

Public hearing – 2024 review of the annual reports and other matters of the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People and Office of the Children’s Guardian

Further Supplementary questions

1. How much state and federal funding was the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People allocated in the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 financial years?

Year	State Funding	Federal Funding
2021/22	\$3.3m	-
2022/23	\$4.0m*	\$0.5m**

* 2022/23 State funding budget includes \$0.5m for the Recovery Support Service

** 2022/23 Federal funding budget \$0.5m is for the Recovery Support Service

The Recovery Support Service Funding is provided by NSW Reconstruction Authority from the Category A: assistance to individuals to alleviate personal hardship or distress arising as a direct result of a disaster, under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) and comprises 50% State and 50% Commonwealth funds to allow support of the Program to 31 March 2025.

2. Could you please provide a breakdown of how the funding was spent in the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 financial years?

Year 2021/22	State Funding Spend	Federal Funding Spend
ERE [^]	\$2.1m	-
Recurrent Opex ^{^^}	\$0.2m	-
Polling	\$0.2m	-
Participation Consultation and Events ^{^^^^}	\$0.1m	-
Community Support	\$0.1m	-
EAP	\$0.2m	-
Total Opex	\$0.8m	-
Total 2021/22	\$2.9m	-

Year 2022/23	State Funding Spend	Federal Funding Spend
ERE [^]	\$2.6m	\$0.2m
Recurrent Opex ^{^^}	\$0.3m	
Polling	\$0.1m	
Participation Consultation and Events ^{^^^^}	\$0.2m	
Community Support	\$0.1m	
Total Opex	\$0.7m	-
Total 2022/23	\$3.3m^{^^^}	\$0.2m^{^^^^}

[^] ERE - Employee Related Expenses including salaries & wages, superannuation, leave, payroll tax, and workers compensation. It also includes Youth Advisory Council (YAC) Board Members payroll and oncost (FY22: \$14k for 4 meetings, FY23: \$27k for 7 meetings). The full-day (7 hours) sitting fee is \$220/day for a YAC member and \$450/day for YAC chair.

^{^^} Recurrent Opex spend include travel, IT, fleet, office, training, fees on consulting & events, etc.

^{^^^} 2022/23 State funding spend includes \$0.2m for the Recovery Support Service

^{^^^^} 2022/23 Federal funding spend \$0.2m is for the Recovery Support Service

^^^^ Participation Consultation and Events spend include travel, accommodation and resources on the YAC meetings, YAC recruitment and related events (FY22: \$26k, FY23: \$57k); it also include events on Youth Week (FY22: \$8k, FY23: \$4k) and Children's week (FY22: \$1k, FY23: \$18k).

Please find the latest ACYP organisation chart as attached for your reference.

3. Please provide instances where the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People was unable to respond to requests received from cross-government colleagues due to a lack of resources (see page 5 of your response to supplementary questions).

The below includes a snapshot of the requests ACYP has received or actioned in the 2023-24 financial year.

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
NSW Ministry of Health	Support to establish Mental Health Youth Advisory Group including recruitment process, governance and practice.	Requested in February 2023.	ACYP met with MoH on a fortnightly basis from April 2023 to March 2024. ACYP attended the recruitment event and delivered advocacy training to onboard the MH YAG on 10 November 2023.
NSW Department of Education	Memorandum of Understanding request - Interactive advocacy training workshop of six disability advocacy service providers participating in the Disability Advocacy Futures Program. Reviewed case studies to incorporate	Flagged in March 2023 with agreement to deliver on 23 November 2023.	Requested case studies from participating providers to incorporate as good practice examples and opportunities to do things differently into our presentation. Delivered on 23 November 2023
Inner West Council	Training on the work of ACYP, participation and advocacy to the Inner West Child and Family Interagency.	Requested in April 2023 for delivery in April 2023.	ACYP were not resourced to present at the next two Interagency meetings and delivered this training on 19 October 2024.
Commonwealth Women in Parliament – Young Persons	Request for advocacy training	Requested May 2024 and delivery in November 2024.	The Advocate will deliver an in-depth training session for the young leaders selected by the CWP

