

We back First Nations young people and their communities to work towards self-determined First Nations justice.

And we back them all to do it *their* way.

Our Strategy

In 2024, FYA had three key strategic objectives, developed from learnings about what young people we work with want and what teams believe we are best placed to provide based on our skills and capacity.

OUR WORK IS SUCCESSFUL WHEN WE:

- 1. Meet and connect** with young people to create more collective, intersectional movements.
- 2. Build skills and capacity** to deliver their vision and strategy.
- 3. Secure consistent and ongoing funding** and resources to improve their overall sustainability.

Across all of our work, we prioritise achieving self-determined First Nations justice by shifting power to First Nations young people, their communities, and their movements.

OUR WORK IS SUCCESSFUL WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SUPPORTED TO:

- 1. Seed exciting, transformative projects** led by and centred on young people.
- 2. Lead campaigns and amplify their voices** on the issues they care about and want to see change on.
- 3. Build sustainable movements** that support their wellbeing, prevent burnout, nurture relationships and achieve ongoing, consistent investment or backing.

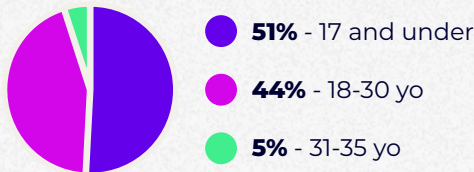
2024 snapshot

A snapshot of what we made possible together in 2024, centering young people, investing in their ideas, and building momentum for long-term change.

218

young people deeply engaged in our programs.

Participant age demographic



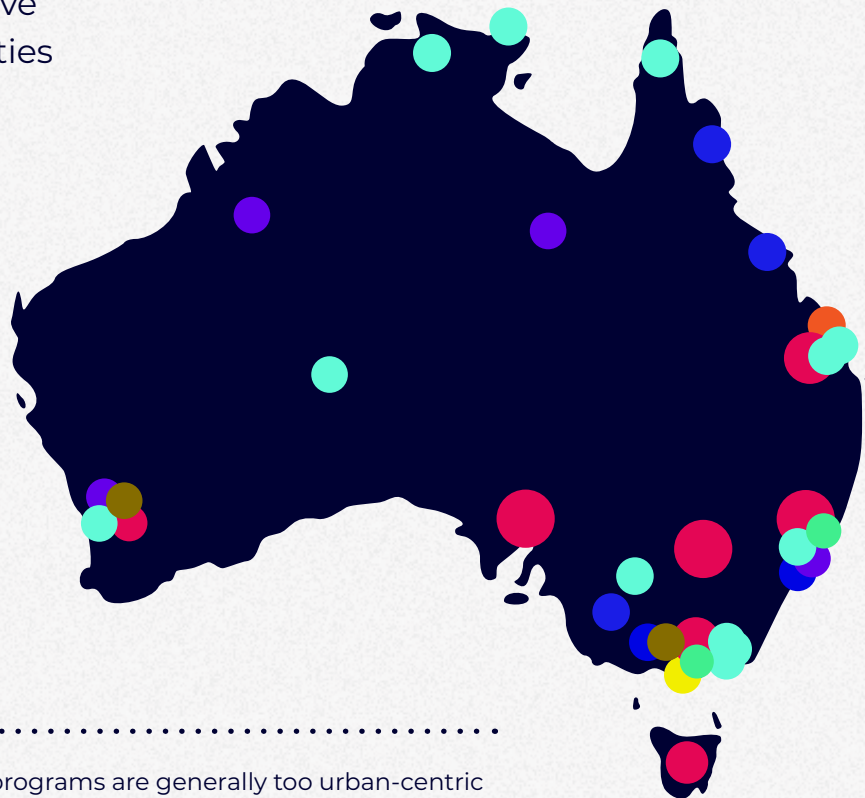
3,911

young people engaged in other types of activities such as voting in elections, or attending our webinars.



In 2024 young people have participated in our activities across the continent.

- BlakAbolition Lab
- Blakollective
- BlakUp!
- Grant Recipients
- Step Up!
- Media for Advocacy
- Partner Campaigns
- Young Mayors



We recognise that our programs are generally too urban-centric and eastern-centric, and are looking at how to reach more young people in rural and remote areas, and WA, NT and SA.

FYA hosted

24 in-person gatherings and **27 online** meetings/trainings

Reached 164k

young people on social media.



19 youth-led

campaigns and projects to move from planning to public launch in 2024.



\$1.35m

was directly invested in backing young people, through FYA auspicing partner grants and 9 youth focused organisations' campaigns.

