



## YACWA 2023 Board Election Pack

YACWA works for its members. Our membership comprises of young people, individual advocates and organisations working to support young people and the youth sector in WA.

Our Board is made up of dedicated members working to fulfil YACWA's strategic objectives, detailed in [YACWA's Strategic Plan](#).

As a member, your input is essential in ensuring YACWA's Board represents the best interests of the organisation, young people and the youth sector.

For this election there are six (6) nominees and two (2) vacancies. Two current Board Members, Celeste Stephens and Clare Grealy are re-nominating for another term.

The nominating members (in alphabetical order by first name) are:

- Cassie Howell
- Celeste Stephens
- Clare Grealy
- Emily Williams
- Jill Downard
- Toby Blyth

## How to Vote

YACWA's Board election follow a proportional voting system-single transferable vote model, where candidates are ranked from highest (1) to lowest (6) in order of preference.

Each eligible voting member will receive an email at their nominated membership contact email with personalised link that directs to the OpaVote voting portal.

## Who Can Vote

Each organisational member and individual member (including Life Members, free members 25 or under and fee-paying members) receive a single vote in this election.

If an organisational member representative is also an individual member, they are entitled to cast two votes.

Associate members, non-members and members registering after 2 November and/or after the commencement of the election are unable to vote.

Voting closes on **Monday 20 November 2023 at 11.59pm.**

More details about this process can be found via this link [YACWA Constitution](#).

## Election Results

The results of the Board election will be announced at YACWA's Annual General Meeting (AGM) on **Wednesday 29 November 2023** at The Panorama Club Leederville (Level 3/201 Oxford St, Leederville WA 6007).

To register your attendance for the AGM, please click the below link: [AGM Registration](#).

## Proxy Voting

### Assigning a Proxy

For members who are unable to attend the AGM in person, we offer the option to appoint a proxy to vote on your behalf. We understand that not all members may be able to attend the meeting, and we want to ensure that your voices are heard. Your proxy can be any YACWA individual or organisation member. A proxy can not be given to an individual or organisation that is not a YACWA member.

**Scope of Proxy Voting:**

The proxy you appoint will be empowered to vote on your behalf only on decisions that are made during the AGM itself. This includes resolutions or motions raised during the meeting.

Please note that the voting of Board positions is not part of the AGM proceedings. The voting for Board positions occurs separately and is open for a designated period before the AGM. Therefore, proxies will not have voting authority for Board elections.

**Proxy Submission:**

To appoint a proxy, please complete the proxy form provided with this statement and return it by November 28. Proxy forms should be submitted in accordance with the instructions outlined in the proxy form.

It is important to ensure that your proxy receives instructions from you regarding how you would like them to vote on your behalf.

**Revoking a Proxy:**

You have the right to revoke a proxy appointment at any time before the AGM by notifying us and the revoked proxy member.

We value the participation of our members in the decision-making process and encourage you to exercise your voting rights, either by attending the AGM in person or by appointing a proxy. The decisions made at the AGM play a crucial role in shaping the future of YACWA, and your input is essential.

Proxy submission form can be found via this link [Proxy Submission Form](#)

## Further Questions

If you have any further questions, please get in touch with us via [yacwa@yacwa.org.au](mailto:yacwa@yacwa.org.au) or call us on 9227 5440.

***Please read through the nominees' biographies below before casting your vote.***

## CASSIE HOWELL



**Please provide a brief bio outlining who you are and any relevant roles, training, education and previous governance or committee experience.**

I am an emerging researcher with a focus in restoration ecology and sustainable agriculture. I have recently concluded a two year term as a trainee board director with Perth

NRM, a leading environmental organisation in Western Australia. This traineeship gave me in-depth education in board directorship through hands-on training within an active NFP board setting.

