# The Young Professional Network Blueprint:

What to consider when establishing a young professional committee within your organisation.

**Prepared by the 2024 IPAA WA Young Professional Committee**

IPAA WA | YPC YOUNG PROFESSIONAL COMMITTEE

# Overview

**Establishing a Young Professional (YP) committee within your organisation can enhance the growth, engagement and overall experience of young professionals.**

A YP committee acts as a voice for young people, bringing forward key issues and opportunities to improve career development for young professionals.

This guide is designed to simplify the process of setting up a YP committee and provide actionable steps based on the experiences of communities across the WA public sector. For additional context, refer to Appendix A which includes brief descriptions of current young professional groups working in, or working with, the WA public sector.

# Areas of focus

## Define the committee's purpose

Clearly defining the purpose of the committee is key to driving meaningful outcomes and ensuring the committee's longevity. Consider breaking down the purpose into specific and actionable objectives to communicate its intent effectively.

- Specific objectives could include:
- Enhancing career development opportunities within your organisation
- Championing a culture of inclusivity and diversity
- Providing professional networking opportunities.

You may also want to define who your committee serves. IPAA WA welcomes under 35 year olds to register as young professionals, but you might choose to define YP differently depending on the demographics present in your workplace.

## Identifying supporters

Identifying individuals who will support the committee's establishment and ongoing activities is essential. Seek out colleagues who share a similar vision and are willing to support the committee.

A diverse range of committee members will ensure representation of various perspectives and experiences. Varied membership will also help grow your base of support.

## Finding a corporate sponsor

A corporate sponsor is an individual within your organisation who can provide the guidance, resources and authorisation to progress a committee within your organisation. Ideally, this individual is a member of your organisation's corporate executive team or someone with influence across your organisation.

You may wish to consult with your organisation's corporate services area to determine who is a suitable corporate sponsor.

## Supporting the corporate sponsor

Once you have identified a potential corporate sponsor, consider how to pitch your committee. You may wish to discuss how the committee aligns with your organisation's values, the potential corporate sponsor's values, what their role will be and how the committee will support them.

When these key details are confirmed, arrange a meeting with the potential corporate sponsor to discuss the committee and its value to your organisation.

# Practical steps

## 1. Documents, structure and scheduling

Preparing a terms of reference document will bring clarity to the committee's purpose, objectives, outcomes and the responsibilities of committee members. Clarifying the roles and expectations of committee members will assist the committee's progress and completion of activities. You may include roles like chairperson, secretary or events coordinator to structure the committee.

Filling these roles can be done in several ways. For example, you might appoint via an election or endorsement from divisional leaders. Whatever method is chosen, it is vital that the committee is impartial and transparent.

Now, consider how the committee will meet. You may prefer to establish a regular schedule of monthly meetings to discuss committee matters and progress actions.

## 2. Plan and launch!

Successful planning and organisation are essential to progressing your committee's purpose and completing objectives. You may wish to organise a workshop with committee members considering how you can allocate your resources and efforts, planning and actioning events over a particular period.

You may wish to arrange a mix of:

- Networking events – lunch and learns, afternoon social outings, virtual coffee catch ups to facilitate connection.
- Professional development – workshops or webinars on topics relevant to your young professional committee, or mentorship programs connecting new professionals to established professionals, focusing on skill building and career progression.
- Social events – social outings across your organisation, team-building activities or volunteering activities to engage professionals, supporting connection and broader impact.

## 3. Communicating with your audience

Regular and engaging communication is vital for your committee to support young professionals within the organisation. You could consider creating a dedicated committee page on your organisation's intranet or distributing a regular newsletter to showcase upcoming activities.

Empowering your committee members to champion the committee through informal conversations is an effective method to keep upcoming events and activities front of mind across your organisation.

## 4. Momentum and evaluation

Sustain momentum by scheduling regular events and maintaining consistent communication. Use feedback from committee members, young people in your organisation, the corporate sponsor and other stakeholders to assess what the committee is doing well, what could be improved and what new opportunities could be explored.

## 5. Broader engagement

Collaborate and engage with other groups internal and external to your organisation to enhance your committee's growth. You may wish to engage with young professionals in a similar industry or where you can co-contribute to delivering each group's objectives.

You may wish to engage with the YPC. The YPC aims to support and promote the interests of young professionals working in or working with the public sector in WA. We connect young professionals and young professional groups through networking opportunities, training and other planned activities.

Please get in touch with the YPC through LinkedIn or visit the IPAA WA website to learn more about how to get in contact with the committee.

# Appendix A – Young Professional Committees across WA.

## Young Professionals Advisory Board, Local Government Professionals Network

The Young Professionals Advisory Board (YPAB) has a critical role in ensuring the voice of young professionals working in local governments are considered and reflected through the support provided by LG Professionals WA to its members.

The Advisory Board comprises of up to 10 young professional members and has a reporting responsibility to the LG Professionals WA Board of Management on current and emerging challenges and opportunities experienced by young professionals working in local government.
The Advisory Board has significantly contributed to the Association's initiatives including the introduction of a Resume Review Services, the recently launched Local Government Career Campaign and participation in various career fairs engaging with young people considering a career in local government.

## Young Professionals Program Committee, WA Department of Training and Workforce Development

The Young Professionals Program (YPP) Committee was formed in late 2021 as an initiative from the Department's Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025, to provide staff with opportunities to connect, share, develop and learn through dedicated employee networks.

The YPP Committee drives outcomes that focus on building a network of young professional employees (35 years and under) to stay connected and commit to learning and developing together to thrive in their careers in the Department and overall, the WA public sector. The YPP Committee organise a range of events and initiatives for the Department's young professionals including:

- Executive shadowing;
- Networking opportunities;
- Lunch and learns;
- Social events; and
- Collaborative events with young professional networks from other public sector agencies.

The YPP Committee consists of a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretariat, Communications Officer and approximately eight committee members.

## Young Professional Program, WA Department of Treasury

The Treasury Young Professional Program (YPP) Committee was established in 2020 to drive outcomes that focus on building a young network of engaged and capable employees who collaborate on projects, develop networks across Treasury and provide a program of social and operational activities to support the over 110 employees aged 35 years and under at the Department. The Committee also collaborate and assist in the implementation of broader Treasury initiatives.

The Committee abides by a Terms of Reference that sets out the functions, membership, meeting requirements and other responsibilities for the Committee. To date, the Committee has eight members, being the Chair, the Communications Officer, Secretariat and five further members each responsible for program streams. Events aim to provide professional development opportunities, foster intra-agency and inter-agency networking, and incorporate a range of social and community events for the YPP cohort. The Committee issue a monthly newsletter to young professionals within the agency and provide ongoing updates to the Executive on YPP activities.