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
Ministry of Health	Facilitate consultations with four-year-olds about what would make them most comfortable when they do their development checks.	Approached in May 2023.	ACYP were not resourced to explore this work in 2024. ACYP re-commenced discussions with the Ministry of Health and DoE in February 2024. ACYP are currently developing a scope of work, in partnership with both agencies, to facilitate this work in late 2024.
NSW Department of Education	Memorandum of Understanding request - Facilitate larger qualitative engagement with children and young people across a set of focus groups or multiple forums about how they want to be involved in communications between their school and parents/ carers regarding support for learning at home.	Requested in June 2023 to occur in Term 3, 2023.	<p>In follow up meetings, Department of Education (DoE) provided a smaller target sample frame and ACYP advised on recruitment strategies with DoE including contact with students via their schools and/ or other pathways. DoE indicated they did not want to recruit through schools and requested other options. ACYP shared three alternative options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult with the 2022-23 Youth Advisory Council (YAC) who were then serving their term, noting all members of the 2022-23 YAC did not meet the criteria (school aged and enrolled in public schools) to hit target sample frame. 2. Consultation with the 2024 YAC once they are onboarded in October 2023.

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
			<p>3. Online consultation with the 2024 YAC shortlisted candidates who met the criteria in October 2023 onwards.</p> <p>In October 2023, DoE advised they would postpone engagement until early 2024 and sought to clarify the sample available via the pool of 2024 shortlisted applicants. In November 2023, ACYP reported on the number of regionally and metro based high school students and noted a meaningful sample of primary aged students could not be sourced from this pool given YAC applications are welcomed from those aged over 12 years. DoE advised nothing further was required.</p>
Settlement Services International (SSI)	Keynote address	Requested in June 2023 for 30 August 2023.	The Advocate accepted the invitation to deliver the Keynote address. ACYP's Participation Team contacted the organisers to arrange a consultation during the event with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds about respect and acceptance. This was facilitated on 30 August 2023.
NSW Department of Education	Memorandum of Understanding request - Facilitate larger qualitative	Requested in July 2023 to occur in Term 3, 2023.	ACYP was not resourced to facilitate qualitative engagement in Term 3 and offered to facilitate small

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
	engagement with children and young people across a set of focus groups or multiple forums about online safety.		focus groups and distribute a student survey in Term 4 2023. DoE requested to postpone until Term 1 to reduce touch points with schools in late 2023. ACYP reviewed DoE's survey, in collaboration with the YAC, and made some amendments to ask children and young people about their concerns with social media, what activities they prioritise and their ideas about what would help them to feel safe and supported in the online world. ACYP proposed the survey be launched in Term 1 and remain open for six weeks. Further work would be discussed after the initial analysis of the survey findings to determine what issues, required a deeper dive through qualitative consultations. Launched in 27 February 2024, the survey promoted across ACYP's networks including schools, service providers and children and young people and on ACYP's social media. Noting the poor response rate to this survey, ACYP funded boosted social promotions four times.
South West Connect	Invitation to facilitate a session at the VET Student Careers Summit and Youth Wellbeing Summit.	Requested in July to facilitate sessions on 18 October 2023 and 1 November 2023.	Delivered which resulted in engagement with 375 children and young people.

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
NSW Department of Education	Memorandum of Understanding request – Potential qualitative engagement with children and young people to explore opportunities to consider alternative modes of digital education delivery.	Flagged in August 2023 to occur in Term 4, 2023.	ACYP discussed this request in August 2023. DoE advised they were expecting approval to be provided in the next two weeks for this work to occur in 2024. ACYP shared ACYP's November 2021 <i>Back to School: Student Insights after lockdown</i> report. DoE did not make further contact about this request.
NSW Ministry of Health	Present on ACYP's approach and resources to engage and empower and share learnings from the Youth Advisory Council to the Child Safe Community of Practice Network.	Requested in August 2023 to be delivered on 20 September 2023.	Delivered on 20 September 2023.
Office for Regional Youth	Circulate survey of young people aged 16 – 24 years regarding Life Skills Research, on behalf of DCS.	Requested on 31 August 2023 to share survey through our networks in September 2023.	ACYP promoted this survey to almost 5,000 children and young people in ACYP's network.
Office of the Children's Guardian	Request for the Advocate to present to NSW Health's Child Safe Action Plan Community of Practice Webinar	Requested in September 2023 to be delivered in December 2023.	The Advocate and ACYP were not available to present to the Webinar in December 2023. The Advocate delivered this presentation on 21 February 2024.
Office for Regional Youth	Request to:	Requested in September 2023.	The scope of the Becoming an Adult work strongly aligns with the recommendations put forward in ACYP's Cost of Living Report. Noting ACYP focuses