\$683,700

was distributed to young people through our Seeding Strength and Youth Action and Wellbeing grants.

\$40,000

was made available to Youth Councils to deliver their priority agendas.



\$75,000

in Partner Campaign Grants.



Our work + impact

Throughout 2024, FYA continued our work of supporting young people to determine their future. We backed young people making a difference in communities, business and public life. We amplified their voices on the issues that matter to them.

Key projects undertaken and progressed in 2024 include:

- BlakAbolition Lab
- Blakollective
- Partner Campaigns
- Step Up!
- Youth Media Centre
- Auspicing and wrap around support
- Seeding Strength
- Youth Action and Wellbeing Grants
- Young Mayors

Zach
Make it 16



Photographer: Koome Muthomi

BLAKABOLITION LAB

BlakAbolition Lab is building a movement of young First Nations people with lived experience to imagine a world without prisons and police.

Formed in 2023, this collective emerged from previous FYA programs, to provide a space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (16-35 years) to learn, connect, and organise around abolitionist futures.

Throughout 2024, BlakAbolition Lab deepened its work, coming together for in-person training, governance, and strategy development. The group collectively created a theory of change to guide their work and is now developing an 'Abolition in Practice' resource—designed to equip young First Nations people with knowledge and tools to challenge carceral systems and build community-led alternatives.

WHAT'S NEXT...

In 2025, BlakAbolition Lab will continue to work towards self-governance, directing resources into abolitionist initiatives, supporting young mob experiencing injustices, and strengthening their campaigning and activism.



BlakAbolition Lab Members and the FYA Team, along with guest speakers Nayuka Gorrie and Witt Gorrie (Beyond Bricks and Bars) featuring art by the late Gunditjmara, Yorta Yorta and Barkindji artist Josh Muir (1991 – 2022).

Photographer: Peta Duncan

“

[The program] is very insightful and helps you understand the systems that are intentionally built against us... I can use this to grow and support others and pass on this important knowledge.”

BlakAbolition Lab member after training July 2024

4

core members from across the nation (rural and regional areas)

\$75,000

Set up financial governance and a grant for BlakAbolition work to develop their 'Abolition in Practice' resource

PARTNERSHIP

FYA facilitated a partnership with BlakAbolition Lab and legal advisors for input on all things legal and internal governance

BLAKOLLECTIVE

Blakolcollective is a network of young First Nations activists, organisers and community advocates under 35 who are established in their work and already making changes in their communities and nationally.

In 2024, Blakolcollective continued to create space for young First Nations people to connect and support each other, with a strong focus on post-Referendum recovery and repair. This year, the program facilitated three skill-sharing workshops, providing opportunities for members to exchange knowledge, build on their campaigning skills, and deepen their collective resilience. Instead of hosting an in-person retreat, Blakolcollective pivoted to provide wellbeing grants, ensuring members could access the support they needed to rest, heal, and sustain their work for the long haul.

“A big part of our wellbeing as Blackfullas is being on country and being surrounded by our family... These grants and this type of support is crucial for the wellbeing and mental health of First Nations people.”

Blakolcollective member on the wellbeing grants

\$20,000

amount in wellbeing grants delivered to young changemakers

3 ONLINE MEETINGS

WHAT'S NEXT...

In 2025, Blakolcollective will continue to be a thriving, safe and restful space for First Nations changemakers, campaigners & creatives to connect, collaborate, and look out for each other. The program will drive self-determination, strengthen community networks, and uplift First Nations voices through meaningful cultural interactions.



Partner Campaigns

Through our campaign partnerships program, FYA backs youth-led organisations and campaigns over at least a 12-month period to help them grow their power sustainably and win ambitious, meaningful change.

In 2024, the Make It 16 campaign to extend voting rights to 16 and 17 year olds entered its second year. FYA supported the campaign by hosting an in-person gathering in Canberra, where campaign volunteers engaged with both local and federal politicians. Volunteers were able to secure the passing of motions at two Young Labor conferences and the campaign also presented its case to the NSW Parliament's Standing Committee on Electoral Matters.

The National Union of Students' ongoing #ChangeTheAge campaign demanding a lowering of the age of independence for Centrelink was supported in the first half of 2024. A new partnership with the Australia Palestine Advocacy Network (APAN) to support the Palestinian youth movement was started in the second half of 2024.

“

Being in a positive environment among peers who shared my values and goals reaffirmed my commitment to them and belief in the cause, reminding me why I care about this issue.”

Make It 16 campaigner after the 2024 Canberra gathering

Photographer: Koome Muthomi



Make it 16 Movement Building
Gathering in Canberra April 2024.



