



Te Rōpū Kaitohutohu Take Taiohi

Youth Advisory Panel

From Vision to Voice: Youth Advisory Panel's
Journey and Legacy.

End of Term Report 2022-2025.

11 September, 2025



Purpose:

This paper details the work of the Youth Advisory Panel during the 2022-2025 Term.

Background & Context:

In 2023, we embarked on an exciting new chapter with the formation of the Auckland Council Youth Advisory Panel (YAP). We came together as a diverse group of young people, aged 14 to 24, each bringing their unique and insightful perspectives on what it means to grow up in our region.

Together, we collaboratively set out our vision for young people and identified the key priorities that matter most. The panel's varied experiences and viewpoints were invaluable in shaping these foundational goals, ensuring our strategies and plans are truly reflective of the community we aim to serve. This fresh start with a committed and passionate panel has laid a strong foundation for improving outcomes for young people in our region.

Members of the panel

Co-Chairs:

- Kritika Selach
- Sanat Singh

Panel Members:

- Ayla Johnstone
- Dylan Chand
- Esther O'Donnell (joined September 2023)
- Fine Aholelei
- Humaira Khan
- Jasmine Gray
- Katja Phutaraksa Neef
- Ryan Chow
- Taimarino Cleave (joined September 2023)
- Note: two panel members resigned during the term; Vira Paky Co-Chaired until September 2024 when Kritika Selach was elected, and Julie Nicholson who joined in September 2023 until March 2025.

Supporting Staff:

- Co-Lead Officers – Alison Reid and Divya Raghubar
- Governance Advisors – Madeline Holland and Milly Athy-Timmins
- Principal Advisor Panels – Victoria Wicks-Brown

Elected Members:

- Liaison Councillor – Councillor Shane Henderson
- Chief Liaison Councillor - Councillor Julie Fairey

Discussion - Work Programme Priorities and Highlights

YAP's Strategic Priorities for the Term:

- Connection and Belonging.
 - All youth in Tāmaki Makaurau have a pathway to meaning and belonging.
- A Resilient Auckland.
 - All youth in Tāmaki Makaurau can navigate our city with ease and contribute to future plans for our city.
- Thriving Young People.
 - All youth in Tāmaki Makaurau feel a sense of belonging in our city and that their voices matter.

Work Programme Highlights:

Youth Advisory Panel: Championing Civic Engagement in Local Elections

A central and recurring theme for the Youth Advisory Panel throughout their term has been Local Elections and Civic Engagement. The panel has been deeply committed to exploring and advocating for how young people can be more involved, engaged, and participate effectively in local democratic processes.

This commitment was significantly demonstrated through the Cross-Panel Local Elections Working Group, which benefited from the dedicated YAP representation of Esther O'Donnell and Co-Chairperson Kritika Selach. Their direct involvement ensured the unique perspectives of young people were integrated into broader discussions on electoral engagement.

Further solidifying their focus, the Panel hosted an in-house session during their April Workshop specifically on Youth Engagement for Local Elections. This dynamic session aimed to generate actionable insights for the Local Elections Team, prompting discussions around "What does dream engagement look like," identifying individual priorities for YAP members, and envisioning these ideas in action.

Key ideas emerged from these discussions, highlighting a desire for:

- **Increased youth participation in Auckland Council Consultation Periods:** This includes crucial processes like the Annual Budget and Long-Term Plan, with the aim of sparking civic engagement by raising awareness of existing mechanisms.
- **A clearer understanding of the youth's role in shaping policies:** Empowering young people to see the tangible impact of their contributions.
- **Tailored and Culturally Responsive Engagement:** Develop and implement engagement strategies that are specifically designed for immigrant, Māori, and Pasifika youth, recognizing their diverse cultural backgrounds, languages, and community structures.
- **Tailored engagement for rural communities:** Recognizing the diverse needs and access points of young people across the region.
- **Provision of easy-to-read information, disseminated by young people:** Ensuring information is accessible and delivered in a relatable format by their peers.

