

YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Giving young people a voice in sports is incredibly important, so that they are in an environment that is safe, fun and inclusive. Allowing young people a voice in sport empowers them to feel part of a community where they not just exist, but can enact positive change as well.

Keira Austin

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INTRODUCTION

Please note, everything listed here is an example only. Adjust, edit, and tailor as you see fit. Whilst we have made these recommendations, it is up to your organisation to do what you think is best suited. We recommend allowing your youth committee to adopt projects that they feel passionate about and we encourage you to support them in their endeavours. We also recommend giving opportunities to your youth committee members to develop their leadership skills by participating in a range of club or external events and programs. At the end of the day, listen to what your youth members want as it will vary between organisations.

STEP 1 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



Youth Officer - Position Description

Position:

Youth Officer

Position Objective:

- To ensure there is a youth voice in decision making
- To hold the committee to account to the views of youth players

Key Responsibilities:

- Attend the organisation's committee meetings
- Take part in discussion on matters on the agenda
- Be a representative for other young people within your club or organisation
- Model good sportsmanship, respect, tolerance and inclusivity

Key Selection Criteria:

There are no set qualifications and experience for this role. The following attributes will be highly regarded:

- A dedication to supporting an inclusive netball environment for all
- A commitment to listen and provide feedback with courage

Youth Committee - Terms of Reference

In selecting members, the committee will seek to:

- Achieve a mix of skills from applicants and strive for inclusivity and diversity
- Ensure a broad representation from the wider organisation
- Create a forum for full discussion of relevant matters to the organisation and netball community

Purpose

The purpose of the Youth Advisory Committee is to be the voice of young people within [insert association], and to assist the association by providing advice and feedback in relation to the opinions of young people in netball. As a member and volunteer-driven organisation, the committee focuses on meaningful youth participation and will work collaboratively to discuss key initiatives as outlined by the [insert association] to ensure young people's views and opinions are well represented. This will also work towards meeting the Netball Victoria-mandated Child Safety Standards, and in particular directly address Child Safe Standard 2, Standard 3, and Standard 5.

Aims

- Empowerment: Provide a platform representing young member views, values and ideas and a place where they will play a significant role in shaping the future of netball for the next generation.
- Inclusiveness: Mutually respectful partnership with a cross-section of the netball community whereby power is shared, and contributions are valued.
- Enrichment: Through experiences, thoughts, ideas, and perspectives young people can enrich Netball Victoria's future decision-making processes and outcomes.

Scope

An expression of interest shall be sought at the beginning of each calendar year. The selection process will endeavour to include all genders, those who identify with the LGBT+ community, First Nations people, those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability. The committee shall comprise of 11-13 members annually. [insert association] at its discretion may alter the minimum or maximum number of members based on the strength of applications. The committee will meet once every 4-6 weeks and have the opportunity to provide feedback to senior committee members.

Applications to join the committee will open [insert desired time frame] and should be submitted via [preferred channels] by the given deadline. Applicants must be between the age of [insert desired age range, we recommend 13-22] at the time of submitting their application. If successful in obtaining an interview this will be conducted with at least one staff member from [association] and a member of the current Youth Advisory Committee/Youth Officer (if not possible, another member of [association]).

Current committee members may choose to do an additional one-year term and should apply through [preferred channels]. The decision to allow an additional term will be based on the commitment and engagement shown during their initial term and the strength of applications. The incoming committee will commence its term [preferred time] with the first meetings being in person or online if required. The Youth Advisory Committee will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from members who have chosen to do a second term. In the event there are no current members returning or they do not wish to nominate themselves, nominations will be open to all committee members.

A representative from [association] will be available to attend all committee meetings, and other staff members will be invited to attend committee meetings from time to time and may make presentations on topics of interest to young members. Meetings shall occur monthly to six-weekly, with the exclusion of January and December where there is no expectation to hold a meeting.

Responsibilities

Establish goals and programs for the calendar year

- Through a calendar of events, identify how the committee can support [association] strategic objectives.
- Attend committee meetings to understand [association] aims and purpose.
- Contribute to the organisation's strategic outcomes by co-designing, advocating, and promoting ideas impacting young people in netball.

