

The Y in Australia

# Four Strategic Pillars of Impact

A better world, with and for young people



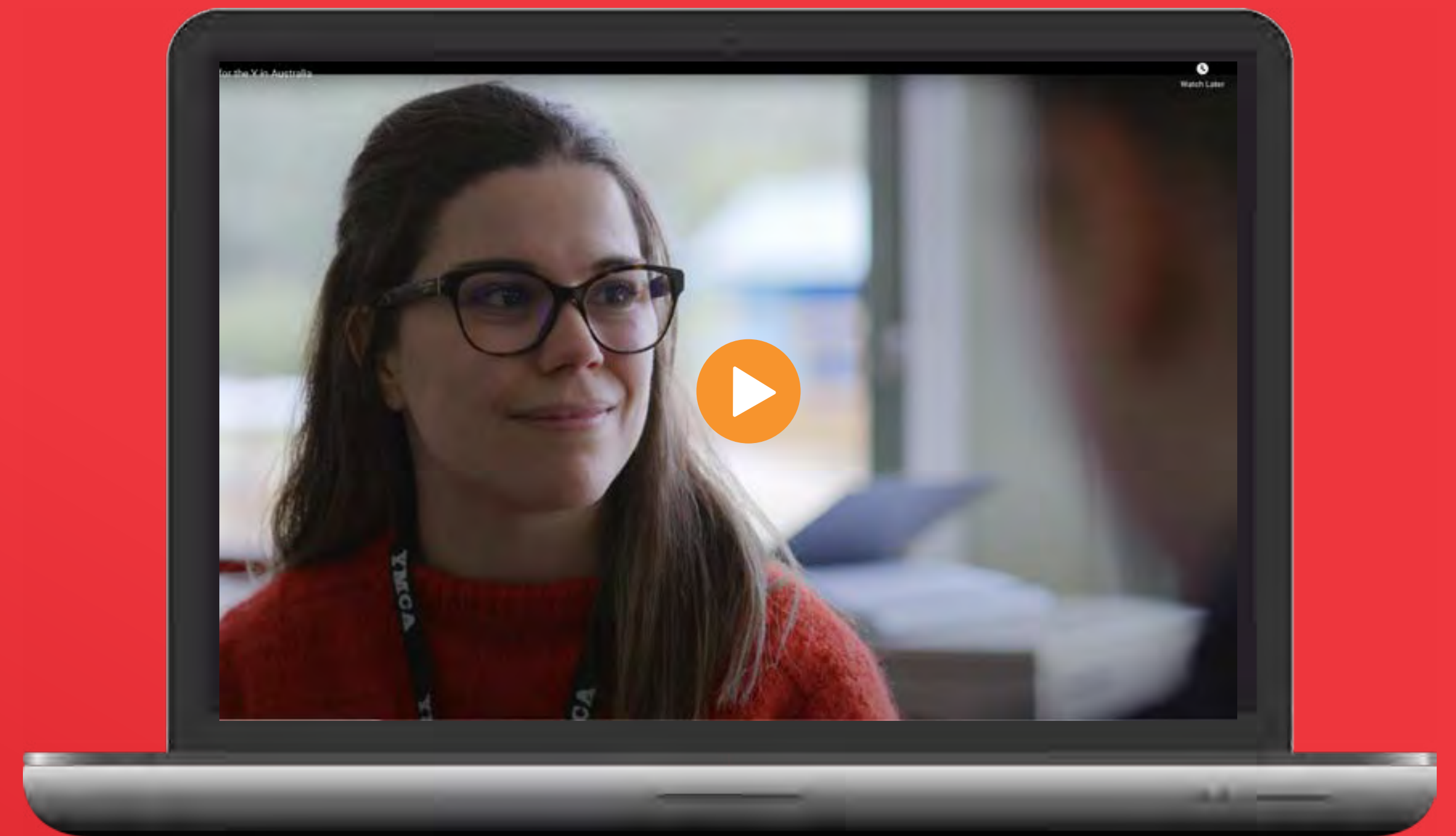


# OUR STRATEGY 2030

Strategy 2030 is our blueprint for how we will work collectively over the next 7 years. Across our 650 communities, 12,500+ staff and volunteers, and thousands of programs and services, to create a better world, with and for young people.

[READ OUR STRATEGY 2030](#)

[FOUR AREAS OF IMPACT](#)



# Y Australia's Strategy 2030

## Global Mission

*Why we exist*

To empower children, young people and communities Australia-wide to build a just, sustainable, equitable and inclusive world, where every person can thrive in body, mind and spirit.

## Vision

*What we want to see*

A better world, with and for young people.

## Strategy statement

*Our game plan*

Together, we drive systemic change to create a better world. We draw from our collective expertise, our deep community partnerships, and our local, national and global influence.