Through these initiatives, the Youth Advisory Panel has powerfully advocated for a more inclusive and effective civic landscape, empowering young people to actively shape the future of their communities.



Endorsement of the Thriving Rangatahi Plan: A Youth-Led Initiative

A significant achievement for the Youth Advisory Panel in 2024 was their instrumental role in the development and endorsement of the new **Thriving Rangatahi Plan**, a comprehensive strategy designed to support children and young people (aged 14-24) across Tāmaki Makaurau.

The plan, which received formal approval from both the YAP and Auckland Council's Policy and Planning Committee on December 10, 2024, is the culmination of extensive engagement with over 400 rangatahi from diverse backgrounds. This ensures the plan genuinely reflects their aspirations and the challenges they face.

The Youth Advisory Panel, through its co-chairs Sanat Singh and Kritika Selach, strongly advocated for the plan's focus on equitable outcomes for all Auckland's rangatahi, emphasizing its role in fostering more representative, future-focused, and equitable decision-making. The plan's commitment to ensuring rangatahi have a voice in decisions directly impacting their lives was a key point of endorsement from the YAP.

The Thriving Rangatahi Plan identifies five critical focus areas, informed by young people's input:

- **Connection and belonging** – "We are safe to be ourselves"
- **Health and wellbeing** – "We are healthy and well"
- **Access to opportunities** – "The world is ours"
- **Civic participation** – "We have a voice"
- **Climate and environment** – "We are connected to Te Taiao".

This new plan replaced the previous "I Am Auckland" strategy and is strategically nested under "Ngā Hapori Momoho / Thriving Communities," Auckland Council's overarching community wellbeing strategy. This new approach underscores the understanding that healthy and thriving children and young people are fundamental to thriving communities. The Youth Advisory Panel's strong backing of this plan signified a crucial step towards embedding youth voices and priorities at the heart of council strategies.

Youth Voice in Auckland Emergency Management and Resilience

The Youth Advisory Panel actively contributed to Auckland Emergency Management's efforts to enhance youth engagement in emergency readiness and response. Following the Storm Recovery Cross-Panel Workshop on August 24, 2023, the Panel provided insight on storm recovery, resilience and Auckland Emergency Management.

Furthermore, the Panel participated in the Auckland Emergency Management Youth Digital Programme Workshop, offering valuable advice on opportunities for 16-24-year-olds to be involved in emergency activities. They identified best practices for sharing preparedness information with this age group and highlighted gaps or new avenues for more direct engagement, ensuring that youth voices are central to building a more resilient Auckland.

The Youth Advisory Panel believes emergency preparedness is vital because it empowers young people to be confident and active participants in their communities during crises, rather than just vulnerable recipients of aid. Furthermore, engaging youth in emergency planning ensures that preparedness strategies are relevant and effectively communicated to a demographic that often faces unique challenges during disasters.

Youth Voice Through Digital Platforms: Buzzy Consultation

The Youth Advisory Panel played an integral role in the developmental phases of Buzzy, Auckland Council's new digital platform designed to amplify youth voices. The concept of Buzzy resonated strongly with YAP members, aligning directly with their strategic priorities of ensuring young people are connected and that their perspectives are actively heard across the region.

The Panel's involvement in these discussions was crucial in shaping a platform that truly serves as a core engagement tool for young people, fostering greater participation and direct communication with Auckland Council.

Transport Consultations for Auckland

Transport has consistently been a topic of significant interest and discussion for the Youth Advisory Panel throughout their term, directly aligning with their priority of "A resilient Auckland: All youth in Tāmaki Makaurau can navigate our city with ease and contribute to future plans for our city." The YAP provided valuable insights into transport strategies through two key engagements:

In August 2023, the Panel contributed to the Auckland Transport draft Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP). They provided crucial feedback on Auckland Transport's key proposals for public transport, identifying their top three desired changes or improvements, the top three aspects of the draft plan they liked, and other general feedback on public transport. This input ensured that youth perspectives on accessibility and efficiency were integrated into the plan's development.

