

AUSTRALIA

Youth delegate programme



Existing since: 1999

Sending youth delegates to: The United Nations General Assembly

Timing of call for application: Late October

Number of youth delegates: 1

Length of term: 1 year, beginning end of March

Criteria for applying:

- Between 16-24 years
- Passion for youth empowerment and participation
- Strong knowledge of the United Nations and of international affairs
- Awareness of the Australian youth sector
- Past background in media, advocacy and consultation
- Able to devote the whole year to a domestic tour and participation in the United Nations General Assembly.

Visa process: G2 visa, received with a support letter from the Australian Mission to the United Nations.

Interviews are recorded in each Australian State and Territory and are then screened by the UNYA National Executive. From the recorded interviews, UNYA shortlists five candidates to be viewed by the Australian Government's Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The final step consists of DFAT's selection and endorsement of the successful youth delegate. UNYA supports the youth delegate's with their domestic consultations and advocacy while DFAT is responsible for supporting the representative's work at the General Assembly.

Before the General Assembly

The youth delegate has a high profile role in the Australian youth community and undertakes a five month consultation tour of all Australian States and Territories. The objective of this tour is to capture the local and global concerns of young Australians.

During the tour, the youth delegate performs a wide range of educational activities, including educating young people on domestic and international political processes. This includes raising awareness among young people on how they can convey their views to the Australian Government and on how they can support the goals of the United Nations. The youth delegate also equips young people with tools and information on how they can get involved in local and global campaigns.

A vital part of the youth delegate's work is engaging voiceless young people in the community, including young people who are marginalized and come from disadvantaged backgrounds. In this work, the youth delegate seeks to improve the self-esteem of young people by delivering motivational speeches and workshops on youth participation.

Throughout the domestic tour, the youth delegate forms strong relationships with members of the National Government, in particular the Ministry for Youth, State Governments and other political actors. Through these relationships, the youth delegate has a good platform through which to advocate the concerns of the diverse youth s/he has engaged.

Selection Process

The selection process is organized by the United Nations Youth Association of Australia (UNYA) and follows a four-step process. The process begins with an expression of interest. UNYA advertises the position and consistently receives around 200 applications per year that respond to short-answer questions relating to youth advocacy and international relations. During the second step, shortlisted applicants are asked to think creatively and to strategically write an essay on what they can bring to the position of youth delegate. Thirdly, successful applicants from the second round are invited to an interview where they are asked questions on their experience with media, advocacy, consultation and youth work.

Ultimately the consultations and advocacy work help develop the youth delegate's official statement to the Third Committee of the General Assembly.

At the General Assembly

The Australian youth delegate works within the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations from mid-September to early December. The main responsibility of the youth delegate is to convey the voices of Australian children and young people in General Assembly forums and events. This includes delivering a statement to the Third Committee of the General Assembly based on the findings of the national tour. The youth delegate also helps to negotiate resolutions in the Third Committee on behalf of the Australian Mission, has the opportunity to organize side events for delegations and contributes to raising the profile of youth participation within UN organs and agencies.

When returning home

Follow-up on the work within Australia and to the General Assembly is one of the most critical parts of the youth delegate's role. The youth delegate's follow-up work include a "Reporting Back Tour" in order to undertake a substantial evaluation process and support to Government and non-Government organizations in the implementation of youth resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. The youth delegate delivers educational workshops and inspirational talks to diverse youth audiences to inform young people, especially those visited throughout the National Tour, on how they were represented at the General Assembly.

Funding

The Australian Government organizes and pays for the youth delegate's accommodation during the General Assembly. All other costs, including the National Tour and flight tickets, are funded by the youth delegate through his/her own fundraising.

Contact

To learn more about the selection process and the Australian youth delegate programme please contact the UNYA National Vice-President for Youth Representation at vp youthrep@unya.org.au or visit www.youthrep.org.au