



Media Release

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The Y Canberra Region seeks Canberra MLAs for the ACT's first Youth Parliament – Applications Open for Young People 16-25 years

Twenty-five young people will soon take their seats in the ACT's first Youth Parliament, to be held on the floor of the Legislative Assembly in July 2026.

The program, led by [the Y Canberra Region](#) (formerly YMCA Canberra), is calling for 25 young MLAs aged 16 to 25 from across the Canberra Region to make their voices heard. The program gives participants the opportunity to debate bills and motions that matter to them, while developing valuable skills in civics, leadership, and community engagement. Importantly, applications close at the end of November 2025.

The Y Canberra Region Chief Executive Kirsty Dixon said the program will be life-changing, providing young people with a platform to share their views on the future of the Territory.

“The Y Youth Parliament program is a flagship initiative of Y Australia and has operated in every state and territory across the country — except the ACT. That didn’t make sense to us at the Y Canberra Region, because Canberra is one of the youngest and most progressive cities in Australia, and the heart of our democracy,” said Ms Dixon.

Government inquiries and university research share a consistent message — many young Australians are becoming disengaged from civics and democracy, and increasingly feel frustrated, and lonely. The Y Canberra Region believes in the power and potential of young people to change that story.

“Every young person has a unique story and perspective, and the Y Youth Parliament program is designed to support this — building their confidence so they feel comfortable and knowledgeable when standing up for what matters,” Ms Dixon said.

“Young people need meaningful opportunities to learn from and listen to those in our community, to help pave a future that connects and inspires everyone.”

Ms Dixon said the Y Youth Parliament is not a “youth takeover”, but rather a program that fosters social cohesion and intergenerational connection, helping young people build confidence and a stronger sense of belonging within their Canberra community.

Applications are open now for ACT Youth in the 16-25 age bracket. For more information and to apply, visit the Y Canberra Region the website <https://ymcacanberra.org.au/what-we-do/youth-parliament/>

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