Later, in November 2024, the YAP received an update from Auckland Transport regarding Public Transport Safety. During this session, the Panel was briefed on the initiatives Auckland Transport was undertaking to address safety concerns across the public transport network, allowing them to understand current efforts and continue advocating for safer transit options for young people.



Transport continues to be a key area of interest for the Youth Advisory Panel, who remain committed to ensuring that future transport solutions are not only efficient and accessible but also genuinely responsive to the needs and aspirations of Auckland's young people. Their ongoing engagement underscores their dedication to creating a more connected and resilient city for all.

Climate & Sustainability: A Core Strategic Theme

Climate and sustainability emerged as a paramount and deeply integrated theme for the Youth Advisory Panel throughout their term, reflecting the profound impact environmental issues have on the future of young people in Tāmaki Makaurau. Recognizing that climate action is not just an environmental imperative but also a matter of intergenerational equity and community resilience, the Panel actively engaged with initiatives aimed at fostering a sustainable and prepared Auckland.

A key aspect of this engagement involved direct exposure to and collaboration with two significant youth-led climate action programmes from the Education and Community Climate Action group. The Panel was presented with insights from Mātātahi Taiao, a powerful rangatahi Māori-led response to climate challenges, which underscored the importance of indigenous knowledge and culturally grounded approaches to environmental stewardship. Simultaneously, the Panel learned about the Rangatahi Environmental Action Leaders (REAL) programme, showcasing another vital stream of youth-driven climate initiatives. These presentations provided the YAP with a comprehensive understanding of diverse youth-led efforts, inspiring their advocacy and strategic thinking.

The significance of this theme was further solidified during the March 2024 Panel Workshop, where Dylan and Esther served as dedicated portfolio leads for Climate & Sustainability. Their leadership ensured that climate remained a core focus, driving discussions and recommendations.

Critically, the Panel also recognized the intrinsic link between climate action and Auckland Emergency Management, understanding that building resilience against the impacts of climate change, such as extreme weather events, is fundamental to the safety and well-being of young Aucklanders. This holistic approach highlights the YAP's commitment to addressing climate change through both proactive environmental initiatives and robust emergency preparedness, ensuring a sustainable and resilient future for the region.

Engaging with the City Centre Student Experience Draft Action Plan

The Youth Advisory Panel participated in a crucial discussion regarding the City Centre Student Experience Draft Action Plan on an Extraordinary June 2025 Meeting. This plan, developed in partnership with universities, the Auckland Council group, and business associations, aims to support, empower, and add value to Auckland's significant tertiary student population, which numbers over 50,000 in the city centre.

This initiative is of particular importance to the YAP because it directly addresses the well-being and engagement of a large segment of young people in Auckland. The draft action plan's objectives to foster student participation in city life, acknowledge their achievements, improve safety and accessibility, and enhance the city centre's desirability as a place for students align closely with the YAP's broader mandate to improve outcomes for young people.

The Panel's input during this discussion was vital as it provided a direct youth voice on proposed initiatives, identified potential gaps, prioritised actions, and suggested further engagement opportunities to ensure the plan truly reflects the aspirations and needs of tertiary students. Through their insight to this plan, YAP actively participates in shaping a more inclusive and supportive urban environment for young people pursuing their education and living in Auckland's city centre.

YAP Insight - Review for Youth Voice Groups Project in Auckland

The Youth Advisory Panel Members provided insight into the planning of the independent review for the Youth Voice Groups Project for Auckland. This was important to various panel members as they came into the advisory space through the Youth Council Spaces. The discussion questions entailed their inspirations of involvement, strengths and impacts of the youth voice group space and lastly challenges and gaps on how they are supported and advice to council, local boards and host organisations on making Youth Voice Groups even more meaningful and impactful.

