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| Frequently asked questions  |
| Victorian Youth Congress 2025OFFICIAL |

## Support to participate

#### Are Victorian Youth Congress (Congress) members paid for their time?

Yes! We know that it’s important to value young people’s time, contributions and advice in a practical way. Congress members are remunerated at $31.67 per hour for the time they spend attending formal meetings and engaged in or preparing for Congress activities.

Payments are made monthly through the Department’s payroll system. Newly appointed members will need to create a MyGov account (if not already created) to obtain a tax file number and select a preferred super fund so that the department can reimburse them. The Office for Youth can provide guidance on this.

#### What’s the time commitment?

The 2025 Victorian Youth Congress term is expected to commence with an induction in March 2025 and conclude in December 2025 (to be confirmed at a later stage). Congress members are expected to attend one three-hour meeting most months, usually held on Friday evenings and alternating between online and in the Melbourne CBD. Members also contribute approximately two to seven hours of out-of-meeting project or consultation work each month in their own time. Hours will vary throughout the year and the Office for Youth will indicate what to expect at the start of 2025.

We know young people are working, studying, and have a range of other commitments, so we try to be flexible with timing and allow members to take a step back some months if they need to.

#### What support do members receive to participate?

For in-person meetings, we arrange transport and accommodation for all members living in regional or rural areas. We also provide transport for young people living in Melbourne to get safely home from meetings.

We provide accessibility supports such as Auslan interpreters, based on individual members’ needs. If there’s a particular kind of support you need, please get in touch to discuss it with us.

## Work of the Victorian Youth Congress

#### What does Congress do?

Congress members provide advice to government on a range of issues that affect young people and will have the opportunity to be spokespeople and ambassadors for young Victorians.

Congress is supported by the Office for Youth, which is within the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. Staff from the Office for Youth work closely with Congress members to coordinate meetings, provide guidance and support, and to help Congress engage with the Minister for Youth and other parts of government. Congress members usually work in three ways:

* Provide insights, advice and recommendations to the Office for Youth and Minister for Youth to support specific government policy or programs relevant to young people, and the implementation of the [Victorian Youth Strategy](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorias-youth-strategy-2022-2027). Congress members typically drive the direction and focus of their work and input however the Office for Youth or Minister may seek Congress' input directly on a specific topic.
* Provide advice to other areas of government working on policies or initiatives related to young people, usually through a workshop or co-design session on a specific topic.
* Participate in training and development opportunities to support the work and role of being a member and broaden your understating of government.

#### What skills and qualities are Congress members expected to have, and what skills can they develop during their term?

The most important things young people can bring to Congress are

* Teamwork skills and an open mind to the perspectives and ideas of others
* An interest in Victorian young people and the issues that affect them
* The ability to reflect on their own experiences, perspectives and abilities

During their time on Congress, members will have the opportunity to learn about how government works and engage with the Minister for Youth, relevant government staff and Victorian youth sector representatives.

They will also develop skills in public speaking, project management, critical thinking and problem-solving, and build networks and friendships with other young people who are passionate about making change.

#### What has the Congress been working on this year, and what will next year’s Congress be doing?

This year’s Congress has supported the implementation of *Our Promise, Your Future: Victoria’s youth strategy 2022-2027*, released in August 2022. Congress has worked closely with government to provide advice on implementing key directions of this strategy, including making contributions to the development of several Victorian Government initiatives including: YouthNav, a new online skills for life toolkit ,FReeZA, a program supporting youth friendly live music and events and Engage, a program supporting young people to develop skills through projects within their community.

The 2025 Congress will continue to play a key role in supporting the implementation of the youth strategy.

## Recruitment process

#### When can I expect to hear back about my application?

**Applications to join Congress in 2025 are open until 5pm Tuesday 15 October**.
The Office for Youth expects to hold interviews with those that have been shortlisted in November.

Preferred candidates will be required to provide proof of identification, some personal information and consent to a police check. Those aged eighteen and above are required to hold a valid working with children check.

We expect to let candidates know they are a preferred candidate in January 2025 and to let all candidates know the outcome of their application in February, following the Minister’s endorsement.

We are expecting a large number of applications and will not be able to respond to people contacting the Office for Youth to find out the outcome of their application. We will do our best to get back to applicants in a timely manner and provide updates if expected timeframes (outlined above) change significantly.

We will only be able to provide feedback to applicants that have been shortlisted. While there are limited spots for each term of Congress, you can indicate in your application if you would like us to reserve your details for other opportunities that may arise to involve young people with the Victorian Government.

#### Still have questions? Send them to vyc@dffh.vic.gov.au and we’ll respond when we can!