Communication

- Liaise with [association] to engage the appropriate support to achieve desired outcomes.
- Be available to respond to queries and concerns from other young members.
- Listen to feedback in a constructive and positive manner, and direct members to the appropriate process/person.

[Association's] Values and Codes of Behaviour

- Understand and embody [association's] values and behave as an appropriate role model.
- Understand and comply with relevant Codes of Behaviour – paying particular attention to Child Safety framework and social media policy.
- Be an active voice and participant in promoting Safeguarding Children as required by [association].

Maintain positive relationships with members and committee representatives

- Establish and maintain good working relationships with young association/club members.
- Treat all people in a fair and reasonable manner.
- Respond to feedback and requests in a timely fashion.
- Be involved in planning and decision making for the sport.
- Escalate complaints or concerns as required.

[Association] Objectives

- Bring a diverse voice to the table and act as an advisory group to [association] to review policies and projects.
- Improve retention of youth members through targeted programs.
- Provide an additional leadership pathway for youth members by advocating and promoting affiliates to embrace their own youth committees.

STEP 2 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

How to reach young people in your community:



a. Approach young people within the organisation – be proactive!

Initiate discussions with youth at events. Game nights, training, functions, whenever and wherever possible. The more young people engaged with the idea of having a voice, the better for the organisation.



b. Use social media to advertise and reach your audience

Using different social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok can allow young people to be aware of a club/association's activities. Being active online is key to engaging youth and encouraging participation within the community. If this feels daunting, ask your youth!



c. Give youth already involved some leeway in the organisation

The idea of youth involvement is to encourage young people to help the organisation and have a voice in its operation. Giving youth real power within the community can help with their motivation to make active contributions and will prove their work is valued.



d. Offer leadership, coaching, and umpire training to engage young people

Provide opportunities and pathways for upskilling of young people in the organisation. This will equip them with skills to advocate for themselves and their friends within the club. This could include coaching courses, assistant coaching roles, umpire workshops, discussion forums, or networking opportunities with leaders both in and outside the club environment. It could even be hosting a day where young leaders can workshop together and brainstorm ideas for the future of the club – all you really need is a place to gather, paper, pens, and good discussion.

STEP 3 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Interview questions you could ask

The main idea at this stage is to make sure that your applicant's goals align with the goals of the club, that they are aware of the role's expectations and believe they can contribute to it. Try to be receptive to new ideas and opinions you might not expect! Your young people have great ideas if you are willing to listen and encourage them.

- What is your involvement with this organisation (if you don't already know them well)?
- Why do you want to join the youth committee/be a Youth Officer?
- What would you be able to bring to this role?
- What are some issues within netball that you care about?

First day questions to direct conversation and start thinking

The focus at this stage is to facilitate conversation and help streamline ideas into actionable items. It's important to make sure that you give your young leaders space to brainstorm, discuss, collaborate, and select goals that are important to them. Don't force them in one specific direction, instead try to gently herd them towards a collective goal.

- What are two issues you care about?
- What do we like about our organisation the most?
- What does leadership mean to you?
- What do you want the organisation culture to be like?
- What could we do to engage our players more?
- What makes an effective team?



STEP 4 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Cultural values we identified

As members of the NV Youth Advisory Committee, we pledge to be respectful, active listeners, open-minded, courageous, inclusive, challenged, leaders, resourceful, determined, kind, enquiring, efficient and committed.

Commitment to culture

A Youth Officer will commit to upholding and maintaining the values set by the organisation and other committee members.

This is a pledge to uphold the values of this committee to the best of my abilities and communicate if at any time I am not up to it.

Aims & Goals of the Netball Victoria Youth Advisory Committee 2023

Aims

- To establish youth committees in netball across Victoria
- To empower young people to have ownership and input in netball
- To work closely with Netball Victoria and advise on issues close to young people

Goals

- To support organisations in implementing youth committees
- Provide a guide to creating youth committees
- Reduce stress around involving young people in decision-making

A PROVEN CASE OF YOUTH LEADERSHIP WORKING: CASE SAMPLE FROM PARK ORCHARDS NETBALL CLUB

Park Orchards Netball Club Youth Committee

Park Orchards has had a Youth Officer/Committee for nine years now and we wanted to expand to a larger youth committee. For our youth committee, the goal was to recruit up to 10 under-15 aged players to plan and run club community events, be a voice for players at the club, improve player retention, and provide a leadership pathway for youth in sport. By the end of the recruitment phase, we were able to fulfill a committee of nine leadership players.