Co-Chairperson Insight: Royal Commission Review into COVID-19

The Youth Advisory Panel's leadership extended to providing crucial youth perspectives on the national response to the pandemic, with Co-Chairpersons participating in the Royal Commission's Review into COVID-19 – The Lessons Learned from COVID-19.

Co-Chairperson Kritika Selach offered a direct and personal account of her experiences navigating the final two years of high school (NCEA Levels 2 and 3) through various lockdowns and subsequently commencing her university degree amidst the restrictions. Her insights highlighted how the COVID-19 pandemic starkly exemplified existing educational inequalities, underscoring the disproportionate impact on certain young people.

Furthermore, Kritika's reflection shed light on the additional responsibilities faced by young people in leadership roles, who often found themselves stepping up to support their peers during an unprecedented and challenging period. This direct engagement ensured that the unique realities and challenges faced by young New Zealanders during the pandemic were formally documented and considered in the national review.

YAP Led Initiative - Youth Entrepreneurship Workshop

The Youth Advisory Panel's Led Initiative for this Term was focused on Entrepreneurship. This was facilitated by YAP Member, Ryan Chow and Co-Chair Sanat Singh.

This Youth Entrepreneurship Workshop was motivated through the idea of understanding the uniqueness of Youth Entrepreneurship and the pathway it can build to grow individuals, helping them grow their potential and the positive impact on communities, society and the economy. This in-house workshop facilitated by Ryan and Sanat focused on unlocking members' understanding of youth entrepreneurship, the Kings Trust NZ's offerings to support youth in entrepreneurship and thought provoking discussions on entrepreneurship. The members came together and discussed the barriers to youth entrepreneurship, how young people can be better supported in this journey and how it connects to leadership.



Experiences - What Went Well and Recommendations

What Went Well: The Strengths of Our Experiences

- **Effective Leadership and Teamwork:** We saw great leadership from our co-chairs throughout the term. A prime example was how our Co-Chair, Sanat, took the lead in curating our responses and presentations for the wider Advisory Panel's reporting as well, which was a real point of pride for the Youth Advisory Panel. This built a strong sense of community where everyone worked well together and treated each other with respect.
- **Adaptable Communication and Engagement:** Our group chat was a game-changer, helping us stay connected outside of official meetings. We also found that having evening meetings was a huge help, as it reduced barriers and made it easier for everyone to engage, especially given our diverse timetables and commitments as young people.
- **High-Quality Contributions and Impact:** The quality of our feedback to the council was consistently high. We always made sure our advice was grounded in real-world experiences, people, and communities. It was intimidating at first, but the council's welcoming reception made us feel that our voices were truly valued. We were even able to provide valuable insights for shaping the city's future.
- **Learning and Growth Opportunities:** Being on the YAP was a great learning experience. We developed a strong "learning ecosystem," gaining a lot of insight into the council's processes, decisions, and overall work. Members were also able to actively contribute to topics they were personally interested in.
- **Cross-Panel Collaboration:** It was incredibly beneficial to engage in cross-panel activities. We had the chance to give feedback directly to the Governing Body and learn about key issues from different perspectives, like those from the Seniors Panel. It was interesting to see the different takes on the same issues and to use that input to form our own suggestions.
- **Support and Resources:** We were grateful for our council support staff who were instrumental in getting us the information we needed. Having access to the Auckland Council building was also a fantastic way for us to interact with the organization. Additionally, the Nexus platform was a useful tool for reviewing meeting materials, and the provided refreshments were a much-appreciated touch.