## Our four pillars



**Community wellbeing**



**Meaningful work**



**Sustainable planet**



**Just world**



# OUR FOUR AREAS OF IMPACT



Click on the tiles to go to the section





# COMMUNITY WELLBEING

The Y is committed to providing high-quality, relevant, and sustainable health and wellbeing solutions to young people and communities, contributing to a measurable increase in the wellbeing of the young people and communities we reach.

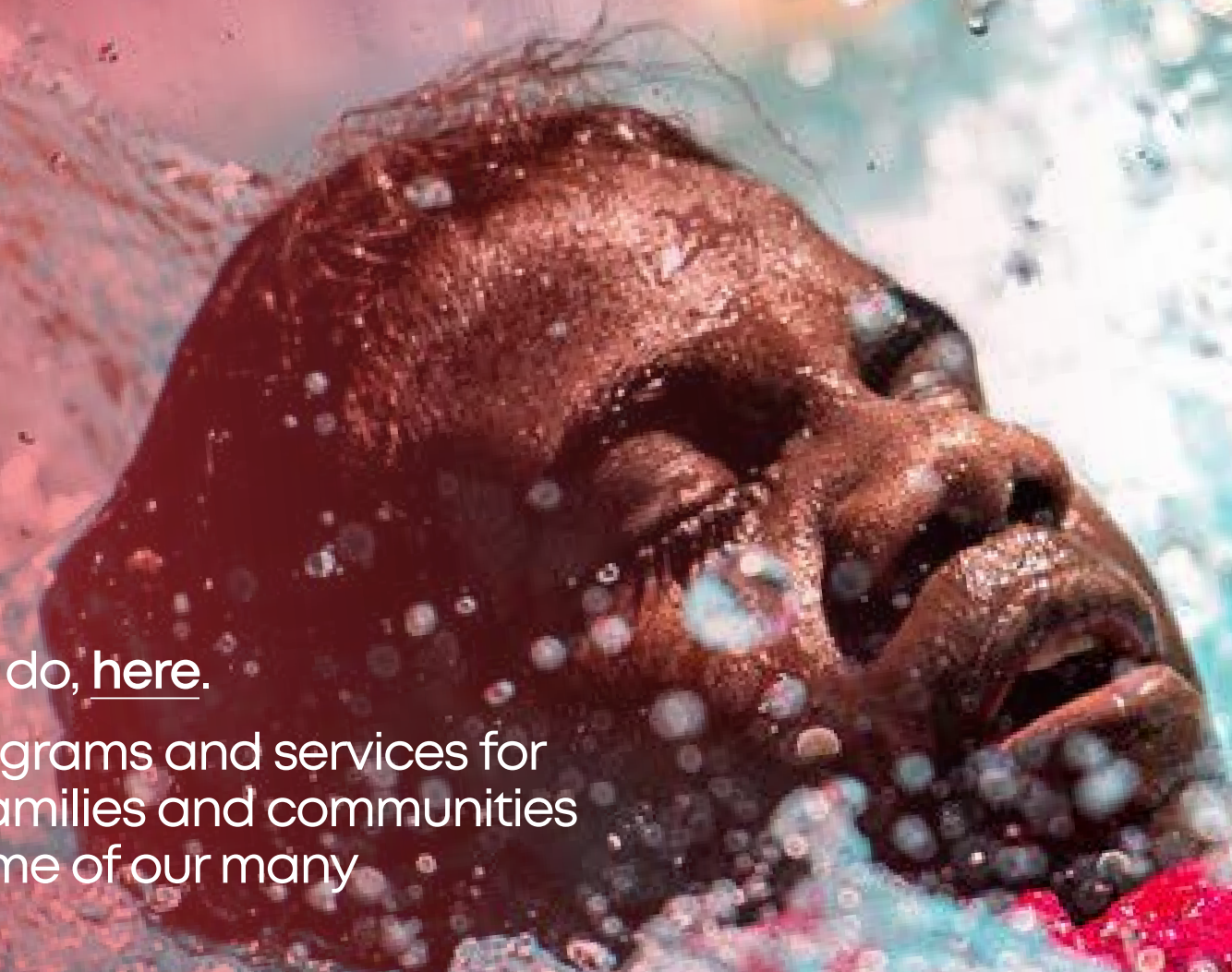
At the Y, we believe that every person should have the capacity to grow and thrive in body, mind and spirit. Our many programs and services which focus on community wellbeing, include:

- ▶ Children's services (early learning and out of school hours care)
- ▶ Youth services
- ▶ Sport and recreation programs

See more about what we do, [here](#).

A key focus for us, are programs and services for children, young people, families and communities who need them most. Some of our many examples include, our:

- ▶ Remote pools program supporting First Nations young people
- ▶ Access for remote Indigenous students
- ▶ Refugee and migrant swim program
- ▶ Breakfasts for disadvantaged children
- ▶ Assisting cancer survivors





## Remote pools program supporting First Nations young people (NT)

Working in partnership with local communities, the Y NT's remote pools project is aimed at supporting First Nations peoples with their goal to improve the health of their communities.