13

13 MP meetings for Make It 16, including presenting to a NSW Parliamentary Committee

25

25 young people attended the Palestinian Youth Summit, gaining skills and knowledge to fuel their campaigning

WHAT'S NEXT...

The APAN and Make It 16 partnerships continue in 2025, with more partner campaigns to be taken on throughout the year.

Step Up!

In 2024, FYA piloted the Step Up! Program. Designed to empower and equip young people from communities impacted by oppression and injustice to become catalysts for structural change, we brought together 20 participants at an early stage of their campaigning journeys.

The pilot took place in Naarm/Melbourne in June and July. Over three days, the intensive program built essential campaigning and organising skills, while fostering valuable networks to help participants amplify their impact and take their advocacy to the next level.

“

I really appreciated the way the Step Up! program was catered to young people in a way that was empowering and mature. I never felt like the FYA team were speaking down to us. They approached the educational aspect with curiosity and passion and made us as participants and young people feel that our ideas, lived experience and knowledge were valued and important.”

Participant, Step Up!



Step Up Melbourne / Naarm Participants

Photographer: Joshua Barreno



100%

100% of participants reported an improvement in their capacity to campaign effectively and strategically

Represented

Participants represented a wide variety of campaigns and interests, including public transport, student unionism, climate change, mental health, refugee rights, gender equality, Palestinian and Uyghur liberation, queer rights, food sovereignty and anti-racism

WHAT'S NEXT...

The success of the pilot program has paved the way for Step Up! to be run again in 2025 in two major cities.

Youth Media Centre

The Youth Media Centre was established to reframe perceptions of young people in the media and ensure young people's voices are heard.

In 2024, the Youth Media Centre provided training and hands-on media support to over 16 youth-led groups and campaigns, empowering young people to amplify their voices and advocate for change via the media. The Youth Media Centre's work has provided a critical service to remove the significant barriers young people face to being covered in the media, and has succeeded in creating tangible shifts in the way issues important to young people are presented.

This year also saw the new Media for Advocacy program, held in Naarm/Melbourne and Gadigal/Sydney. These two-day intensive workshops equipped young activists with the skills and knowledge to safely and effectively engage with the media on their own terms. In August and November, young people from across the country gathered for a weekend of in-person workshops, offering them an accessible and inclusive opportunity to build critical media skills and deepen their advocacy work.

26

26 individual media hits amplifying the National Union of Students (NUS) response to the 2024 Federal Budget

90%

Participants of the Media for Advocacy program reported a significant increase in their understanding of the Australian media (more than 90% said they understood the media fairly or very well, compared to less than 30% prior to the program)

3/4

Program participants also said they felt much more equipped to communicate messages about issues they care about via the media (more than three quarters said they felt fairly or very equipped to do so, compared to less than a quarter prior to the program)

WHAT'S NEXT...

Thanks to the success of 2024, Media for Advocacy will be running again in 2025, continuing to empower youth to engage with media and advocate for change on their terms.



Photographer: Joshua Barreno



Photographer: Stephen Wilson Barker



Photographer: Stephen Wilson Barker

“

I feel like I've learnt so much over the past two days that I am ready to put into action! For a weekend training, we were able to deep-dive in various topics- and it was wonderful being able to hear from so many panelists and their varied experiences...”

Participant, Media for Advocacy

Auspicing and wrap around support

FYA's auspicing program supports youth-led initiatives by partnering with organisations to manage financial processes and provide critical mentorship. Through this support, FYA helps reduce administrative burdens and empowers young people to focus on driving change while ensuring they have the resources and tools to thrive.

In 2024, FYA reduced the barriers youth led initiatives face when accessing funding, for nine organisations through auspicing partnerships. Alongside auspicing, we provided wrap around support, including guidance on fundraising strategies, grant writing, network building, and navigating philanthropic relationships. FYA also extended 1:1 support to organisations and campaigns beyond the auspicing partners, with 30 young people benefiting from these sessions.

“

...the auspice [agreement] has helped us secure major funding, as well as increase our minor funding programs ... It has also significantly reduced our administrative burden [thanks to the] point person with a regular check in support on the auspice relationship, admin and any ways they can assist.”

Tomorrow Movement



Photographer: Tomorrow Movement

9

9 organisations entered auspicing agreements with FYA

\$1,354,680

\$1,354,680 in auspicing and partner grants were distributed to youth-focused organisations

30

30 young people received fundraising strategy and grantwriting support

WHAT'S NEXT...

FYA will continue to refine its auspicing program, reducing barriers to young people receiving funding and ensuring ongoing support for young people and their initiatives.