Our Recommendations for Areas for Improvement

- **Diverse Representation:** For Auckland to truly be an "international city," the YAP needs broader representation. We should look to include more Māori and Pasifika members, as well as international students and people for whom English is not their first language. Recruitment should also actively seek out young people who aren't already engaged in these processes, not just those who are.
- **Expanding Our Reach and Influence:** We need more opportunities for cross-council collaboration, specifically with key Council Controlled Organisations (CCOs) like Tataki Auckland. These CCOs are vital to the city's development, and building a relationship with them would be beneficial for both YAP's priorities and future opportunities. We should also explore opportunities to meet with other youth advisory bodies.
- **Improving the Panel Experience:** The recruitment process is currently too long, which means we lose valuable time getting into a productive rhythm. More frequent meetings could help us build relationships faster. We should also have more opportunities to get out of the Auckland House/Town Hall. Field trips, to learn about different council organisations, or holding meetings in different communities, would be a greater way to better connect with the city.
- **Strengthening Our Role and Impact:** As a panel, we should have the ability to pass formal resolutions. This would give our shared ideas and thoughts more momentum and weight. It's also critical to close the feedback loop, so we know what happens to our advice.
- **Building a Better Relationship with the Governing Body:** We need a stronger relationship with the Governing Body. While it's great for us to present to them, it should be a two-way street. We could create a rotating roster where members of the Governing Body are mandated to attend different panel meetings to hear directly from us.
- **Enhancing Support and Leadership:** We should offer better support for different leadership styles, including for neurodiverse individuals. This could involve training on public speaking and navigating meetings. We also recommend having older YAP members join the recruitment panel.
- **New Areas for Discussion:** The panel could focus on key topics like youth entrepreneurship and international student welfare in the future.

Reflections & Recommendations

In this section, hear from some of our Panel Members in regard to their reflection and recommendation for the next Panel Term.

Name:	Reflection & Recommendation
Sanat Singh (Co-Chair)	<p>I have been in and out of local government spaces for a long time, first in my time at the Puketapapa Youth Foundation, then at Auckland Youth Voice and now as the co-chair for the Youth Advisory Panel.</p> <p>One thing that has been made very clear to me, is that when you have a group of young people in a room together and give them the power and responsibility to shape that space to achieve what they see fit, they can accomplish some really fantastic things.</p> <p>Throughout our time we have been laser focused on bringing in our diverse lived experience to inform more equitable and representative decision making from within Auckland Council. We have conversations ranging from Civic Engagement, to Public Transport to Auckland Council's new Rangatahi Strategy for the next 10 years.</p> <p>My aspiration and advice for the next panel is to make sure they own the mandate they have been given and take up as much space as possible (unashamedly), because they'll be surprised just how much people want to hear what they have to say.</p>
Kritika Selach (Co-Chair)	<p>Being part of the Auckland Council Youth Advisory Panel has been an instrumental part of my journey in youth voice, leadership and the advisory environment. The learnings have been extremely valuable and I am so grateful to have worked alongside and co-chaired an insightful group of Panel Members with diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>My recommendation for the incoming panel is to really delve deep in, be courageous, ask some great questions and carry on the momentum of what we achieved keeping the young Aucklanders you are representing at the back of mind.</p>

Name:	Reflection & Recommendation
<p>Fine Aholelei (Panel Member)</p>	<p>Ko e ‘Eiki pē tene lava</p> <p>As my term on the Auckland Council Youth Advisory Panel nears its end, I reflect on the absolute privilege it was to work alongside and learn from some of Auckland’s most driven, community minded, and passionate young people. Being in this space as a Pacific person from Glen Innes meant more than merely a seat, but meant a chance to advocate for my fellow Pasifika youth who call Auckland home - accounting for their experiences, their communities, and their value in Tāmaki Makaurau.</p> <p>As we pass on the baton, I just have a few recommendations to the next panel of trailblazers. Your lived experiences, your communities, and your stories are what we need at the centre of this work. If anything, this space welcomes your authentic self and encourages you to make it one which reflects you, your identity, and your villages.</p> <p>Mālo ho’o ngaue lelei, my fellow peers who have helped me grow as an individual simply by their inspiring presence and driving passion to serve their communities.</p> <p>Mālo ‘aupito, Auckland Council for implementing such measures in efforts to ensure more equitable outcomes and an enhanced quality of livelihood for our young Aucklanders.</p>
<p>Esther O’Donnell (Panel Member)</p>	<p>My time on the Youth Advisory Panel has been extremely rewarding and eye-opening. It has definitely driven me to become more involved with issues that matter to me and to use my voice for the causes I believe in, especially now that I know more about the mechanisms to create change.</p> <p>I’ve especially enjoyed the relationships I’ve been able to develop with my fellow Panel members and the support of Auckland Council staff, and how driven everyone is to make Tāmaki Makaurau an incredible place to be a young person, and have no doubt that this will continue into the future.</p>