As a highly engaged young person, I have experience across a range of committees and youth-related initiatives. Most recently, I was a member of the Jane Goodall Institute Australia National Youth Leadership Council (2022) and a Youth Ambassador for the Australasian Dark Sky Alliance (2022-23). I am also a founding committee member of Perth Intrepid Landcare, an organisation that aims to empower and engage young people in volunteering and caring for our natural environment.

**From everything you know about being on a board, YACWA and the youth sector, how would you make a contribution to the Board?**

With significant experience in youth-run organisations and youth-focused initiatives, I understand the unique challenges that young people in WA face today. As I am a young person myself, but also already have 2 years of board experience, I feel uniquely placed to bring both first-hand experience and governance skills to this role.

The youth sector, with YACWA as a key body, plays a vital role in supporting young people's wellbeing, as well as shaping the future of WA through the development of current and future young leaders. With a commitment to sustainability in all forms, as well as to responsible governance, I will contribute my skills, experience and enthusiasm to ensure that YACWA can continue to empower current and future generations of young West Australians.

**YACWA has two sub-committees that support risk, finance, governance and organisational sustainability. Please provide examples of your knowledge and/or experience of these governance challenges.**

I believe that good governance relies on accountability, responsibility, integrity and a clear commitment to the goals and principles of the organisation. My board director traineeship equipped me with a broad understanding of all aspects of governance, including exposure to financial documents, strategic

planning and relevant sub-committees.

I have developed an understanding of the difficulties of maintaining financial viability as an organisation that relies on external funding sources, which can be significantly impacted by fluctuating funding landscapes. I understand the need to manage these risks while continuing to provide the most resources and services possible.

With a background in sustainability, I understand the importance of implementing sustainable practices throughout the organisation, and in particular in maintaining relationships with members and stakeholders, and ensuring the financial viability of the organisation.

# CELESTE STEPHENS



**Please provide a brief bio outlining who you are and any relevant roles, training, education and previous governance or committee experience.**

My name is Celeste Stephens, I am a current Board member of YACWA and have been for the past 16 months. I come from a regional perspective as I live and work in Karratha (Pilbara). I have been working in the Pilbara for the past 5 years as the Senior Manager - Pilbara at the Western Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS) and have an excellent understanding of Peaks bodies, the

social services sector and policy. I have a Masters in Public and Social Policy (Macquarie University). My previous employment was with a youth based organisation in the Pilbara. I have completed numerous professional development opportunities that align with the skills required for YACWA's Board such as governance and finance, leadership, outcomes measurement and advocacy. I have previously sat on the Board of The Junction Co. and Pilbara for Purpose and numerous other committees.

**From everything you know about being on a board, YACWA and the youth sector, how would you make a contribution to the Board?**

I have a highly strategic and outcomes focused perspective and strive to influence systems to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable in our society. This requires high-level coordination and systems-change thinking which is a passion of mine. Furthermore, coming from a regional perspective I offer a unique lens that considers the vast and various needs of young people across the region and the challenges this poses. My previous experience in youth work influences my day-to-day and the skills I have developed throughout my profession allow me to ensure I advance the voices of our most vulnerable. My current work at WACOSS is comparable to the work of YACWA, which has allowed me to build strong relationships, networks and connections that I also bring to the Board.

**YACWA has two sub-committees that support risk, finance, governance and organisational sustainability. Please provide examples of your knowledge and/or experience of these governance challenges.**

As I currently sit on the YACWA Board I have had experience on both sub-committees in the past 16 months and constantly strive to offer sound knowledge, critique and resolution where possible. I have attained professional development in governance, risk and finance as well as strategic planning and outcomes measurement which assist in my ability to contribute.



# CLARE GREALY



**Please provide a brief bio outlining who you are and any relevant roles, training, education and previous governance or committee experience.**

I have been part of the YACWA Board since May 2022 and I have been the Treasurer heading up the Finance & Sustainability Subcommittee since December 2022. In my day job, I am Senior Vice President of Finance for Brookfield Properties. I am qualified as a Chartered

Accountant and I have approximately 20 years' experience working in accounting and finance roles. I think that my experience and understanding of issues relating to finance and governance are valuable to the Board and I'm hopeful to be able to continue working alongside YACWA's management and Board.