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide advice on consent arrangements and incentives to be used for the Becoming an Adult: Life Skills stream being led by the Department of Customer Service. 2. Support recruitment of young people to participate in workshops between October – November 2023. 		<p>on all children and young people in NSW, ACYP made an exception for part of this project. Understanding DCS and ORY were not resourced to deliver face-to-face workshops for metro based young people, ACYP offered to partner with DCS to deliver a session at our offices. ACYP continued to provide advice on best practice regarding consultations with young people, supported recruitment through ACYP's contact lists and networks and delivered a workshop with DCS on 21 November 2023.</p>
NSW Department of Education on behalf of the Deputy Premier	Present findings from consultations with young people about their perceptions of vaping and what would support them to quit to the Deputy Premier's Roundtable on Vaping.	Requested in October 2023 to present on 16 November	Delivered.
Member for Gosford	Request to deliver presentation and resource a promotional stall at Central Coast Youth Leadership Forum	Requested on 18 October 2023 to deliver at a 8 November 2023 Forum.	Delivered.

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
United Nations Association of Australia (UNAA)	Invitation to participate as a contributing organiser and resource a stall at the UNAA One voice, One Humanity: Next Gen event.	Requested on 27 October 2023 to attend on 4 December 2023.	Delivered.
Youth Advisory Council	Funded and supported travel to regional areas to undertake consultations and understand issues being faced by children and young people in regional communities.	Requested in October 2023.	<p>ACYP is not resourced to do this despite the significant interest indicated by each YAC. Here are two examples where ACYP has met requests by the YAC:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACYP did facilitate a weekend meeting in April 2023 for the 2022-23 YAC in Albury, a YAC member's hometown. The weekend included engagement with local service providers and programs such as Boys to Bush. 2. The current 2024 YAC Chair also raised issues being faced in his local community of Walgett related to youth crime. ACYP committed to doing an event and consultation in Walgett as part of Youth Week 2024, inviting five local high schools to participate.

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
Revenue NSW	Participate in Roundtable on a review of the Fairer Fines Program announced as part of legislative changes in 2019.	Invitation sent to ACYP in October 2023 to attend November 2023 roundtable.	ACYP attended roundtables on 16 November 2023 and 22 May 2024. ACYP has requested data on the young people who receive fines to inform advice on strategies which can prevent fines, mainly for Transport infringements, being given to young people.
Sydney Local Health District	Request to present findings from consultations with young people about their perceptions of vaping and what would support them to quit to the Stop Vaping Forum.	Requested on 3 November 2023 to present on 5 December 2023.	Delivered.
WentWest Limited on behalf of the Western Sydney Primary Network	Deliver Advocacy Training to a group of young people who have lived experience of mental health so they can advocate changes in funding for mental health services.	Requested in November 2023 however WentWest asked to postpone it until May 2024	Delivered on 14 May 2024.
Coonabarbran High School	Lived experience presentation to school assemblies in Coonabarbran, Gilgandra and Coonamble.	Requested in November 2023	With ACYP's resourcing constraints, this was postponed until May 2024. ACYP then facilitated a three-day trip to this area which included whole school assembly presentations at three local high schools, consultations with students who are at risk

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
			of disengagement and with children at Gilgandra Youth Drop in Service.
Liverpool City Council	Advocacy training for 44 children who were in year 5 and 6 participating in the 2168 Children's Parliament program	Requested in December 2023 to be delivered in March 2024.	Delivered on 4 March 2024.
Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra (MCCI)	Request to present findings from consultations with young people about their perceptions of vaping and advice on early intervention programs for young people at the Illawarra Multicultural Youth Network	Requested in December 2023 to be delivered on 20 February 2024.	Delivered. ACYP also partnered with MCCI to facilitate consultations with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in April 2024.
Cumberland City Council	Deliver Participation training workshop for professional development of the Children and Youth Development Team.	Requested in January 2024.	ACYP were not resourced to deliver this training until April 2024. Delivered on 26 April 2024.
THRIVE obo of Transforming Early Education Child Health Research Centre (TeACH) at Western	Distribute survey to young people aged 14 – 24 years.	Requested in January 2024.	ACYP promoted this to ACYP's network list of 5,000 schools and 2,300 children and young people in February 2024. ACYP also suggested THRIVE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reach out to non-government organisations (i.e., Western Sydney Women) to see if they