SEEDING STRENGTH

Seeding Strength provides grants for existing or new campaigns, movements, and projects led by First Nations young people (aged 16-35 years). We take a participatory grant making approach - the First Nations Governance Group make decisions on which grants will be made.

In 2024, the First Nations team and Governance Group delivered \$160,000 in Seeding Strength grants, providing critical core funding for existing or new campaigns, movements, and projects led by First Nations young people aged 16-35 years. These grants supported initiatives across five key impact areas:

- Truth Telling and storytelling
- Decolonising, dismantling and re-Indigenising
- Building and strengthening movements and campaigns
- Global solidarity
- Facilitating vision creation.

Successful projects in 2024 included the Ailan Pawa Youth Summit fighting climate change in the Torres Strait, Larrakia language revitalisation in the Northern Territory, the Mindful Mob youth healing camp in Victoria, support for youth deaths in custody campaigns, and resistance against damaging youth justice changes in the NT.



18 APPLICATIONS for Seeding Strength

SHORTLISTED

6 grant applicants for the main round of Seeding Strength were actively supported to develop their proposals including refining their Theory of Change, and project budgeting

WHAT'S NEXT...

In 2025, we'll continue to work with these groups to deliver and support their impactful projects, deliver a series of training sessions for grantees, and in September we will start accepting expressions of interest for the 2025 grant round!

FYA's First Nations team worked closely with 2023/2024 grantees to support them to achieve their goals, including strategic advice, coaching and event support.

As part of a trial Seeding Strength offering, FYA applied jointly with the National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC) to successfully secure an Office for Youth grant. The \$300,000 grant, spread over four years, will support the development and pilot of a model for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student congress, creating space for young First Nations people to have voice and agency throughout their learning lives. NIYEC is leading this exciting work, with FYA's First Nations team providing project governance support and guidance.

Youth Action and Wellbeing Grants

The Youth Action and Wellbeing Grants support youth-led groups and grassroots campaigns with lived experience of injustice, providing resources to drive positive change while promoting self-care and community well-being.

Through a participatory grantmaking model, funding decisions are made by an independent panel of young people, ensuring that resources go to those best placed to make an impact.

In 2024, the first round of grantees rolled out their activities with FYA's ongoing support, strengthening their movements in campaign strategy, community organising, media, First Nations solidarity, and organisational knowledge retention. From the launch of the *End Junior Wages* campaign and the *Boorloo Disability Pride Festival*, we've been on the ground witnessing firsthand the incredible work being done by these youth-led campaigns.

A second round of grants were distributed in December 2024 to seven organisations for initiatives which include a project to expand truth-telling work with young First Nations people, advocating for free prison phone calls in NSW, campaigning to overturn the ban on drag storytime events in Cumberland local government area, push for divestment by the University of Melbourne from companies and other institutions supporting the occupation of Palestine, and secure a fair transition for graduate visa holders and their families.

88
applications for Youth Action and Wellbeing Grants in 2024

\$100,000
Distributed in grants across 7 groups

WHAT'S NEXT...

In 2025 we'll continue to work with these groups to deliver and support their impactful campaigns, deliver a series of trainings for grantees, and in July we will start accepting expressions of interest for the 2025 grant round!

“

Our experience with the Foundation for Young Australians has been incredibly positive. They are not only accommodating but are also deeply committed to supporting grassroots organisations in meaningful ways. Their training opportunities are valuable resources and they also foster genuine, positive stakeholder relationships. Most importantly, they understand both the impact and challenges of grassroots work, offering support where possible to help navigate barriers. We deeply appreciate their partnership and the way they champion grassroots-led change with authenticity and care. Yung Prodigy sees The Foundation for Young Australians as a leader in their approach to financial and training support.”

Yung Prodigy, Youth Action and Wellbeing grantee

Cairns Youth Council at their Swearing in Ceremony.



Photographer: Micah Hart



Photographer: Micah Hart

Young Mayors

Young Mayors is a program that changes the way young people aged 11 - 17 years are included in local government. Elected by their peers, young people work together to define priority action areas, and serve a term in office working with their council to implement projects and events, and influence decisions that impact their community.

Building on last year's momentum, the first term Youth Councils in Cairns, Mackay, Wollongong, and Horsham developed their Priority Agendas, presenting ideas focused on securing investment to drive real change in their communities. These included library activations to increase third space usage in Mackay, planting trees to address a lack of shade in Horsham and organising youth maker markets for Youth Week in Wollongong. These councils moved to implement their projects and initiatives, bringing the Youth Councils' visions to life.

