



**South
Australian
Student
Representative
Council**

November 2023



Are you a young South Australian passionate about making change in your community? SA SRC wants you!



In South Australia, there are more than 363,000 children under 18 years of age. This total represents one fifth of the state's entire population of 1.8 million (2021).

We know you care about many issues and that you have very different life experiences from older Australians. South Australia's Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly, has met with many of you over the last few years and you have repeatedly told her that you are feeling frustrated and sidelined as you continue to be denied opportunities to 'participate' because of a perception that you lack knowledge and experience, and that your opinions are therefore not valid. You want to make a difference to the world and to your communities, however, you do not feel listened to or that decision makers are willing to include or value your input.

You have told the Commissioner that many adults around you really don't know much about your lives or understand what it is you care about.

This perceived lack of understanding and interest in your lives is producing feelings of powerlessness and creating mixed feelings about what the future holds for you and creating doubts about whether adults really do have your best interests at heart, now or for the future. This is particularly so when you see that those in leadership don't act on the issues you see as critical and urgent, such as inequality, climate change and mental health.

As the experts in your own lives, you have knowledge you can share about your experiences and ideas on ways to create positive change within your local community led by young people themselves.

Introducing a new youth participation model for SA young people

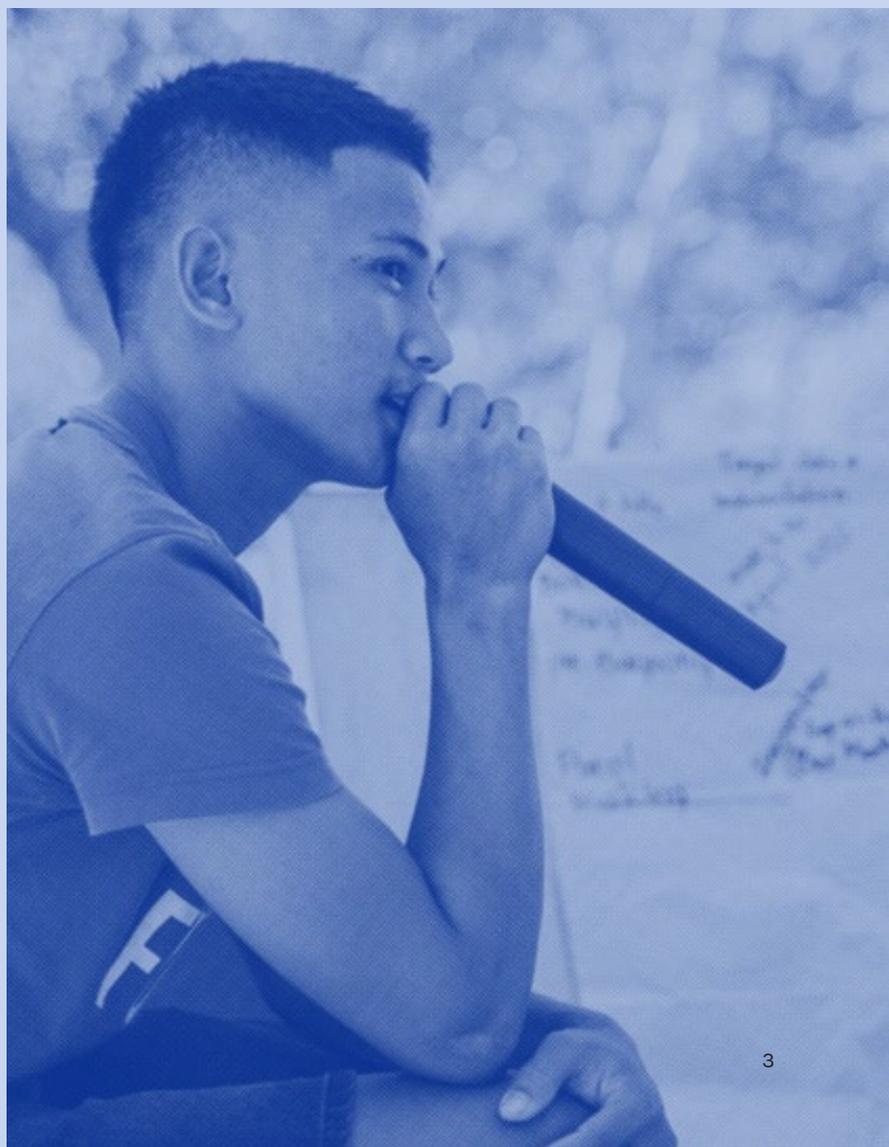
In 2022, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly, in partnership with Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) established a state-wide student representative council that would ensure young South Australians can act on the issues that matter to them most.