Name:	Reflection & Recommendation
	My advice to the next cohort of Panellists is to bring your whole selves to the panel meetings, and to lean into the lived experience of yourselves and the communities that you represent.



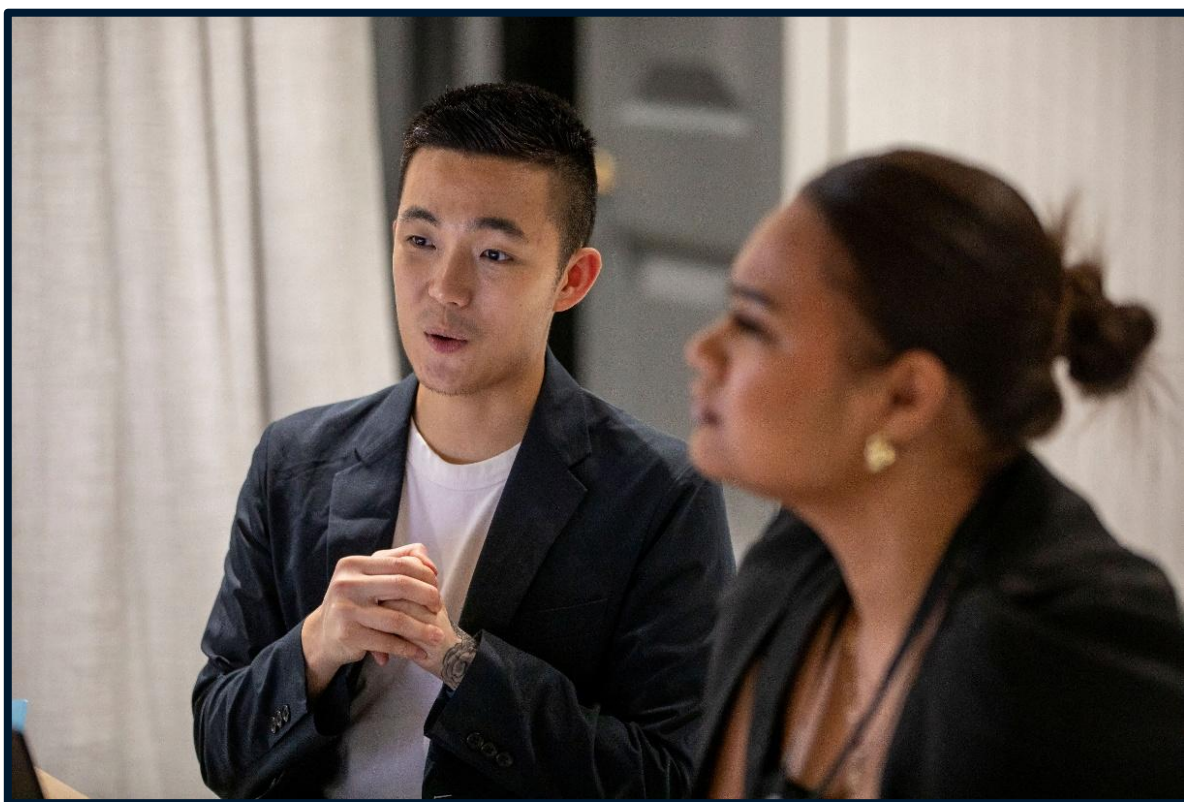
Name:	Reflection & Recommendation
<p>Ryan Chow (Panel Member)</p>	<p>Being part of the Youth Advisory Panel has been a valuable and insightful experience. I've appreciated the opportunity to contribute to initiatives that support young people across Tāmaki Makaurau and to learn from the perspectives of other passionate members.</p> <p>At the same time, I would like to reflect on the formulation of the Panel itself. While we had a diverse group in many respects, I felt that the majority of voices came from those with deep-rooted local experience. As someone who came to Auckland more recently, I often felt that the perspectives of foreign-born or international youth - those who may be newer to the city or navigating it as students or recent arrivals - were underrepresented.</p> <p>Auckland is increasingly international in nature, and many young people here are experiencing the city through a different lens: one shaped by cultural adjustment, limited social networks, or a need to quickly make sense of complex systems in education, housing, and transport. Ensuring that these experiences are actively heard and reflected is essential to making Auckland a city that genuinely supports all youth.</p> <p>I encourage future Panels and Council to consider more intentional inclusion of young people who are newer to Aotearoa, so that civic advice and youth policy can fully reflect the diverse lived realities of all who call Tāmaki Makaurau home.</p> <p>Looking ahead, I believe there is significant opportunity for the Youth Advisory Panel to deepen its impact through greater collaboration with external youth-focused entities operating in Tāmaki Makaurau. A number of organisations - both local and international - are already doing meaningful work to uplift young people, and stronger strategic alignment with them could enhance the reach and relevance of the Panel's initiatives.</p>