Young Mayors also entered its second election cycle for Mackay and Wollongong, with young people returning to the polls to vote for their next Youth Councils. The Youth Council in Horsham wrapped up its term, and Young Mayors launched a new partnership with Hume City Council. The program also established a Youth Advisory Group with Hepburn Shire Council to activate civic participation in the region and build towards an elected Youth Council.

“

If there is one commitment in my life that I am most grateful for, it is truthfully this program. From the first campaign poster I designed to our most recent community consultation and planning work, the Young Mayors program has taught me more about civics, leadership, and collaboration than any formal education setting ever could. It has instilled in me a deep sense of civic pride and responsibility and has shaped my belief that anything is possible through effort and vision.”

Young Mayors Participant

“

The Young Mayors program can be a powerful platform for positive change, and I want to use it to amplify youth voices and address issues impacting young people in the Illawarra.”

**Young Mayors Program,
Wollongong Youth Councillor**

2,591

**young people
voted in elections**

43

**elected representatives
sitting on youth councils**

11

**youth-led projects kick
started in community**

WHAT'S NEXT...

In 2025 Young Mayors will continue to work with the partner councils to back young people to implement their projects and hold elections in the coming years. We'll be talking with local, State and Federal governments, with the aim to expand the program so that every LGA in Australia can have a democratically elected Youth Council.

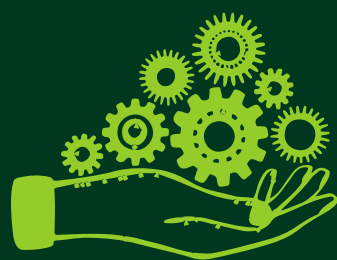
ABOUT YLAB

YLab is a social enterprise dedicated to helping organisations design better systems, services and products with young people.

Our youth engagement framework brings technical and lived experience together, and is underpinned by an understanding that effective design is only possible if young people are meaningfully engaged in the process. Beyond this, we train and employ young people to lead the work themselves, developing young leaders across our projects, team and Board to drive innovative solutions in every sphere that we operate in.

Partnering with organisations, governments and communities, we believe that intergenerational collaboration is key to tackling complex social, environmental and economic challenges together. With young people leading the way, we are proud to co-design initiatives that are equitable, inclusive and build a better future for all.

OUR STRATEGY



FOCUS SYSTEMS

After assessing our unique capabilities and impact potential, YLab has shifted our focus to enacting change within employment, education and health systems.

75% of our projects across 2024 were within these target systems.



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT MODEL

Following deep research, surveys and community engagements, YLab has strengthened our youth engagement model to ensure young people are well supported with their work and ongoing career pathways.

In 2024, YLab has transitioned to engaging a smaller cohort of young people to provide more consistent and meaningful work, training and coaching.



GOVERNANCE MODEL

While remaining a wholly-owned subsidiary of FYA, YLab has established our own governance structure in 2024 to achieve greater independence and more impactful operations.

Co-designed with young people and alumni staff, YLab's Board uniquely features a youth co-chair model and enshrined positions for diverse young and First Nations voices to lead our organisation.

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

295

Young people received training and coaching.

2,131

Hours of paid work by YLab Associates.

88%

of YLab Associates agree that their individual efforts could lead to change.

75%

of clients said they were likely to embed co-design as an approach in their organisations.

Young people within YLab:

75%

of the delivery team.

33%

of our leadership team.

33%

of our Board.

We couldn't do it without our valued clients and financial partners who believe in our mission.

To our collaborators and backers throughout 2024, thank you. Your ongoing support is vital to creating sustainable systems change and empowering young people to design a better world.

FINANCIAL PARTNERS

Brian M. Davis
Charitable Foundation



2024 CLIENTS

Association for the Wellbeing of Children in Healthcare
Australia Post
Australian Electoral Commission
Bass Coast Shire Council
Behavioural Insights Team
Biodiversity Council
Broome Youth and Families Hub
The Commons Library
Creative Victoria
CSIRO
Department of Transport and Planning
Foundation for Young Australians

Health Consumers NSW
Learning Creates Australia
Life Education QLD
Melbourne School of Government
Melton Suburban Revitalisation Board
Office for Youth
Our Watch
Port Phillip City Council
VicHealth
Virgin Unite
Whitehorse City Council
YWCA Australia

CASE STUDY

CO-DESIGNING A PLAN FOR VICTORIA

We partnered with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) to meaningfully embed young people's insights and ideas into the department's Plan for Victoria.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Victorian Government's Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) sought to create a bold, forward-thinking Plan for Victoria, a guide for Victoria's growth over the next 30 years. Recognising the critical importance of young people in shaping the future, DTP partnered with YLab to co-design an engagement strategy, ensuring the voices of young Victorians were at the heart of this process. The goal? To amplify young voices in the creation of policies and urban plans that reflect their diverse visions.