Through a community-led approach, the program provides Indigenous children and young people living in remote communities, such as Kintore, Santa Teresa and Areyonga, with access to swimming pools, water safety education and health promotion programs - delivering physical and social health outcomes hand-in-hand with local communities. See more [here](#).

“Our community pool is the best place for our kids to swim, especially when it's hot. It's safer than the local waterholes around community. The pool brings families together, and kids are happy to see other kids. They don't fight, they just play with each other.”

**Patricia Oliver, staff member.**





## Providing school access for remote Indigenous students (WA)

The Y's Newman Remote School Attendance Strategy is all about supporting children to attend school every day.

Working in partnership with schools, families, parents, students, and community organisations, the program helps identify ways to support school attendance by remotely located, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The program also provides opportunities to access junior sports programs. One student who previously had their school administration in 'lockdown' given his difficult behaviour, was supported to participate in an U16's football team.

As a result of playing football, and the sense of belonging and connection he found with the team, the school has seen a positive turnaround in the student, with a notable positive social and emotional wellbeing outcome. See more [here](#).





## Water safety for refugees and new arrivals to Australia (Canberra)

The Y Canberra Refugee and Migrant Swim Program was borne out of tragedy. 24-year-old Najeebullah (Najeeb) Rafee, was enjoying time at a popular swimming spot in Canberra, when he fell into trouble and drowned. To honour Najeeb's legacy, his close friend Annie Gao, started a swim school in his honour.

Now every week, a team of instructors teach swimming skills to refugees and young people who have migrated from South-East Asia, Kenya and the Democratic Republic of the Congo - at no cost to participants. The program's goal is simple: to teach water safety to those who have never seen the water before.

“This is just our way of doing something to prevent any other people from experiencing such tragic loss from drowning.”

**Annie (the founder of the swim school).**

“When you think about his life in Afghanistan - he survived the Taliban fighting and war, and then tragically drowned in one of the safest countries in the world - it is such a tragedy.”

**Najeeb's cousin Hom.**





## Schools' breakfasts for disadvantaged children (Brisbane)

Since 2006, Y Brisbane's Schools' Breakfast Program has supplied over 6.5 million healthy breakfasts to children who might otherwise have gone without.

Supporting 200+ schools in lower socio-economic areas, the program provides breakfast, equipment and support to schools in South East Queensland free of charge, so that children have the best opportunity to make the most of their education and develop healthy eating habits.

96.5% of schools surveyed reported they saw benefits for students as a result of their school's breakfast program, including improved school attendance, classroom engagement and an increase in effective learning-related behaviours.



“One of the boys who lives in a tent with his mum... on his last day we were talking and I asked what he would do to celebrate. ‘Probably not much. Mum hasn’t been paid yet’ – he said. So, I gave him a \$50 voucher before he left for him and his mum. This kid, the tough kid at school, cried when I gave it to him. It meant so much to him.”

**Y Brisbane staff member.**



## Assisting cancer survivors (Brisbane)

Y Brisbane's Cancer Survivor Program provides a free physical activity and support program for anyone living with, through and beyond cancer.

Supporting over 600 participants across four sites since 2016, the purpose of the 12-week program is to empower cancer survivors to improve their quality of life by increasing functional capacity and strength.

With the growing prevalence of cancer in Australia, Y Brisbane is committed to continuing to provide access to physical activity programs and support for all cancer survivors.







# MEANINGFUL WORK

The Y is committed to creating and advocating for meaningful, just, and fair education, training and employment opportunities and working conditions for this, and future generations.





## Y Careers – providing a new pipeline of young employees for the care economy

Australia is currently facing a national shortage of workers in the care sector across child-care, disability care and aged care.

Workforce estimates suggest the Australian care sector will need 1 million additional workers over the next 10 years.

Without innovative solutions and direct, tailored action to create a new and ongoing stream of workers, this shortage will result in the closures of critical services that our communities and the Australian economy desperately need. The need is particularly acute in regional areas.

At the same time, current training and education systems do not adequately introduce or support young Australians into care careers.

The result is that young people cannot find, gain exposure to, or undertake appropriate training / work experience and jobs in the care sector.

