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# Rebranding South Australia with young people.

Sometimes when you are flat out you lose sight of the significance of things. That's what happened last week when I facilitated a conversation between Brand South Australia and a group of young South Australians. It was only on reflection that I realised how big it was.

When I went out and spoke to children and young people last year during my Listening Tour I heard great things, but some worrying things too. I got a sense from them that there wasn't a strong vision for this state with a youth focus. Young people said to me 'we are always talking about an ageing state or hoon youth but where's the conversation about us?'

The current SA brand isn't one that's inspiring many of our young people. So I suggested that Brand SA might want to explore what the image of SA is that our young people want to project to their peers. They were open to exploring how to build the views of young people into their work and so last week it happened and it was fascinating.

In the session young people 16-22 talked about cool places to live like Melbourne, New York, Silicone Valley and explained why they were cool. According to them these places just have a "vibe"

So what is the vibe? It's young people friendly, comfortable and welcoming. There's an acceptance of risk taking, a feeling that anything is possible where "tribes" of young people can get together, to innovate, to express themselves, to just be young and hang out.

So what about SA? How do you promote what's good for young people when that's not what we are known for? They had so many ideas. They said this is a great market to test things in, there's the one degree of separation thing here that young Adelaidians can use to their advantage. There are so many niche markets, unique fashion labels that people come here for, it's an easy place to navigate but we need to tell people where the cool things are that young people like. They want young people to curate their own separate Brand SA platform to showcase this cool and quirky, small and easy city and beautiful state.

This could be massive, and the key is that young people would own the platform. The ideas and the work would come from them. They would run it and grow it and it becomes an opportunity for those involved. Our own young people passionately building the state brand for their peers. I think that's progress and it's a significant shift. There are more conversations to be had to build on this, but **thanks for listening Brand SA.**

**Helen Connolly**

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