HOW WE ENGAGED YOUNG PEOPLE

Our young people-centred approach enabled us to meaningfully involve over 200 young people from diverse backgrounds. Through activities like speed-friending in North Melbourne and creative origami workshops in Dandenong, we provided spaces for young people to voice their visions. Nine Youth Ambassadors designed and facilitated nine events, ensuring the engagements were deeply rooted in their communities' needs. They also played a key role in synthesising the insights gathered, ensuring that young voices shaped the project's outcomes.

"I LOVED THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE... WHEN EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE CAME TOGETHER, IT WAS LIKE A MAGICAL MOMENT. WHAT WENT WELL WAS THE COLLABORATION, IT MADE EVERYTHING SO EASY."

— Youth Ambassador

PROJECT OUTCOMES

By centering young people in the process, we successfully embedded their visions into the Plan for Victoria. This resulted in actionable insights on issues ranging from affordable housing and mental health to sustainability and community connection.

As a direct result of the project:

- **Victoria's future urban planning will reflect young people's perspectives:** the insights gathered from young people directly informed key urban planning decisions, ensuring that the next 30 years of Victoria's growth are shaped by those who will live through it.
- **Actionable policy recommendations:** the insights uncovered through young people-led co-design informed concrete policy recommendations on critical issues such as affordable housing, sustainability, and mental health, which will guide the state's planning.
- **Community empowerment:** young people involved in the project reported a strong sense of pride and ownership over their contributions. Many expressed a desire to stay engaged and continue influencing their local communities.
- **Lasting impact on youth employment and leadership:** through their roles as Youth Ambassadors, young people gained hands-on experience in leadership, community engagement, and policy influence, preparing them for future roles in shaping their communities.

Read more about this project and watch the recap video at ylab.global/our-impact/plan-for-victoria



OUR RESOURCES

This year we launched two innovative resources designed to drive meaningful change with like-minded organisations and practitioners.

Future of Work: Unlocking Gen Z's Potential in the Workforce

An insights paper on fostering intergenerational cohesion in the Australian workplace, through the lens of young people.

Beyond Youth Advisory Groups: How to Genuinely Partner with Young People

An online masterclass to guide attendees to build authentic partnerships with young people beyond traditional programs that often lack true authority or trust.



Our people

FYA Board

At 31 December 2024, FYA’s Board was comprised of the following:



Jason Glanville (Chair) is a Wiradjuri startup founder with extensive governance expertise and experience across community, corporate, government and philanthropic sectors. He works as an adviser on strategy, leadership, governance and systems transformation to leaders across the commercial, for-purpose, and creative industries. Jason is a Co-founder and Director of Native Foodways, was the inaugural Executive Director of the Atlantic Fellows for Social Equity program and creator and inaugural CEO of the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence. He is currently a member of the Boards of The GO Foundation and ACON, and, until recently, was Chair of PwC Indigenous Consulting and the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute.



Banok Rind is a Yamatji Badimaya woman from Western Australia. She is a registered nurse with a background in public policy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing and currently works as the Co-Lead for Impact and Engagement and the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Institute for First Nations Gender Justice.



Maya Marcus (Deputy Chair) is the CEO of Kids in Philanthropy and a consultant and coach focused on maximising the impact of individuals and organisations. Her experience is primarily in designing, leading, evaluating and scaling programs for young people. Maya was previously the Head of Programs and Capability Development at the Social Impact Hub, General Manager at Young Change Agents, and Manager of Entrepreneurship Education at University of Technology Sydney.



Gary Gabriel is currently Head of the Portfolio Management Group at the Victorian Funds Management Corporation (VFMC). He has more than 25 years’ experience in institutional investment, spanning investment strategy formulation, portfolio construction and risk management, and investment management across global listed and unlisted asset classes.



Grace Vegesana is the National Director of the Australian Youth Climate Coalition, and a 25 year old woman-of-colour who has been building youth power to end fossil fuel expansion since she was 17. She co-founded the People of Colour Climate Network, led climate justice organising on Dharug Country in Western Sydney with AYCC, and mobilised 3000 Australian businesses to join the Climate Strikes. Committed to empowering young people from diverse backgrounds, she envisions a future where communities thrive and are empowered to forge systemic solutions that resonate across generations.