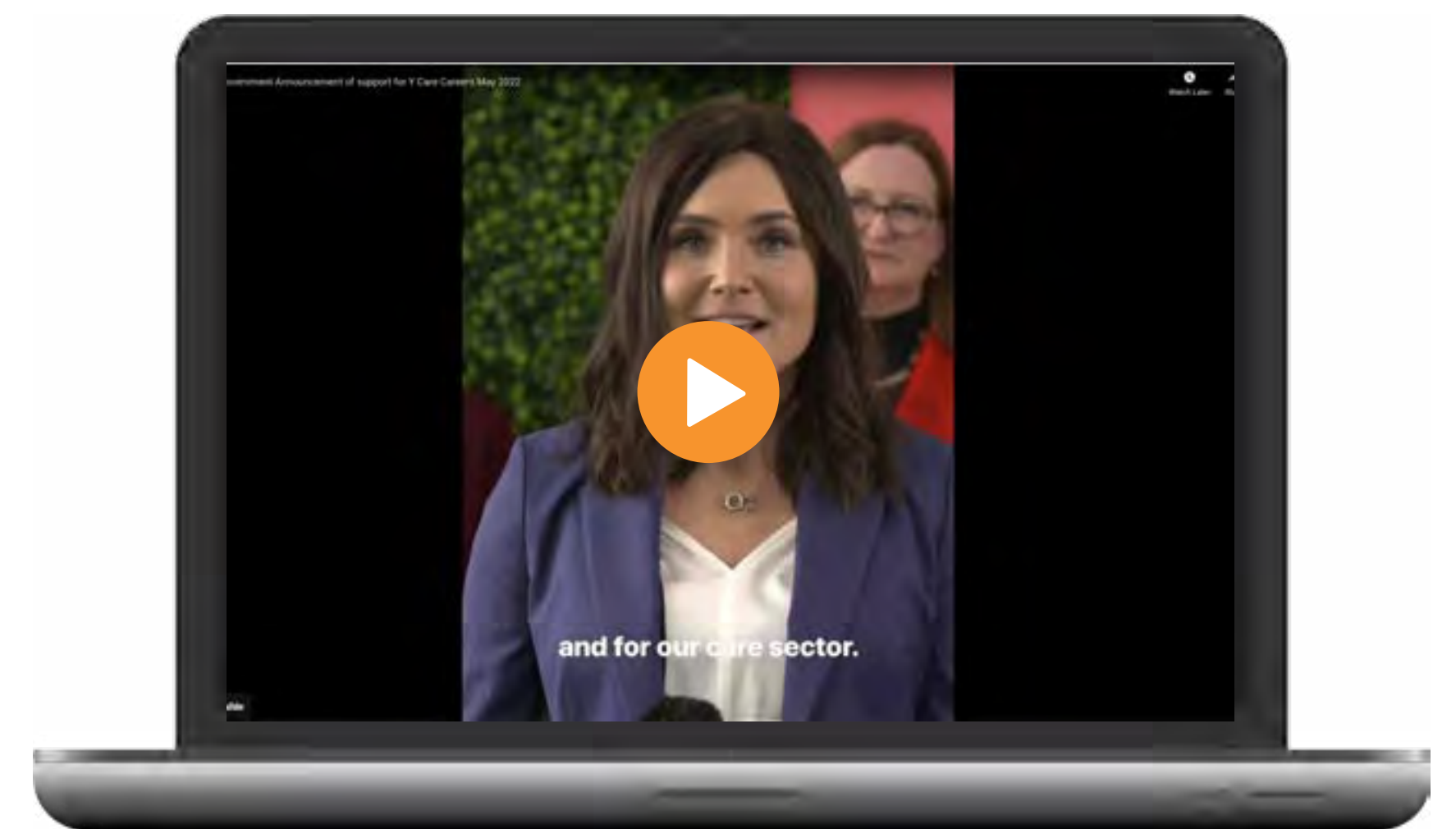
Established as a Charity in 2022, Y Careers will help to address this situation by creating a pipeline of next generation workers for

employers in the care industry, through a program that provides young people with:

- ▶ a two-year traineeship;
- ▶ the support and coaching of a Career Agent; and
- ▶ a choice of placements in a variety of care sector roles and organisations (while having the stability of one employer – Y Careers).

Through \$15.2 million of establishment funding committed by the Federal Government for FY23 (see [here](#)), Y Careers will build a much-needed pipeline of 15,000 young workers over the next 5 years, across child-care, disability care and aged care sectors.

In the future, the Y intends to extend Y Careers to other growth industries and is currently conducting a feasibility study for Y Careers for the Green economy, supported by the Macquarie Group Foundation, Social Ventures Australia and Y Labs. See more [here](#).





## Rebuilding the lives of young people in the criminal justice system (Vic)

YMCA ReBuild supports young people involved in the criminal justice system with a pathway to re-integrate back into the community through employment, connection and belonging.

Focused on reducing the rates of reoffending, ReBuild provides on-the-job training, mentoring, employment and support to provide these young people with a second chance.

Since 2018, Rebuild has saved the Victorian Government more than \$2.4 million in avoided re-incarceration costs. The rate of participants who reoffend within five years is less than 5%, compared with the 44% average.

In a first for the Y, YMCA ReBuild was selected for the Yarra Trams Community Partnership Program. Our unique tram advertising banner wrap promoted some of the local faces involved and encouraged commuters to tune into the powerful stories of our ReBuild participants on the Time to ReBuild podcast— now in its fourth season. See [here](#).