The **South Australian Student Representative Council (SA SRC)** is a representative body of up to 150 students in Years 10, 11, and 12 drawn from across the state, working together to create genuine, student-led change within their own communities.

The inaugural SA SRC enabled high school students across South Australia to create a vision for change that they would like to see. In 2023, the SA SRC worked on turning their student-led ideas into reality within schools and throughout the community. The SA SRC will continue to build on this work in 2024.

The SA SRC brings together passionate young people from rural, regional, and metropolitan communities, who want to harness the energy, ideas, and desires of other likeminded young people to create a better future, not only for themselves, but for future generations of South Australians.

As a member of the SA SRC you will be equipped with the trust, resources, skills, and confidence you'll need to enact the change you want to see. You'll be involved with other like-minded young people in setting priorities and actions for making change focused on issues you perceive as being critical and requiring urgent action.



What is the SA SRC?

The SA SRC is an inclusive action-orientated body for high school students working together on issues young South Australians raise and prioritise, in ways you believe will make a difference.

I encourage you to become a member, either as an individual or as part of a small team of friends who will be able to support each other to participate over the school year.

In the words of one young South Australian:

“If we are able to empower the youth of SA then they will believe in them themselves and create a snowball effect that will make the world a better place.”

The SA SRC is representative and democratic, with a focus on providing support to young people who care deeply about bringing about positive change into areas of their lives that they feel matter most. SRC members will have an opportunity to have a say and to determine what actions will be taken at the community, state, and national levels.

You can expect a very different SRC to the one you might know from school. This state-wide SRC is about having the opportunity to join with other like-minded young people from across the state to make real change in your community on issues decided upon and actioned by you. You'll meet other passionate young people like yourself, and be given the opportunity to build the skills and knowledge you'll need around the issues and areas you care most about.

SA SRC Membership consists of:

- Up to 150 high school students in Years 10, 11, and 12 selected annually from across South Australia.
- Members from the breadth of SA with representation from all SA regions.
- Applications can be made by individuals or small teams of 2-3 young people.
- Members will be appointed by the Commissioner in consultation with a representative from the Foundation for Young Australians.
- Members will represent their community for the duration of the school year.



What is required?

SA SRC exists to ensure that all young South Australians:

- Have a stronger voice in their school and communities
- Have more support in addressing challenges to their mental health and wellbeing
- Have more accessible public transport
- Feel included and celebrated regardless of race, gender or ability
- Are taught an inclusive curriculum that better reflects the diversity of our society.

Commitment from young people who are selected to become SA SRC members includes:

- Attendance at one face-to-face summit held in March 2024*
- Monthly meetings held via Zoom after school 4:30-5:30pm
- Work on local campaigns as required
- Contribute to online work as required.

*Where required attendance costs will be supplied for members travelling to attend from regional, rural, and remote locations.

Application opening and closing dates:

- Applications for membership of the 2024 SA SRC open on Wednesday 1 November 2023
- Applications close at 11:59pm on Sunday 11 February 2024
- Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by Friday 23 February 2024.

Important meeting dates:

- Welcome to SA SRC session: Wednesday 6 March 4:30-5:30PM (online)
- SA SRC Summit 2024: Friday 22 March (in person)
- Monthly project meetings 4:30-5:30pm and ad hoc workshops and panels (dates TBC) (online)

Important dates for Terms 3 and 4 will be determined throughout Terms 1 and 2.