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
Sydney University, the Human Technology Institute at the University of Technology Sydney, the NSW Department of Education and the Paul Ramsey Foundation.			<p>can have their survey on a QR code for YP to scan at events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact local councils and request to distribute the survey through their networks (rather than having a QR code at their events).
Central Coast Council	Request to attend the Central Coast Youth Week Awards Presentation event during Youth Week.	Invited in February 2024.	ACYP had committed to consultations in Walgett and Nyngan on the date of this event and lacked sufficient staffing and resourcing to attend both events. To support the Council, ACYP attended Youth Fest in Wyong during Youth Week in addition to 16 other events in Casino, Kingswood, Coraki, Bankstown, Murwillumbah, Missingham, Ballina, Peshurst, Wardell, Fairfield and Wollongong.
Department of Customer Service	Request to provide subject matter expertise on the review and re-design of the Young People's Hub on the NSW Government's webpage.	February – May 2024	ACYP provided feedback on the updated content of the Young People's Hub uplift and the survey to collect feedback from young people. ACYP facilitated the 2024 Youth Advisory Council's review and input into the Hub's uplift in April 2024. In April 2024, DCS

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
			asked ACYP to be the content owner of this Hub going forward. In May 2024, DCS advised the Office for Regional Youth would be the content owners because they had been involved in the project since its inception.
Waterloo Collective driven by the NSW Department of Education	Advice on strategies to meaningfully consult with children and young people who live in the Waterloo area about what they need and the barriers they face.	Approached in May 2024.	ACYP suggested local school and service providers however the Collective had no traction. ACYP suggested they broaden their scope to think of neighbouring areas with a high proportion of Aboriginal children and young people, a target cohort of this work. ACYP has not been resourced to recruit and facilitate consultations, on their behalf, to date but is exploring options over the coming months.
Office of Regional Youth	Support with the Regional Youth Investment Program Grant Panel and Evaluation.	Approached on 12 March 2024 to support Evaluation from June 2024.	ACYP commenced supporting NOUS with the evaluation from June 2024. It is expected to conclude in late 2024.
BOCSAR	Provide advice and guidance on how to engage young people and facilitate the effective evaluation of 'Youth Frontiers' program.	Approached in May 2024.	Initial scoping meeting currently being scheduled – awaiting BOCSAR's availability.

Requesting agency or organisation	Request	Timeframe	ACYP response
Providing funding to Youth Justice to run programs including the African youth program, and other requested support.	Youth Justice centres approach ACYP to help support programs that benefit young people, that are currently not within the YJ's budget.	Annually	In the FY 2023/2024 ACYP could not support the African youth program for Cobham and did not provide support for the touch football tournament. ACYP did provide funding for the "plate it forward" program

The Minister for Youth, the Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC requested support from the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People to support consultations with young people to inform the Minister's Youth portfolio priorities and the potential establishment of a central Youth Agency. The request included asking ACYP to fund:

- a series of roundtables from April – November 2024 which would include sourcing venues, recruiting attendees and designing the event program,
- attending music festivals, sports and community events to consult with young people; and
- outreach at schools and universities.

With the Office's limited budget and resources and existing 2022-2024 Strategic Plan priorities and work program, the Office has been unable to meet this request in full.

The below table reports:

- the Office's Participation budget for consultation activities with children and young people, Youth Week, Children's Week, Communications and Marketing, YAC recruitment and ongoing travel and expenses for YAC meetings.
- the approximate operating budget for the 2024 YAC Recruitment event to inform an estimate for 10 roundtables; and
- what it would cost to resource the Minister's request.