Some key stats on our Rebuild program for FY21-22:

- ▶ There have been more than 8,000 participations in YMCA Bridge project/Rebuild.
- ▶ 49 young people completed our ReBuild program.
- ▶ ReBuild employed 34 young people, with 6 in new full-time employment.





## Alternative learning (Brisbane)

Y Brisbane's vocational schools provide adjusted education programs and vocational training to secondary students, who would benefit from an alternative learning environment. With campuses across Brisbane, our schools support students in their journey to employment. Students participate in programs dedicated to enhancing practical and personal skills, at a pace that encourages school attendance, engagement and confidence.

We work in partnership with students to build their self-worth, resilience and the development of positive behaviours, to support young people to become happy, healthy adults and thriving members of our communities. We take a holistic, flexible, individualised approach to learning, and provide a safe environment where all young people can enjoy a sense of belonging, regardless of their gender, sexuality, religion, or difference.

There are currently 9 school campuses and 700+ students, mostly across South-East Queensland, with one campus in Perth, West Australia. A new campus will open in Bundaberg, Queensland in 2023 and in Redlands, Queensland in 2024.

98% of students across all Brisbane campuses successfully completed Year 12 in 2021.



“My daughter is in a much better place mentally now with all the support she is getting at school, and it has made such a difference to our family. I was getting very worried about my daughter's future, but I feel it is a lot brighter now that she is engaged in learning.”

**Mother of a student.**





# SUSTAINABLE PLANET

The Y is committed to acting to decrease our carbon footprint, support sustainability solutions, and contribute to regenerating the earth.