Name:	Reflection & Recommendation
	<p>One example is the US Embassy Youth Council, which offers a platform for young leaders in New Zealand to engage with peers across Aotearoa and the United States on topics ranging from civic participation to indigenous rights and international cooperation. Their work in building cross-cultural dialogue and empowering emerging leaders complements the Panel’s kaupapa, and I believe there is room for closer partnership through joint events, forums, or knowledge exchanges.</p> <p>Beyond that, collaborating with groups that serve refugee youth, international students, and migrant communities could allow the Panel to better reflect the lived experiences of Auckland’s increasingly diverse youth population. These connections could bring fresh insight into the challenges and aspirations of underrepresented young people—particularly those navigating identity, opportunity, and belonging in a global city.</p> <p>As the next panel is formed, I would strongly encourage a more intentional effort to reach out to these kinds of external networks. Doing so would not only broaden the perspectives represented at the table but also build stronger bridges between Auckland Council and the wider ecosystem of youth leadership already thriving across the city.</p> <p>To strengthen outcomes for youth entrepreneurship in Tāmaki Makaurau, the Panel encourages deeper collaboration between the Youth Advisory Panel and other Auckland Council-controlled organisations - particularly Tātaki Auckland Unlimited.</p> <p>As Auckland’s economic and cultural development agency, Tātaki Auckland Unlimited is uniquely positioned to provide structural support to emerging entrepreneurs through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to business development networks and industry clusters. • Connections to local and international investment pathways.

Name:	Reflection & Recommendation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for creative industries and digital innovation initiatives. • Major event platforms and marketing infrastructure. <p>Youth entrepreneurs, especially those from underserved communities, often face barriers to accessing such opportunities. A coordinated effort between the Panel and Tātaki Auckland Unlimited could help bridge this gap by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-developing youth entrepreneurship programming that sits within Tātaki’s innovation and business support workstreams. • Establishing a youth stream or scholarship pathway into flagship initiatives such as GridAKL, the Auckland Innovation Precinct, or tourism and event initiatives. • Facilitating access to council-led campaigns, export readiness programmes, or creative industry funding for youth-led start-ups. • Inviting youth representatives to participate in roundtables or working groups alongside industry and government partners. <p>This collaborative model would not only ensure intergenerational representation in economic strategy but would also embed youth voice in the heart of Auckland’s growth agenda.</p> <p>I would also encourage Auckland Council to consider revisiting the current structure of the Youth Advisory Panel and its engagement model to allow for greater flexibility, autonomy, and responsiveness to emerging issues and interests among young people in Tāmaki Makaurau.</p> <p>While the existing meeting schedule and agenda-setting processes provide a valuable foundation, there is a growing need for the Panel to be empowered to self-organise discussions, projects, or events around topical issues and thematic areas, including - but not limited to -</p>

