



National Youth Commission Australia

Name: Q+A: Young and Essential [TBC]

Time: Monday 25th May 7pm - 8:15pm AEST

Duration: 75 min

Panellists:

Amelia Telford: Seed Mob



Amelia Telford, a young Aboriginal and South Sea Islander woman from Bundjalung country is the National Director of the Seed Indigenous Youth Climate Network. Amelia is passionate about supporting a national grassroots network of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to protect our land, culture and communities from the impacts of climate change and fossil fuel extraction and be a part of creating positive change for our people. Amelia was awarded National NAIDOC Youth of the Year 2014, Bob Brown's Young Environmentalist for the Year 2015 and Australian Geographic Young Conservationist of the Year 2015 for her commitment to building a more just and sustainable future for all young

people.

Issy Orosz: YDAS



Issy is a young person with lived experience of disability, mentally ill health and chronic illness, who works for the Youth Disability Advocacy Service in Victoria. They are currently studying year 12 in an alternative education format, and are passionate about accessibility, social justice and young people being given the agency and respect they deserve.

Desiree Cai: YOUNG Campaigns



Desiree Cai is an Organising Director at YOUNG Campaigns, a movement of young people fighting for a healthy society with good jobs, stable housing and a safe climate for all. She is a queer, person of colour who is passionate about fighting for equality and justice. Desiree has campaigned on a range of issues from sexual assault on campus to economic justice, and lives on Wurundjeri land.

Mohamed Semra: Social Entrepreneur



Mohamed Semra is a young leader working to shatter stigma and misconceptions surrounding African migrants and refugees. As someone who migrated to Australia at a young age, he has overcome challenges; learning English and overcoming a stutter; to being elected as School and Debating Captain and winning the Commissioner's Race Discrimination Prize for his essay on racism. Mohamed is currently developing a leadership mentoring program while studying Commerce and International Relations at university. He hopes that sharing his story and the resilience he has gained from it, will inspire young people to become leaders and challenge the negative stereotypes they often

face.

Brodie Gaudion: Mallacoota Youth Group



Brodie grew up in Mallacoota, a remote rural community which was hit hard by the 2019/2020 bushfires in East Gippsland. In response to this disaster, Brodie has supported a crew of amazing locals aged 12-25 to establish a youth-led, community-based association and drop-in service known locally as 'The Sanctuary' Mallacoota Youth Group Inc. The Sanctuary emerged because young people in Mallacoota needed a place to gather, support each other and organise whilst being cut off from electricity, internet, daylight and the rest of the world during the summer of 2020. In the short time since, it has become a respected, inspiring and effective mechanism of grassroots leadership, mutual aid and representation as we overcome the bushfires and look towards an uncertain post-COVID-19 future.



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Event Description:

COVID-19 is on everyone's minds right now. The pandemic is throwing our lives into chaos and our futures. Young people in particular have been hard hit by job losses, disruption to education, lack of sufficient government support, increased mental health challenges and more.

In the midst of this, Monday night's [Q+A: Young and Free?](#) on young people was explored by a panel which, apart from Sophie Johnston, was not representative of young people.

Although we think Youth Commissioner Sophie Johnston (the only young person on the panel) did an incredible job representing her knowledge and experience with young people, to say we are disappointed with the episode is an understatement. We were disappointed by the lack of youth representation on the panel, particularly young First Nations people, refugees and migrants, young people with disability, and LGBTQIA+. Because of this lack of representation, throughout the episode, many questions asked by young people were inadequately addressed. Overall, we believe that this episode of Q&A completely missed the point.

As Commissioner Johnston pointed out, "the people in power, the people who are making decisions, aren't listening to young people."

This is not good enough.

We've decided to give everyone the episode they wanted to see: A Q&A with actual young people with different areas of expertise and experience, looking at issues impacting their lives and futures.

So how will young people fair after COVID-19? What do we need to do now to prepare for this future? And how can we create a better world for them to thrive in work and life?

Join us in this discussion. Put your question to the panel [here](#).

Acknowledgement

The National Youth Commission Australia acknowledges that the work undertaken to organise and run this event is on the stolen land. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded and wish to pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



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Accessibility Statement

The National Youth Commission Australia values diversity and is committed to ensuring that this is an inclusive event. If there is anything you require to make this event more inclusive and accessible please let us know via info@nycinquiry.org.au.