

YOUTH PLUS FOUNDATION LTD

Annual Report - 2020



The Youth Plus Foundation acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways of Australia. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the stories, the culture and the hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the Country.

We thank the Traditional Owners for sharing your land with us and acknowledge you as the Sovereign owners of this country; and that your Sovereignty has never been ceded.

YOUTH PLUS FOUNDATION LTD

YOUTH PLUS FOUNDATION BACKGROUND

OUR VISION

Is to enable all young people from diverse and complex backgrounds to have equal access to educational opportunities.

OUR MISSION

The Youth Plus Foundation exists to support the broader interests of the community. It does this by supporting Flexible Learning Centres to provide a quality and innovative education for young people from diverse and complex backgrounds. Youth Plus Foundation fundraising activities facilitate the improvement and development of the resources and operations of Edmund Rice Education Australia Flexible Learning Centres nationally.

The Foundation has been endorsed under the Australian Taxation Office Deductible Gift Recipient and registered as a charity with a purpose of the 'Advancement of Education and other purposes beneficial to the community' with the Australian Charities and Not - for - profits Commission (ACNC) The Youth Plus Foundation has also received its charitable tick as an Approved Charity with the ACNC.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2020

Building on the successful work from the 2019 calendar year, the Youth Plus Foundation continued to focus on strengthening the goals of our original strategic intent:

- Partnership Development.
- Raising Funds
- Governance

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

HOOK INTO BOOKS

2020 marked the 3rd year of the National Campaign – Hook into Books delivered by the Youth Plus Foundation. Our strategic direction of *partnerships development* was nurtured alongside of our National Campaign Ambassador and Campaign Champions, who supported us to raise awareness of young people who have experienced challenges in developing literacy skills. Hook into Books highlights to importance of reading and aims to promote a love of reading and exposure to rich

literature. Our campaign supporters are widely recognised literacy figures who again continued their voluntary support of the campaign in 2020. Despite some of the challenges we faced during the COVID-19 pandemic we were able to deliver some much-needed literature and other educational resources to Flexible Learning Centres across Australia.

Queensland University Press and the Children’s Book Council of Australia (Qld Branch) continued their previous commitments to the campaign providing a wealth of literature knowledge and donations of educational resources. From these donations we contributed a range of early childhood storybooks to programs such as the Young Parents Program within Albert Park Flexible Learning Centre. First Nations specific resources also filled our Traveling Book Suitcase that traveled across Australia into many Flexible Learning Centres and many donations of books were contributed to Flexible Learning Centre libraries.

Of particular significance in 2020 was the targeted support provided by the Youth Plus Foundation to a regional Flexible Learning Outreach service in Bowen. During 2020, the Youth Plus Foundation were successful in gaining a grant from the RALI Foundation to support a Young Writers Program for the students of the Bowen Outreach Service. Our National Ambassador, Samantha Wheeler visited, developed, and designed a writing workshop tailored to the learning needs of the students engaged with the Outreach.

When COVID-19 made visiting the Outreach impossible, Samantha pivoted her support of the students, providing live-virtual and pre-recorded opportunities to continue their writing journey.

The major campaign activity ‘Catch-a-flexi-reader’ was more challenging to deliver during the pandemic as schools were not operating to their full capacity and resulted in reduced engagement from students.

The Youth Plus Foundation however was able to award a winner – St Laurence’s Flexible Learning Centre in Newcastle, who received a large donation of books to add their school collection.

Hook into Books Supporters 2020

National Ambassador – Ms Samantha Wheeler

Champion – Mr Michael Gerard Bauer

Champion – Ms Michelle Worthington

Champion – Ms Remy Lai

Champion – Ms Rebecca Sparrow

Supporter – Children’s Book Council of Australia (QLD)

Supporter – Queensland University Press

HILDEBRAND BENEFICIARY

The *Greg Hildebrand Award* was established to honour the life of Greg Hildebrand, (1970 - 2010) son of Clive and Nita Hildebrand. The Award encourages Flexible Learning Centres to apply for \$5000 each year to support the development and delivery of innovative projects/programs for young people, that honour the life and passion of Greg Hildebrand. Each year has seen incredible innovation from the students and staff at Flexi, including a suicide prevention program and healthy lifestyle/exercise programs and infrastructure investments – an outdoor kitchen for a Flexi community.

In conjunction with the donors, the 2020 round of the Greg Hildebrand Award was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Award seeks participation from young people in its design and application. Given that many students had moved to online learning during the award period, it was determined that this was not conducive to a successful grant round.

We did however decide to deliver the additional competition for Flexible Learning Centres - '*The Music In Me*' towards the end of 2020. This competition is also sported by the Hildebrand Family. However, we received minimal interest and consequently, the funding was not delivered in 2020.