Rosie Thyer has extensive experience working in local government, evaluating council engagement with young people as well as advocating for equity and equality within academic settings. She previously chaired Culture Spring, a youth-led social agency at the Centre for Multicultural Youth. A Certified Community Director, she was Darebin Council’s Young Citizen of the Year 2023. She is currently studying a Bachelor of Law (Honours) and Global Studies at Monash University and hopes to integrate human rights reform and law in the future.



Kergen Angel is a health, policy and economics enthusiast, working across social enterprise and philanthropy to strengthen community-led governance. He led youth programs and served as company secretary at the Y Northern Territory on Larrakia Country, holds the same role at Brown’s Mart Arts, and now leads governance services at Giving Connect. A graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD), he holds a BA in Anthropology from the University of Melbourne and is completing an MBA at Melbourne Business School.



Zoë Myers (Treasurer) is a finance executive who has built her career in three iconic Australian businesses, Worley, Redbubble and MYOB. Zoë’s experience covers business operations and growth, financial reporting, taxation, M&A and governance. Zoë is a Chartered Accountant and holds a Diploma in Investor Relations and is currently Director of the Start up Network.

The Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001. Ultimate responsibility for the governance of the company rests with the Board of Directors. These responsibilities are set out in detail in FYA’s [Board Terms of Reference](#).

FYA Committees

In 2024 the governance of FYA was further supported by the Investment, Finance & Audit and Governance & Risk Committees.

Investment Committee

Ken Liow, Committee Chair & Treasurer (to May 2024)

Gary Gabriel, Committee Chair (from June 2024)

Jason Glanville

Sam Mostyn (to April 2024)

Jon Buckeridge

Russell Clarke

Jack Dawson

Asanga Seneviratne (to May 2024)

Molly Whelan, CEO

Finance & Audit Committee

Ken Liow, Committee Chair & Treasurer (to May 2024)

Zoë Myers, Committee Chair & Treasurer (from June 2024)

Sam Mostyn (to April 2024)

Jason Glanville

Kergen Angel

Grace Vegesana

Molly Whelan, CEO

Governance & Risk Committee

Sam Mostyn, Committee Chair & Board Chair (to April 2024)

Jason Glanville

Zoë Myers

Banok Rind

Corey Hale

Alice Hong (to March 2024)

Molly Whelan, CEO



Young Mayors Mackay Meet
the Candidates event.

YLab Board

At 31 December 2024, YLab’s Board was comprised of the following:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Leilani Darwin
(Co-Chair) | James Hall | Kevin Kapeke |
| Shailja Sharma
(Co-Chair) | Ikram Mahamed | Ernez Dhondy |
| Lloyd Alderman
(Treasurer) | Telaine Bichard-Cowdrey | |
| | Elanor Huntington | |



You can read more about them at www.ylab.global/who-we-are



Attendees at YLab Strategy Launch Event.

Photographer: Joshua Barreno

FIRST NATIONS GOVERNANCE GROUP

The First Nations Governance Group is the accountability mechanism for the First Nations Team, to communities we work with. This group will provide cultural governance and project guidance to FYA’s work, and ensure self-determination is embedded in our work, and that there is direct communication and accountability with First Nations communities.

This includes governing the Seeding Strength program through decisions about funding.



Anton Schirripa
Ngarabul



Arielle Henaway
Birri Gubba Juru



Caroline Kell
Mbarbrum



Christopher Saunders
Gunditjmara



Hope Kuchel
Barkindji (to September 2024)



Leyla Quartermaine
Ballardong-Noongar



Madleine Wells
Palawa and Koorie



Talicia Bolea
Gubbi Gubbi, Gurang,
Zenadth Kes and Oceania



You can read more about them [here](#).



Our Team

FYA and YLab have a diverse team of staff who play a key role in the design and delivery of all our programs. Located in Melbourne, Cairns, Horsham, Hepburn, Mackay, Sydney, Perth, East Gippsland and Wollongong, our team represents some of the country's top thinkers and doers when it comes to youth empowerment, policy change, co-design and programming.

 You can read more about the FYA team [here](#), and the YLab team [here](#).



Our Values

Our values define what we stand for, how we work together and what our work feels like as we pursue our vision. In backing young people's power, strong values also underpin what we choose to do, and how we do it.

- **1.**
We respect and back
First Nations young people
and their communities
- **2.**
We back young people
- **3.**
We shift power to young
people with lived experience

- **4.**
We dream big
- **5.**
We care about each other
- **6.**
We are always learning
- **7.**
We celebrate impact

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Our 2024 Financial Report

Our 2024 Financial Report

This financial report is an extract from the audited consolidated financial statements for The Foundation for Young Australians for the year ended 31 December 2024. The full audited financial statements and Directors’ Report are available on our [website](#).