**From everything you know about being on a board, YACWA and the youth sector, how would you make a contribution to the Board?**

While I don't have much experience in the youth sector, I have been involved with YACWA now for almost 1.5 years and I have a lot of respect and admiration for the organisation, its management and my fellow Directors. I think that my finance skill set is valuable to YACWA – this was a skills gap that the Board identified when I was initially co-opted. I have a collaborative approach and have built good relationships with the other Directors and the management team and I think I'm able to help provide guidance and oversight, particularly in the finance area.

**YACWA has two sub-committees that support risk, finance, governance and organisational sustainability. Please provide examples of your knowledge and/or experience of these governance challenges.**

I have significant experience in the finance field, having worked in a professional accounting firm and heading up the finance teams in three different companies. My roles have also required a reasonable level of understanding of issues related to governance. If successful in this nomination process, I would hope to continue in my role as Treasurer of the Finance & Sustainability Subcommittee.

# EMILY WILLIAMS



**Please provide a brief bio outlining who you are and any relevant roles, training, education and previous governance or committee experience.**

Emily (she/they), is a Community Impact Advisor in Homelessness, a Master of Arts Student in Gender Studies, full time advocate in youth empowerment, mental health and feminism on unceded Whadjak Nyoongar Land. She has been involved in youth programs such as Girls Take Over Parliament, Youth Parliament, Youth Council and the City of Salisbury Youth Council. She has also been involved in both undergraduate and postgraduate student Union movements including winning an election to become

General Secretary of the Flinders University Student Association. Emily continues empowerment in advocacy work to enshrine young peoples voices into politics and to bring power to communities. In 2022 Emily ran in the local government elections for the City of Salisbury's West Ward. Emily has over three years of board director experience with the most recent appointment onto the Flinders University Council the governing body for Flinders University. They have also completed University governance training with the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

**From everything you know about being on a board, YACWA and the youth sector, how would you make a contribution to the Board?**

I am committed to diversity and inclusion, and bring evidence based, trauma informed, compassion and a sense of justice approaches to all the work I do. I seek to empower others within organisations to be diverse and compassionate, to have courage, and centre community in all the work we do. A community that moves from symptoms of injustice but to the root causes, to see the ways this is intertwined within our everyday lives and build collective knowledge and inspire people to self-reflect and grow is powerful. Therefore, I would like to be able to support YACWA as a board director. As I value lived experience, being courageous and getting to the root causes of the inequalities and provide inclusive, accessible, and equitable opportunities for people to be at the decision-making table.

**YACWA has two sub-committees that support risk, finance, governance and organisational sustainability. Please provide examples of your knowledge and/or experience of these governance challenges.**



In 2022 my role as General Secretary had me overseeing the financial budget of the organisation, policies, and procedures. This included the operational aspects of financial management but extended to strategic planning with advocating for future investment and support from the University with SAF bets. I have also had training and experience with risk and governance from my position or board director on the Flinders University Council. This includes governance and best practices in the process of selecting a new chancellor for the University with recruitment processes and planning for risk and reputational mitigation. During my time on Henhouse, whilst brief, the organisation was in the process of winding up. During my time on the board there was planning for processes and legalities in relation to ensuring that all risk, and legal needs were being met in the wind up of the organization.

## JILL DOWNARD



**Please provide a brief bio outlining who you are and any relevant roles, training, education and previous governance or committee experience.**

Jill has spent her career leading organisations that create social impact. From West Africa to Canada, Jill has worked across the globe in a range of roles, within government, private sector and not for profit.