Despite the setbacks in 2020, not to be seen in isolation from world events, we are now in our 7th year of a very successful and positive funding arrangement with the Hildebrand Family. We continue to show our gratitude to Clive and Nita who remain committed and connected to the work of Flexible Learning Centres across Australia.

Moving forward in 2021, we plan to undertake a program review of the Greg Hildebrand Award to ensure we have a robust and fair grant program in operation.

THE DOWD FOUNDATION

In the 2020 calendar year, the Youth Plus Foundation formed a funding relationship with the Dowd Foundation via Dunraven Pty Ltd as trustee for the Dowd Foundation. The intention of this funding was to support a post-school transitions program specifically at Noosa Flexible Learning Centre.

The donors were eager to provide financial support to students from Noosa Flexible Learning Centre to make successful post-school transitions into work or further study. Prior to this funding becoming available Noosa Flexible Learning Centre had employed a dedicated transitions officer to support student to plan their transition paths. This funding is a wonderful addition to transition plans for students as they are now able to make application to the Fund to provide financial assistance as part of their planning.

In 2020, the funding from the Dowd Foundation supported two young people in their first year of transition from Flexi to pursue a combination of work and further study. During the COVID-19 lockdown experienced in Queensland, the funding was pivoted to support these young people to access the appropriate technology required to continue their study in an online format.

The Youth Plus Foundation is incredibly honoured that the Dowd Foundation, chose to support the young people of Noosa Flexible Learning Centre, particularly in a support space that is currently under resourced. We are grateful to them for this insightful donation as post-school transition is often very difficult for Flexi students as the costs associated with further study or work-related purchases can be a significant barrier.

ST JAMES COLLEGE

The Youth Plus Foundation was successful in obtaining a Social Justice Grant provided by Religious of Queensland. Thank you to Youth Plus Foundation Board Director Peter Chapman for supporting our application. This grant was used to partner with St James College, an Edmund Rice Education Australia school who provides educational opportunities for a diverse cohort of students. This grant was targeted at supporting students from Asylum Seeking backgrounds at St James College for 2 main purposes:

1. To provide a suite of consultancy and support to build the capacity of St James to access and engage with QLD Supports of the Asylum Seeker student community – including key people in universities to support successful post-school transitions.
2. Support a QLD Student Pilot Program – negotiating a full-fee waiver scholarship for a transitioning grade 12 student from St James College – and the implementation of living support fund spend and associated support from Y+F.

We are excited where this partnership will lead us in 2021.

RAISING FUNDS

In 2020 the world changed and the fundraising objectives of the Youth Plus Foundation changed along with it. We were no longer fielding funding support enquiries for programs or projects of Flexi. Instead, our direction changed to COVID-19 support for some of the most vulnerable communities in Australia.

Two major fundraisers that the Youth Plus Foundation facilitated in 2020 were for the Communities of St Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre in North Melbourne and for the Asylum Seeker community in Victoria. Fundraising during this time was hosted by the Youth Plus Foundation using the crowd funding platforms of *Pozzible* and *Go Fund Me*.

Loss of work and lack of access to government support because of their visa status, meant our asylum-seeking students and their families experienced significant hardship during the pandemic.

Our fundraising during this time supported a program called ‘Food for Hope’ – a fresh food and grocery service for our asylum-seeking students and their communities. At St Joseph’s Flexible Learning Centre, the fundraising was directed towards food and essential services for their students and their communities.

We extend a sincere thank you to all our donors during this particularly difficult time for everyone across the globe. 100% of the donations received were directed towards supporting these communities and without these generous donations this would not have been possible.

Thank you also to the many private donors whose names we may never know, in addition to our ongoing supporters such as the John Cummins Memorial Fund and specifically Di Cummins herself.

A break-down of funds received by the Youth Plus Foundation in 2020 are detailed in the table below:

The Academy	Living Support Fund	\$7100	Myki Card purchases
Private Donors	Living Support Fund	\$1186	Living Support student stipend
Department of Industry	Woodstock	\$14000	Riparian rejuvenation project
Private donors	Hope Coop	\$44,403	COVID-19 relief
Private donors	St Josephs FLC	\$21,743.42	COVID-19 relief
Dowd Foundation	Noosa FLC	\$15,000	Transitions program
Catch-a-Flexi Reader Competition	St Laurence’s FLC	\$1000	Hook into Books
QLD Community Fund	Noosa FLC	\$4875	4WD & outdoor ed program
Geelong Connected Communities	Geelong FLC	\$3000	Community access grant

Give Where You Live Foundation	Geelong FLC	\$8,475.39	Coffee Cart
ACT for Kids		\$1000	Child Protection Week
Religious QLD Social Justice Grant	Youth Plus Foundation & St James College	\$5000	Asylum Seeker student support
Private Donor	Xavier Network	\$6000	South Passage
Private Donor	Townsville FLC	\$500	Student support
John Cummins Memorial Fund	LSF	\$17,335.00	Myki Card purchases & support emergency relief
Sporting Schools Australia	St Mary's FLC	\$6160	Sporting Programs
Sporting Schools Australia	St Laurence's FLC	\$2750	Sporting Programs
Private donors	St Joseph's North Melbourne	\$1915	Christmas Campaign
TOTAL FUNDS RECEIVED		\$161,433.00	

LIVING SUPPORT FUND

The LSF exists to promote respect, inclusion and equality for young people who have sought asylum in Australia and are pursuing tertiary education.