Consolidated statement of financial position as at 31 December 2024

In Australian Dollars	2024	2023
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,850,360	2,385,153
Trade and other receivables	1,034,968	1,057,845
Term deposits	108,534	108,534
Prepayments	53,846	1,829
Total current assets	3,047,708	3,553,361
Non-current assets		
Other financial assets	58,430,020	56,724,150
Property, plant and equipment	990,179	1,363,799
Total non-current assets	59,420,199	58,087,949
Total assets	62,467,907	61,641,310
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	271,617	428,455
Contract liabilities	18,998	127,579
Provisions	301,020	240,080
Lease liabilities	328,736	300,444
Total current liabilities	920,371	1,096,558
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	5,152	19,872
Lease liabilities	612,662	940,674
Total non-current liabilities	617,814	960,546
Total liabilities	1,538,185	2,057,104
Net assets	60,929,722	59,584,206
ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
Retained earnings	60,929,722	59,584,206
Total accumulated funds	60,929,722	59,584,206

Consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December 2024

In Australian Dollars	2024	2023
REVENUE		
External income from operations	3,023,413	2,871,074
Total Revenue	3,023,413	2,871,074
EXPENDITURE		
Personnel expenses	(5,727,691)	(6,135,889)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	(378,517)	(392,473)
Scholarships and grants paid*	(43,300)	(638,618)
Program expenses (excluding personnel expenses)	(1,105,835)	(664,764)
Digital engagement and public relations	(108,614)	(135,939)
Research, monitoring and evaluation	(376,324)	(595,666)
Other expenses	(420,788)	(325,341)
Total expenditure	(8,161,069)	(8,888,690)
Loss from operations	(5,137,656)	(6,017,616)
Finance income	6,943,390	6,485,369
Finance costs	(460,218)	(471,130)
Net finance income	6,483,172	6,014,239
Profit/(Loss) before income tax	1,345,516	(3,377)
Income tax expense	-	-
Profit/(Loss) for the year	1,345,516	(3,377)
Other comprehensive income, net of tax	-	-
Total comprehensive income	1,345,516	(3,377)

* In 2024, some grants were distributed through programs and are therefore allocated to Program Expenses.

Consolidated statement of changes in equity for the year ended 31 December 2024

In Australian Dollars	Retained earnings	Total funds
BALANCE AT 1 JANUARY 2023		
Balance at 1 January 2023	59,587,583	59,587,583
Comprehensive income		
Loss for the year	(3,377)	(3,377)
Total comprehensive income	(3,377)	(3,377)
BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2023		
Balance at 31 December 2023	59,584,206	59,584,206
Comprehensive income		
Profit for the year	1,345,516	1,698,686
Total comprehensive income	1,345,516	1,698,686
Retained earnings	60,929,722	60,929,722
Balance at 31 December 2024	60,929,722	60,929,722

Consolidated statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 December 2024

In Australian Dollars	2024	2023
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash receipts in the course of operations	3,085,864	3,442,841
Cash payments for scholarships and grants	(685,024)	(357,948)
Cash payments in the course of operations including to employees	(7,260,163)	(9,541,297)
Net cash used in operating activities	(4,859,323)	(6,456,404)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Interest received	85,715	78,167
Unit trust distributions received	4,591,949	4,528,997
Acquisition of property, plant and equipment	(4,896)	(94,476)
Net cash from investing activities	4,672,768	4,512,688
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Payment of lease liabilities	(348,237)	(336,235)
Net cash used in financing activities	(348,237)	(336,235)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(534,793)	(2,279,951)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January	2,385,153	4,665,104
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December	1,850,360	2,385,153

Foundation for Young Australians

Level 1/136 Exhibition St, Melbourne VIC 3000
W: fya.org.au T: 03 7046 3837 E: info@fya.org.au

 /likeFYA  @FYA_org  @FYA_org

YLab

Level 1/136 Exhibition St, Melbourne VIC 3000
W: ylab.global T: 03 7046 3837 E: hello@ylab.global

 @ylab.global

Cover photo:

Moirra

BlakUp! Working Group

In 2024, the BlakUp! Working Group came together for the first time to meet each other and initiate co-design program conversations for the event in 2025. The group focused on empowering First Nations youth aged 16–35 through the theme of 'healing as resistance'.



Photographer: **Joshua Barreno**

Graphic Design: **Made Visual**