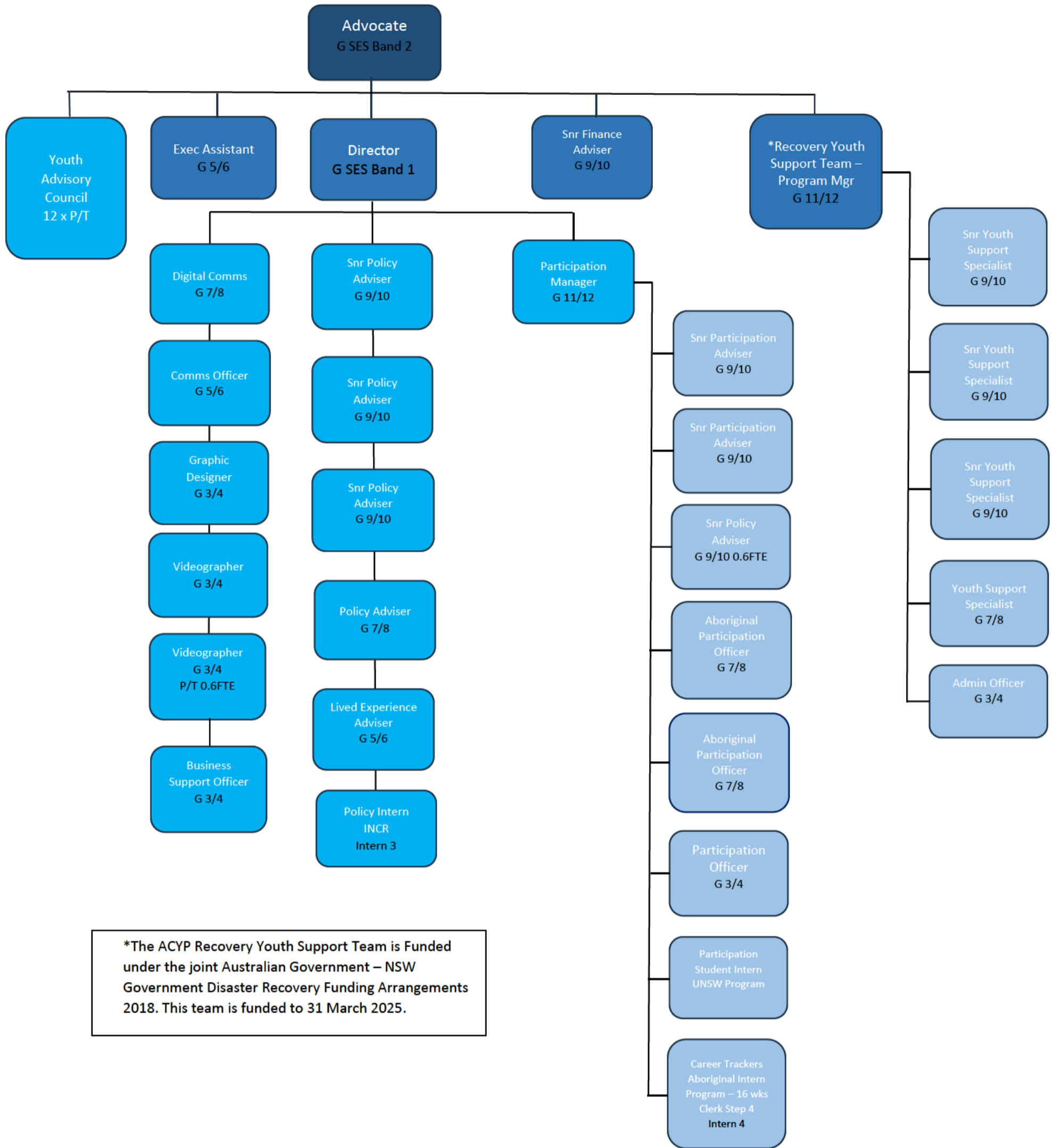
Year 2023/24	Approximate budget
The Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People's 2023/24 Participation Budget	\$0.172m
Cost for one day event with 50 children and young people, equivalent to a roundtable	\$0.03m
Cost for outreach to university (Open Day stall fee)	\$0.0015m

Year 2023/24	Forecast
Cost for ten roundtables	\$0.3m
Cost for outreach to 11 NSW universities including travel	\$0.017m
Total Forecast for Minister's request*	\$0.317m

*excluding school outreach, participation in music festivals and sports events	
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To support the Minister's work despite these resourcing constraints, the Office has designed a survey for young people, in consultation with the YAC, built the survey and reports on the data insights on a monthly basis.

Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People – Org Structure at January 2024



*The ACYP Recovery Youth Support Team is Funded under the joint Australian Government – NSW Government Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018. This team is funded to 31 March 2025.