How we did it

1. End of year presentation night was approaching in 2022 and we wanted some of our more experienced players to help run games for the junior U9s and U11s. As well as sending an email out to our U15 cohort, our Youth Officer attended training and messaged coaches asking for U15 players to help out at the event.

At the end of year event, we presented all the U15 players who volunteered with an invitation to a leadership evening and dinner to say thank you for their generosity of time and their awesome work.

2. At the leadership dinner, we introduced the topic of the youth committee to our U15 group, spoke about the opportunities it would involve - leadership camp, running club events, attending tournaments, and meeting people in leadership positions outside of our club.

We asked them what ideas they would have. At the end of the evening we invited them to join the youth committee, to have a think about the commitment and we would email them and their parents with further information.

3. The email was sent to parents and players inviting them to join the youth committee with a position description and details of the commitment it would involve. It was important to ensure the commitment was easy for parents and players to manage - our requirements were one meeting a month and attendance at main club events (approximately 1-2 hours a month). We set a deadline of two weeks to hear back from the players on whether they accepted the role or not.
4. 9 out of the 12 players we asked accepted their role and we set up an initial meet and greet session for the committee. Here, we set goals and intentions as well as expectations and planned the calendar for the year with desired events.

How we maintain our team and maintain 'always recruiting' framework

At Park Orchards Netball Club we want to ensure this program is inclusive and accessible to all our U15 and U17 players. To avoid a need for mass recruitment we do the following:

1. Our program is always open for players to join. At the start of a new season, we send a personalised email to all our U15 and U17 aged players (approximately 60 members) inviting them to join our leadership program. We also have a section in our monthly newsletter with events we have been doing and anything upcoming and add a point of contact if a player is interested in joining the program.
2. We frequently run large whole-club events. From Mother's Day and Father's Day to internal Fast5 competitions, our events are catered to all age groups. At all of these, we ensure we mention a point of contact to join our youth committee. We also make sure our committee is identifiable at the events and we get them to introduce themselves and engage with players, forming relationships for potential future recruitment.
3. We have a U13 'spirit team', which does smaller, low commitment fun events such as cheering at our finals, running small games at presentations and, if they would like, attendance at the leadership sessions. This ensures more opportunities and provides a feeding pathway to our youth committee.

HISTORY OF NETBALL VICTORIA'S YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Netball Victoria's Youth Advisory Committee has made significant strides since its inception in 2022, with a vision to empower young individuals to actively participate in shaping the future of netball. In the early stages, the committee of 18 members organised leadership sessions and bonding activities that laid the foundation for the core values, emphasising the empowerment of youth and the cultivation of a safe, inclusive space for all participants.

Throughout the inaugural term, the committee diversified its efforts by establishing specialised subgroups focused on critical areas such as coaching, uniform standards, male participation, and umpiring, each of which were identified as issues within the netball community. Notably, current members Ruby, Danny, and Jess were part of the Male Pathways Group that conducted a comprehensive survey through Deakin Talent to comprehend the barriers faced by male participants in netball. The findings of this survey not only hold relevance for Netball Victoria, but also have the potential to influence and benefit the wider netball community both domestically and internationally.

Alongside these efforts, the committee was actively engaged in various initiatives aimed at promoting inclusivity, raising awareness, and advocating for essential social causes within the netball sphere. These endeavours included creating engaging social media content, advocating for transgender visibility in uniform choices, participating in media interviews, and promoting awareness about child safety in netball. Moreover, the committee played an instrumental role in contributing to Netball Victoria's strategic plan for 2023-2026, emphasising the importance of incorporating the youth perspective in shaping the future trajectory of the sport.

Final thoughts of the Netball Victoria Youth Advisory Committees from 2022-2024

As we look toward the remainder of our tenure and reflect, we hope that we leave having had a lasting and positive impact on Netball Victoria, leaving a legacy that not only enriches the sport itself but also leaves a valuable imprint on the broader netball community. We believe that the Youth Advisory Committee is poised to shape a more inclusive, diverse, and progressive future for netball in Victoria and beyond.