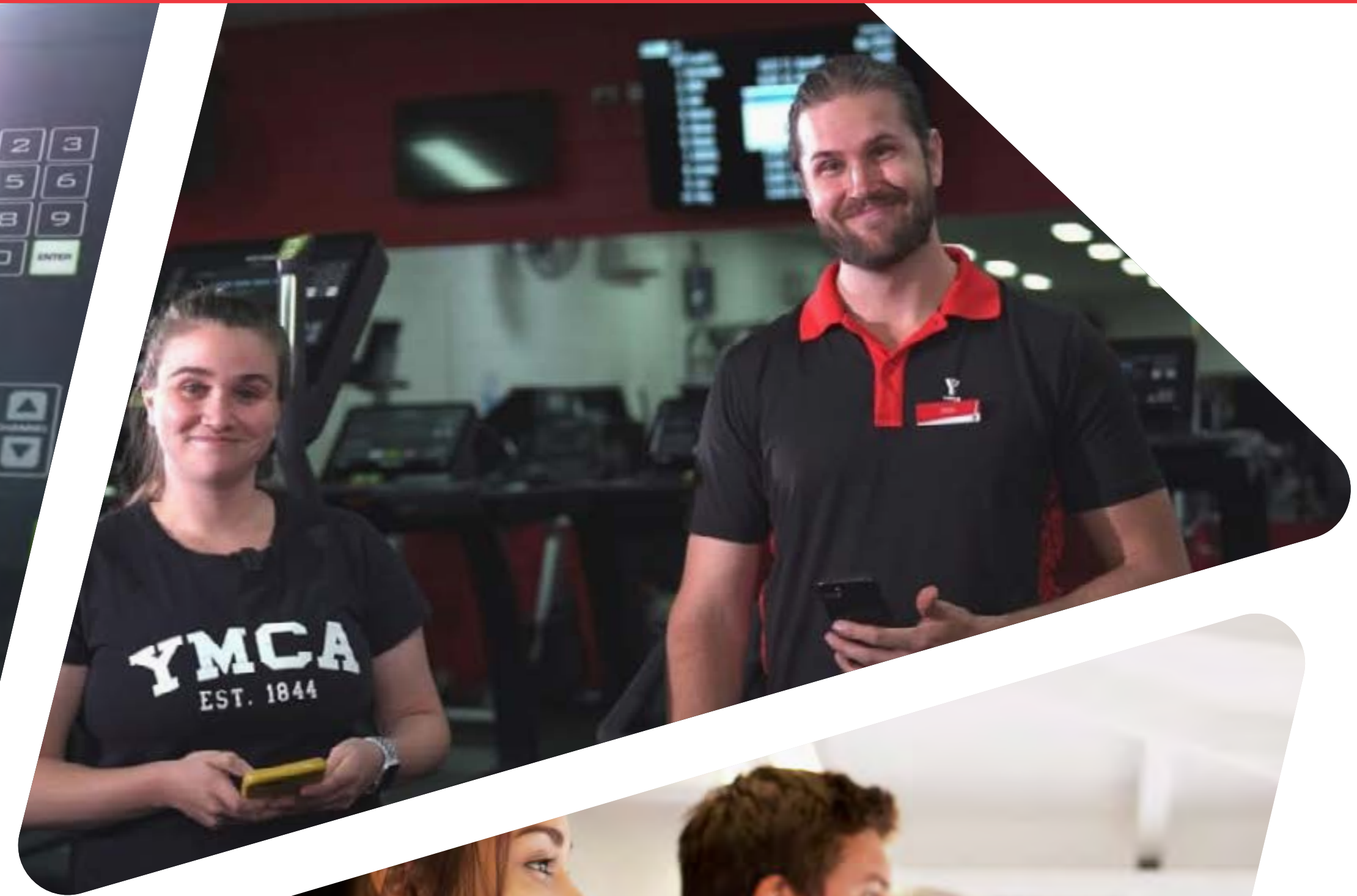
AUSTRALIA'S FIRST  
ECO-GYMS

## Australia's first eco gyms (NT)

The Y NT's Eco Gym enables local communities to use specially engineered equipment that captures and converts movement into electricity that powers the facility.

Every time someone works out, they are helping power the lights, fans and air-conditioning in the centre – both burning kilojoules and reducing fossil fuels! See more [here](#).

Launched in March 2022, the eco-first initiative at the Y's gyms in Katherine and Alice Springs support the wellbeing of our community and the health of our planet at the same time.





## Reducing carbon emissions and waste, and saving energy

To support our commitment to environmental sustainability, the Y has a number of initiatives to reduce carbon emissions, reduce waste, and save energy.

### Reducing carbon emissions in our aquatic centres, through geothermal engineering (Vic)

The pools at our Gippsland Regional Aquatic Centre (managed by Y Victoria) are heated with an innovative geothermal engineered system. The system extracts heat from 600 metres below the earth's surface and into its heat exchange, allowing water from the pool to become and stay warm for extended periods, with minimal energy use.

Integrating geothermal technology has reduced carbon emissions at the Aquatic Centre by around 840 tonnes a year, resulting in energy savings of approximately \$639,000.

### Implementing waste reduction strategies in our aquatic centres (SA)

The South Australian Aquatic and Leisure Centre has been driving change through its Waste Reduction and Energy Saving Strategy, by:

- ▶ Prioritising recycling through South Australia's container deposit scheme, to recycle cans, cartons and bottles, and generate funds for Y's Open Doors charity – achieving \$5K annually.
- ▶ Eliminating plastic bags, removing plastic straws, and reducing the amount of plastic used in catering.
- ▶ Diverting 80% of the centre's waste, by separating items that can be recycled from waterways and landfill (approx. 32 tonnes).
- ▶ Incentivising the use of reusable coffee cups, by offering discounted coffee where patrons bring their own cups.
- ▶ Diverting 3.6 million face masks from landfill – saving 12.96 tonnes of carbon being released in the environment.





## eWater Systems – is replacing chemical cleaning solutions (Vic)

The Y in Victoria has installed [ewater Systems](#) in all of their Centres across Victoria - a chemical-free cleaning solution which is environmentally friendly, sustainable, and safe for children to use. eWater generates cleaning, sanitising and disinfectant solutions that requires only salt, water, and electricity as inputs.

The system requires a simple installation in a kitchen or cleaning room and at the press of a button will produce an unlimited supply, replacing the need for most of the commercial cleaning, sanitising and disinfectants found in businesses around the country.





## Global climate action

Taking steps for global climate action is a key priority for the World YMCA movement. Over the past 12 months, World YMCA has funded young changemakers to develop innovative approaches to address global issues both at home and abroad through YMCA's global Youth-Led Solutions on Climate Action.

At the November 2021 COP26 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, Scotland, the global YMCA Movement showcased six stories of young leaders around the world taking climate action.

YMCA also commissioned a series of short films that premiered within the iconic Glasgow Science Centre IMAX Cinema at COP26, as part of the UK Government's official programme in the 'Green Zone' area of the conference, to 'listen, learn and celebrate climate action'. See more [here](#).







# JUST WORLD

The Y is committed to defying discrimination, inequity, injustice, and systemic racism; and amplifying young people as agents of change for an equal and safe world.

REFLECT RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN  
YMCA BRISBANE - May 2022 - June 2023





## Enabling First Nations young people

The Y runs a number of programs to support and enable First Nations young people through a community-led approach.

The Y's Remote Pools Program in the NT provides Indigenous children and young people living in remote communities with access to swimming pools, water safety education and health promotion programs – delivering physical and social health outcomes hand-in-hand with local communities. See [here](#).

### Promoting reconciliation

With our new Federal Government's strong commitment to the Uluru Statement from the Heart, there has never been a more important time for our nation, and our Ys, to consider the role we currently play, and should play moving forward, in advancing the recognition of, and reconciliation with, our First Nations Australians.

Ys across Australia are taking steps to understand and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, living cultures and traditions; and to identify our role at an organisational and individual level in pursuing reconciliation, through the development of reconciliation action plans.

