

Young People Inclusion Plan: Monitoring and evaluation plan

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Background

Young voters tend to be less informed about democratic processes and less willing and likely to vote (VEC, 2018; 2020) than older voters. At the 2018 Victorian State election, the voter turnout rate for enrolled 18- to 19-year-olds was 90.36% compared to the total turnout of 90.16% (VEC, 2018). This is positive and history shows that many people vote the first time when they have the opportunity to do so. However, the participation of people aged 20+ declines, with only 85.79% of 20- to 24-year-olds and 83.70% of 25- to 29-year-olds voting (VEC, 2018).

The number of young people enrolled to vote in Victoria increased from 2010 due to the introduction of direct enrolment. With direct enrolment, the VEC uses data from trusted sources, such as VicRoads, to add eligible people to the electoral register. Although this has helped increase the number of young people enrolled, many young people aren't aware of the direct enrolment (VEC, 2020). Directly enrolled voters, many of whom are young, vote at lower rates (72.22% compared with the total of 90.16% at the 2018 Victorian State election) (VEC, 2018).

The VEC has a role to provide education and increase awareness of electoral matters (Electoral Act, 2002). The VEC aims to engage electors across Victoria, particularly those that are currently under-represented, including young people (VEC Diversity and Inclusion Framework, 2020).

The VEC Young Person Inclusion Plan aims to empower young people as active citizens, who are engaged in their democracy. The Young Person Inclusion Plan targets two groups of young people, including:

- 10- to 16-year-olds before they are eligible to vote and 17-year-olds who are eligible to enrol to vote
- 18- to 29-year-olds who are eligible to vote.

Monitoring and evaluation overview

This plan outlines a process and outcome evaluation using mixed methods to determine how effectively we have implemented the Young People Inclusion Plan. A program logic details the activities that will contribute to outputs and outcomes that produce intended impacts. This logic guides the evaluation ([see Appendix 1](#)). Monitoring of progress against this plan is part of progress and annual reporting.

The process evaluation will explore:

1. the extent to which all activities were implemented as planned
2. the effectiveness of the Young People Advisory Group
3. the 2022 Democracy Ambassador program relating to the youth sector
4. participation in VEC youth programs, including the [Passport to Democracy](#) program
5. the effectiveness of the 2022 State election campaign for young people
6. the electoral work opportunities the VEC provides to young people
7. the number and quality of sector partnerships
8. youth sector access to peer-to-peer electoral education
9. how much the VEC has improved its knowledge of, and engagement with the youth sector
10. barriers and enablers to implementing the Young People Inclusion Plan
11. the strengths and limitations of the Young People Inclusion Plan.

The outcome evaluation will explore:

12. how satisfied young people were with participating in Young People Inclusion Plan programs
13. how much participating young people improved their electoral knowledge
14. how much participating 17-year-olds improved their understanding of how to enrol and vote
15. how much participating 18+ year-olds improved their understanding of how to enrol and vote
16. how engaged and influential participating young people felt in electoral processes and democracy
17. whether young people had more electoral work and employment opportunities within the VEC
18. whether stakeholders have more understanding of the VEC, and the importance of electoral participation for young people
19. whether stakeholders are more likely to help young people participate in electoral processes
20. how much the number of eligible young people enrolled to vote increased
21. how much the number of eligible young people formally voting increased
22. how much non-voter instances in the 18-29 age group decreased
23. how many young people who are directly enrolled participated in the election compared to young people not directly enrolled.

Data collection for the evaluation includes:

- surveys with young people
- interviews with stakeholders
- interviews with VEC staff
- enrolment and election data
- 2022 State election campaign data
- website data
- program data.

Scope

Because of time limits, we are not able to assess project outcomes over a longer term. The evaluation will not assess whether activities of the Young People Inclusion Plan cause enrolment and voting outcomes.

Expected timing of monitoring and evaluation activities

KEY TASKS	TIMEFRAME
Develop data collection tools	January to June 2022
Data collection	Ongoing to June 2023
Data analysis	June to October 2023
Quarterly and annual monitoring and reporting	Ongoing
Evaluation report	October 2023
Dissemination/knowledge translation activities	November 2023

References

Australian Electoral Commission. (2016). *Voter Turnout: 2016 House of Representatives and Senate elections* [Voter turnout \(apo.org.au\)](http://apo.org.au)

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Victorian Electoral Commission. (2018). *Report to Parliament on the 2018 Victorian State election*

Victorian Electoral Commission. (2020). [*Understanding non-voters of the 2018 State election*](#)

Victorian Electoral Commission. (2021). [*Diversity and Inclusion Framework - Final 2021*](#) (unpublished)

Victorian Electoral Commission. (2021).

<https://www.vec.vic.gov.au/about-us/publications/selections-2021/strategy-2023-update>

Problem statement: Democratic legitimacy depends on inclusivity. Young people tend to be less informed about democratic processes and while many participate in social justice issues, many younger people are less willing and likely to vote than older community members.

Strategies: Attitudes

Through the Passport to Democracy program, educate young people about the importance of voting - every vote counts.

Strategies: Attitudes

Encourage young peoples' voice in democracy through the co-design of a social media campaign for the 2022 State election.

Strategies: Community

Engage young people through partnerships, employment, the Young People Advisory Group and Democracy Ambassador program.

Strategies: Access

Facilitate voting and enrolment for eligible young people through the 17-year-old birthday card, direct enrolment and vote ready workshops.

Intended impacts

- **Young people are active citizens who have life-long engagement in electoral processes and democracy.**
- **Young people are appropriately considered in electoral processes.**
- **Increased enrolment of under-represented groups in electoral processes and democracy.**
- **Increased participation (ie. formal voting) of under-represented groups in electoral processes and democracy.**
- **Maximised participation of all eligible Victorians in democracy and electoral processes.**

Evidence and assumptions

- **Evidence 1** – Young voters tend to be less informed about formal democratic processes and less willing and likely to vote (VEC, 2018; 2020) than those aged older. Data also shows a sharp decline in participation following young peoples' first voting experience, with only 85.79% of 20- to 24-year-olds and 83.70% of 25- to 29-year-olds voting (VEC, 2018).
- **Evidence 2** – The number of young people enrolled to vote increased significantly from 2010 due to the introduction of direct enrolment. However, directly enrolled voters, many of whom are young, vote at lower rates than those not directly enrolled (72.22% compared with 90.16% at the 2018 Victorian State election) (VEC, 2018).
- **Evidence 3** – Lower participation rates amongst young people appear related to life course stage rather than generation (Voter Turnout: 2016 House of Representatives and Senate elections, AEC).
- **Assumption 1** – Providing younger voters with civics education will increase interest and participation in electoral processes and democracy.
- **Assumption 2** – The strategies will lead to intended impacts through activities, outputs and outcomes outlined in the Young People program logic.

Appendix 1. Young People Inclusion Plan program logic