Name:	Reflection & Recommendation
	<p>entrepreneurship, sport, international student wellbeing, climate action, and mental health.</p> <p>To support this, Auckland Council could explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a framework or set of flexible guidelines enabling Panel members to initiate issue-specific working groups, roundtables, or community engagements outside of the formal quarterly meetings. • Allocating a modest, discretionary budget to the Panel to support small-scale youth-led initiatives or convenings, such as pop-up events, collaborative workshops, or peer-led campaigns. • Supporting the development of a Panel-hosted calendar of engagements, allowing members to champion particular themes or communities in a way that reflects their lived experience and interests. <p>This approach would help to unlock the full potential of the Panel - not only as a consultative body, but as an active, youth-led platform for civic leadership and community-building. It would also recognise the diverse interests and strengths of each panel member, and better reflect Auckland's dynamic and international youth population.</p>
Ayla Johnstone (Panel Member)	<p>My time on the Youth Advisory Panel has been both beautiful and deeply insightful. I've had the privilege of meeting so many incredible people, both fellow panel members and those within Auckland Council. What stood out most to me was that our feedback was genuinely heard and taken seriously.</p> <p>One of the absolute highlights of my experience was working with the Thriving Rangatahi group. Regularly engaging with them filled me with hope and optimism for the future. I also really valued the chance to learn about and provide input on topics that aren't typically associated with youth voices, such as public transport safety and sustainable urban planning.</p>

Name:	Reflection & Recommendation
	<p>Collaborating with other advisory panels, particularly the Senior Advisory Panel, was a real highlight. It was heartening to build intergenerational connections and shared understanding. I'm especially proud to have been a voice for rural rangatahi. With the support of Councillor Shane Henderson and dedicated council staff, I truly believe that geographically disenfranchised youth are receiving more attention and consideration than ever before.</p> <p>Looking ahead, I would encourage the next panel to spend more time clarifying their priorities early on. At times, our focus felt scattered, and I believe more structure could help strengthen the impact of their work.</p>



Name:	Reflection & Recommendation
Katja Neef (Panel Member)	<p>Being part of the Youth Advisory Panel has been incredibly insightful to fully understand how as young people we can use our voice to see tangible changes and to be heard. It has been rewarding to work alongside powerful young people who bring such diverse backgrounds, and lived experience to the space and are able to represent their communities to shape decisions and strategies that impact our city.</p> <p>My recommendation for the next incoming panel is to ensure that as panel members we bring our communities to the table which is invaluable.</p>
Taimarino Cleave (Panel Member)	<p>Being part of the Youth Advisory Panel has shaped my perspective on the possibilities of youth involvement in Auckland City. There's a growing demand for youth-centric recommendations, as young people drive cities forward and having a small part in that has been incredibly rewarding. Through the panel, I've met incredibly talented individuals who are pioneers in their respective fields</p> <p>My recommendations for the oncoming panel would be to seize every opportunity. There's a wide range of initiatives led by talented individuals, so dive in and try something new.</p>
Humaira Khan (Panel Member)	<p>Being part of the Youth Advisory Panel was a fun, interesting, and thought-provoking experience. I had the opportunity to meet new people, build meaningful connections, and participate in engaging workshops. I'm truly grateful for this opportunity and would like to thank the Council for making it possible.</p> <p>The co-chairs, lead officers, and everyone involved were incredibly kind and supportive, which made the experience even more enjoyable. To the next panel members: make the most of this opportunity, get involved and enjoy every moment. It goes by really fast.</p>