Y Brisbane launched their first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) earlier this year, to provide a clear framework for action across three key areas:

- ▶ Relationships - relationship-building with local Aboriginal organisations and individuals;
- ▶ Respect - achieving greater understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures; and
- ▶ Opportunities - enhancing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve social inclusion, economic participation and health equality.

See Y Brisbane's RAP, [here](#).





## All abilities (disability) inclusion

At the Y, we are committed to creating opportunities so that people, of all abilities, can participate. We want our participants to have meaningful access to sport and recreation, to improved quality of life and connection with their community.

Over the past year, we had over 58,000 participations across our all-abilities programs.

### A focus on inclusion services at Y Whittlesea

Providing programs that empower people with disability to participate in inclusive and innovative programs of their choice, is a key focus of our work at Y Whittlesea (see more [here](#)). Our many programs include:

- ▶ **1:1 Home based support service** – helps people with a disability learn or maintain the skills needed in their home to enable independence, choice and control.
- ▶ **1:1 Community Support** – aims to increase confidence and self-esteem of a person with a disability in the community with tailored, individual support.
- ▶ **All Abilities Camps** – offers the chance for everyone to experience active recreation.

- ▶ **Holiday Programs** – supports individuals to achieve personal goals during the school holidays through fun, engaging and educational activities.
- ▶ **Early Years Engagement (EYES) Support** – draws from our expertise in both the disability and early learning sectors, to identify where early intervention is required, and to work in partnership with families and agencies to support children to reach their full potential.
- ▶ **Group Programs** – we also provide programs offering social support, swimming lessons, basketball, gymnastics and NDIS support.

### Our inclusive sport and recreation programs

The Y offers a wide range of inclusive sport and recreation programs, from providing exercise interventions and supporting mobility, to supporting our next generation of Paralympians!

Our programs include:

- ▶ **RAID Basketball program (Canberra)** – our Recreational Activities for People with Intellectual Disability (RAID) basketball program provides participants with the opportunity to be part of a sporting team. Operating since 1984, some of our participants have been involved for more than 20 years. See [here](#).





## All abilities (disability) inclusion - continued

- ▶ **GymAbility and SwimAbility (NSW)** – our GymAbility program gives people with disability the chance to try gymnastics in a fun and safe environment. SwimAbility offers specialised swimming lessons for people with a disability. See [here](#).
- ▶ **Exercise Physiology Services (Canberra)** – we design, deliver and evaluate safe and effective exercise interventions for people with acute, sub-acute or chronic medical conditions, injuries or disabilities, through accredited exercise physiologists. See more [here](#).
- ▶ **Mobilisers (Canberra)** – we provide a group exercise program for people with significant mobility challenges, including those living with multiple sclerosis, stroke, muscular dystrophy, paraplegia and visual impairment. See more [here](#).
- ▶ **Special Olympics swimming squad (Hobart)** – training aspiring Paralympians, who can swim independently of an aid. See more [here](#).
- ▶ **Mixed Youth Disability Engagement program (WA)** – an education support and recreation program, run in partnership with Department of Education staff, supporting the wellbeing of year 7 – 12 students attending the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Community High School. See [here](#).

### Our NDIS programs

We offer a range of supportive NDIS programs, including:

- ▶ **Community Inclusion program (Bundaberg)** – as a registered NDIS provider, our Community Inclusion program empowers people with a disability to go about their daily lives and access and participate in our wider community. See [here](#).





## Diversity and inclusion

The Y is committed to taking active steps to build a culture of inclusion, diversity, and equality within our Ys and our communities.

We provide services and opportunities for those who need it most, including those who are marginalised, vulnerable or at risk because of factors such as socio-economic background, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, location, background and age (noting the intersectional nature of factors of this nature).

### Supporting LGBTIQ+ youth mental health (WA)

Now in its fourth year, our award-winning Inside our Minds campaign, supports young people to share personal experiences with mental health, to support other young people.

This year, the campaign provided the moving reflections of six LGBTIQ+ young people, to shine a light on the very real mental health challenges disproportionately impacting LGBTIQ+ young people.

LGBTIQ+ young people experience poorer mental health outcomes than their peers, due to experiences of stigma, prejudice and discrimination (LGBTIQ+ Health Australia, 2021). See more [here](#).

The campaign was the brainchild of Martin Johnson, a former Y WA global change agent, who came up with the idea as his passion project as a change agent. Y WA leads the campaign, supported by Ys across Australia.

### The Y's first Sydney Mardi Gras parade (NSW)

In March 2022, Y NSW came together with YWCA Australia, to participate in the Mardi Gras Parade for the first time. Bringing together 40 dancers, including members from several Ys across Australia, marching at the 44th Sydney Mardi Gras Parade was the realisation of a long-held dream for members of Y NSW's Affinity Network.