Jill has over 15 years experience working in senior marketing and communication roles, with organisations including Youth Focus, Department of Water and Environmental Regulation,

Department of Fire and Emergency Services, St John Ambulance, Cancer Council, Amnesty International. Jill has a Bachelor of Commerce degree in Marketing Management from the University of Guelph in Canada, and a post-graduate diploma in Policy Studies from Murdoch University.

Jill is passionate about elevating the voices of young people to shape the direction of policy in WA. As part of her role at Youth Focus, Jill works with young leaders across the state, from Albany to Meekatharra.

**From everything you know about being on a board, YACWA and the youth sector, how would you make a contribution to the Board?**

As Chief Marketing Officer at Youth Focus, I could bring a valuable perspective to YACWA - I work closely with our youth reference groups and youth leaders across the state, from Meekatharra to Albany.

As a communications specialist with a deep understanding of WA government, I could also support YACWA in influencing policy and engaging with the community.

Thanks to my previous experience being on the Board of Conservation Council WA working alongside Board Chair Professor Carmen Lawrence, I have a strong understanding of governance, strategy and engagement.

Having worked on a sub-committee of the Board of Amnesty International as a member of the International Issues Committee, I have helped set the priorities of a large organisation.

I have experience in community engagement, branding, strategy and governance, and through these skills I could support YACWA to grow and increase its influence in WA and beyond.

**YACWA has two sub-committees that support risk, finance, governance and organisational sustainability. Please provide examples of your knowledge and/or experience of these governance challenges.**

With my experience on the Board of Conservation Council, and having been a member of the Corporate Executive of organisations ranging from government departments to not for profits, I am well placed to ensure best practices in YACWA's Board operations and that the Board meets the responsibilities set out in the YACWA constitution.

I have nurtured and developed my leadership and governance skills, and am passionate about life-long learning. Some examples of my experience include having been selected for the CEDA Copland Leadership program, which I attended as the recipient of a scholarship. I also recently completed the AIM Strategic Development Program for Not-for-Profit Organisations, which focused on how organisations can configure their business models and shape corporate strategy to address the challenges of a dynamic and uncertain environment.

## TOBY BLYTH



**Please provide a brief bio outlining who you are and any relevant roles, training, education and previous governance or committee experience.**

As a young person who has grown up in regional WA I understand what is important to young people living outside of the city where access to services is limited. I am one for advocating for what is needed and what is best for the community and its young people. I have an extensive background in volunteering, and have served 2 years on the Scouts WA Board, a board that serves a similar cohort as the YACWA Board and faces similar challenges and shares similar goals of making life better for young Western Australians. For many years I have served on youth committees in both WA and Nationally

providing the voice of young people to decision makers. My personal views and background; and focus on youth empowerment is one that I feel is strongly aligned to the vision and purpose of YACWA, and why I feel I will be a valuable member of the Board.

**From everything you know about being on a board, YACWA and the youth sector, how would you make a contribution to the Board?**

I have been a member of the Scouts WA board for the past two years and have just started my second term as their under 30 representative. I have worked in Community Development with a Local Government through the COVID-19 pandemic, spent two years as a Disability Support Worker, and now work for the National Disability insurance Agency. I will bring to the YACWA Board a sound understanding of the issues that are faced by young people in our State, along with an understanding of the challenges that other minorities face. I also understand the challenges faced by Not-for-Profit organisations and understanding Government processes. I have grown up in regional Western Australia, So I also know the struggles of accessing services and support as a young person that is not in the metropolitan area.

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Working in Local and Federal Government, my work with other Not-for-Profit organisations, and the Scouts WA Board, I have had plenty of exposure to working in the areas of risk, finance, Governance, and organisational sustainability. I have worked in the development of strategic plans for both Not-for-Profits and Local Government. I have assisted in developing risk documents across various sectors, along with delivering training in this area.

To better understand the areas of finance and governance I undertook board member specific training on the topics and have continued to embed my learnings in my various work, volunteer, and board roles. This experience means that I am well equip with the skills necessary to support the YACWA Board and sub committees to navigate these challenges.