- COP forum (October)
- End of year celebration (December)



Your questions answered...

What is the time commitment for the SA SRC likely to be?

We are looking for students who can dedicate their time to working on creating change in their communities.

The 'campaigns' you will work on might take up 1–2 hours of volunteer time per month. We will also have monthly check-in meetings that will be conducted online via Zoom. Optional bi-monthly online meetings for regional and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will be offered and held online. Face-to-face meetings will take place in the Adelaide CBD. SA SRC meetings will be held monthly over Zoom.

The SA SRC Summit 2024 will be held on Friday 22 March.

Can I apply with a friend?

Absolutely! You can apply with a friend or as an individual. We encourage small teams of between 2 and 3 young people to apply, so that you can participate together and support each other with your involvement.

How much does the SA SRC cost?

There may be some small out-of-pocket expenses, but we will endeavour to ensure most of these costs are covered. Travel costs will be covered for regional and rural students.

What is expected?

Attendance at the Summit is non-negotiable. SA SRC members must be able to participate in a range of interactive discussions and workshops and be willing to work in small groups and teams throughout the year.

Who can apply?

Anyone currently enrolled in Year 10, 11, or 12 in a South Australian public, Catholic or independent school.

Does my school have to agree to my membership?

No. The SA SRC is not school based, so applications are not made through your school. However, as the SA SRC provides opportunities for empowerment and leadership, we are confident SA schools will promote, encourage, and engage with the SA SRC program, and the Commissioner will be advocating for them to do so.

Is this a 'leadership' program?

Yes and no. Leadership will be developed and supported but it is not a formal leadership program as such. We want SA SRC members to represent the breadth and depth of difference in our South Australian student population. We know that young South Aussies care about lots of different issues and come to the table with different experiences and perspectives. We think it's really important that we reflect diversity and take an inclusive approach to young South Australians who become members of the SA SRC.

What will I get out of being on the SA SRC?

We want to provide you with the trust, resources, skills, and connections that will support you to create the change you want to see in your community. CCYP and FYA in collaboration with NIYEC, will do this by connecting you to other young people and decision makers.

Your questions answered...

We will also be upskilling you through sessions with experts in media, campaigning and advocacy. By doing so, you'll leave the SA SRC with new friends, professional contacts, the experience of working in professional contexts, and a bunch of 21st century leadership skills.

Do I have to be on my school's SRC to apply?

No. No previous experience is necessary for you to apply. The only criteria is that you're currently in or going to be in Year 10, 11, or 12 in 2024. We are looking for young people who want to work collaboratively with their state-wide peers on campaigns and projects they care about because they want to create a future they will be excited to be in.

Who is behind the SA SRC?

The SA SRC is an initiative of **South Australia's Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP)**; an independent statutory authority, established under the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016*. The Commissioner promotes and advocates for the rights, development, and wellbeing of all children and young people in South Australia and is committed to advocating for their involvement in decision making that affects them, with particular consideration given to those children and young people who are vulnerable and at-risk.

The Commissioner's **Advocacy Agenda** has set a key objective to create opportunities for young people that will enable them to engage policy and decision makers to enact and influence change.

The **Foundation for Young Australians (FYA)** is an Australian non-profit organisation whose purpose is to back young people with the trust, resources, skills, and connections to make change. The organisation's vision is that young people have the power to beat injustice and transform the future.

The **National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC)**, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led organisation, is supporting the initiative. NIYEC brings together a diverse coalition of young mob from different Indigenous Nations, experiences, and passions, who all share a commitment for good quality education. NIYEC is driven by an intergenerational vision: to build on the work of our Old People, and to plant the seed of an equitable and quality education ecosystem for future generations.

Any other questions?

Please forward any inquiries to CommissionerCYP@sa.gov.au with "SA SRC" in the subject field.

Are you up for the SA SRC challenge?
Apply today at ccyp.com.au/sa-src