The Living Support Fund (LSF) is an advocacy and fundraising campaign; a holistic model of emotional and financial/material support for young asylum-seekers to gain access to tertiary scholarships in Victoria. The LSF provides comprehensive support to these young people, helping ensure that the human potential and social inclusion nurtured by their scholarships is realised.

The LSF is a partnership between the Youth Plus Foundation and HOPE Co-op in Victoria and has been in operation since January 2018, having successfully raised approximately \$150k for the direct benefit of young people who have transitioned from flexible learning onto fee-covering University Scholarships.

The LSF is a way in which community members have been able to contribute to the social, economic and educational inclusion of young people seeking Asylum in Australia. The Youth Plus Foundation has provided attractive tax offsets for donors via its DGR status which has been a strength of the LSF's fundraising capacity.

The Youth Plus Foundation have financial accountability to manage and distribute the donations and funds raised. In 2020, the LSF supported 8 young people engaged in tertiary study with a fortnightly living support payment, a pre-paid annual MYKI transport card and emergency relief as needed. In 2020 the Youth Plus Foundation distributed a total of \$48,200.

We continue to have a steady flow of regular donors to the LSF and for their support we could not be more grateful. We do acknowledge that our regular LSF donors did direct some of their normal contributions towards COVID-19 relief this year, and as such the general fund did not grow exponentially.

Therefore, sustainability of the fund is an ongoing concern moving forward for the Youth Plus Foundation and needs to be prioritized in our strategic direction to ensure we can continue this important work in liberating education with students from asylum seeking backgrounds

BRANDING

The Youth Plus Foundation continues to grow its presence as a Charitable Trust through the important work we do with disenfranchised communities. Of importance to this presence is maintaining a sound reputation as a Funder and Grant Recipient. The Youth Foundation does this by:

- Building trust with our community and external donors
- Communicating effectively across all our communication channels
- Knowing our risks & managing crisis – ensuring sound governance processes
- Understanding our responsibilities to data collection and financial transaction.

GOVERNANCE

MEMBERSHIP

As another year goes by, the Youth Plus Foundation acknowledges the important role that our Board Directors play in the operation of the Company to progress its goals. Building and growing the Youth Plus Foundation relies on the commitment, knowledge and connection of the Directors to continue to assist in the generation of funding to support young people in the Flexible Learning Centre's across the country.

Additionally, the Board is instrumental in continuing our goal of advocating for educational equity and liberating education for the many young people who have been disenfranchised from mainstream education systems. The Youth Plus Foundation thanks the Directors for what has been a challenging yet positive year for the Company.

AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES & NON-FOR-PROFIT COMMISSION

The Youth Plus Foundation is compliant to the Australian Charities and Non-for-Profits Commission (ACNC). Part of this accountability requires meeting ACNC governance standards. The Governance Standards are a set of core minimum standards that deal with how charities are run (including their processes, activities and relationships) – their governance. They help charities remain trusted by the public and continue to do their charitable work. Because the Governance Standards are a set of high-level principles, not precise rules, your charity must decide how it will comply with them.

For the Youth Plus Foundation our focus is:

- Keeping accurate records
- Reporting annually
- Maintaining our charity status

The Youth Plus Foundation reports annually as part of the Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) ACNC Group.

In 2020, the Youth Plus Foundation undertook a ‘governance health check’ as prepared by McInnes Wilson Lawyers. This governance framework was prioritized and implemented throughout the year. This framework has guided the development of much needed policy, procedure and supporting governance documents. Directors will also access compulsory compliance training into the future as delivered by EREA. Training. This training includes such things as child protection and child safeguarding.

The Youth Plus Foundation continues to maintain its Registered Charity Tick. The Tick is recognition from the ACNC that gives reassurance to the public that the Charity is transparent and accountable and listed on the ACNC Charity Register.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The Youth Plus Foundation is proud of its achievements in 2020 given a challenging external environment. As with each year, in 2021 we will strive to exceed our goals and expectations of the work with conduct alongside of young people who have

difficulty engaging with education and continue to experience complexities in their lives. We look forward to furthering our work with Flexible Learning Centres and other EREA learning communities where there is identified opportunity.

We invite all members of the wider community to join us in our endeavours into the future as we continue to fulfil our mission and some newly identified key Priority Areas in 2021:

1. Indigenous Young People within the EREA Learning Communities;
2. Refugees/asylum seekers to cover general living expenses;
3. Young people who continue to experience continued complexity in their lives.