Formed in 2018, the Y Affinity Network brings Y NSW employees together to advocate and facilitate a culture of inclusion and respect, regardless of sexuality, gender and expression. It also raises awareness of LGBTIQ+ people and issues to support the Y NSW as a safe place for LGBTIQ+ employees.

With the theme 'Shaping a More Equal Future' our dancers wrote a new chapter for the Y, on the back of years of hard work and commitment, excellent choreography, and plenty of flair and glitter!

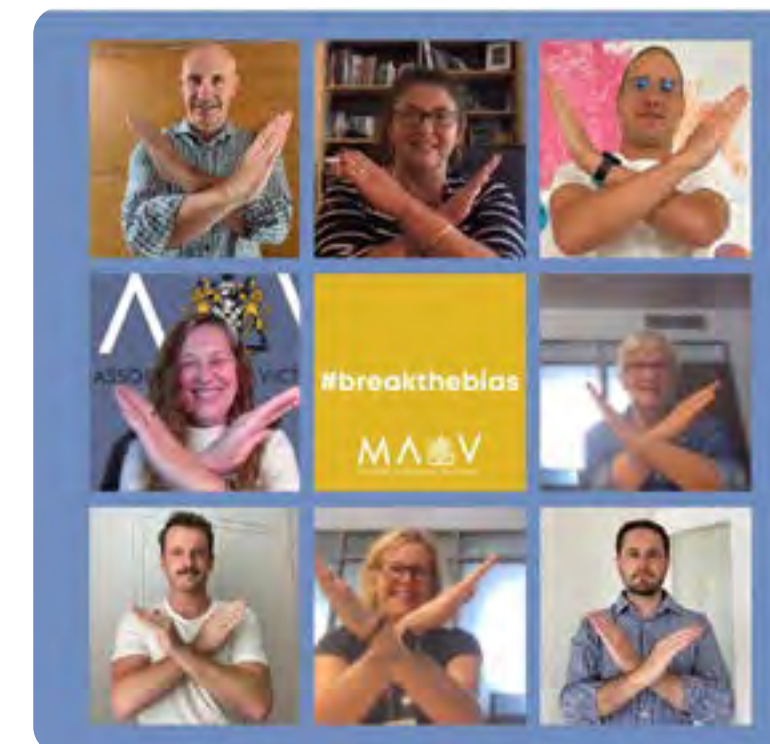


Photo caption: key Y Australia leaders crossed their arms to show solidarity in breaking the bias and encouraging more people to commit to an inclusive world.

Leigh Johns, OAM (photographed bottom right)



## Diversity and inclusion - continued

“It’s an exceptional example of the wonderful journey we’ve been on in terms of diversity, inclusion and pride. It says a lot about our organisation that there’s a heap of queer kids who find a home here at the Y.”

**Leigh Johns, OAM, Board Director of both Y Australia and Y NSW.**

### Supporting refugees, displaced and newly arrived people

Supporting refugees and displaced persons is key to our global YMCA commitment to support young people and their families.

In response to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, our Y movement across Australia collectively contributed \$138,500 AUD to the Together We Care Appeal, a global YMCA appeal for Ukraine refugees. The appeal raised over \$2 million AUD, providing displaced persons and local Ys in Ukraine with medical and baby supplies, hygiene products and accommodation. Key to the global YMCA effort, has been the support of Ukrainian refugees, with Y people meeting refugees at the Ukrainian border (and in surrounding countries) and assisting refugee children and their families across Europe to connect with local services, temporary accommodation, and psychosocial supports. See more [here](#).

To support our Asia-Pacific neighbours, the Y in Australia has also joined the Asia Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY) Emergency Partners’ Support Group, to assist the YMCA Sri Lanka to navigate an environment of economic and political crisis, and civil unrest.

At home, the Y runs a number of programs and services to assist refugees and new arrivals to Australia to connect to community and access support services, including inclusive sport and recreation programs, and swimming programs that teach water safety to those who may never have seen the water before.

### Our spotlight on gender equality

A Change our Game (Gender Equality) Ambassador for the Victorian Government, our National CEO, Tal Karp, was a keynote speaker at the Change our Game ‘Break the Bias’ online event, held on International Women’s Day (IWD) in March 2022.

It was a day to celebrate the achievements of women and girls, while also bringing focus to the biases, both conscious and unconscious, holding us back.

Following the IWD Break the Bias theme, Y Australia has commenced a gender equality project to assess our current performance when it comes to workplace gender equality, and to co-design an action plan to drive improvement. This will involve developing tools to conduct a workplace data audit across key gender equality indicators; a survey to understand employee experience; an unconscious bias workshop to build gender-equality capability; and an action plan to drive our progress.

We will be taking an intersectional lens to this work, in recognition of the compounding, overlapping forms of discrimination that may be experienced based on factors such as age, ethnicity, culture and sexual orientation.

“We all have a role to play to break the bias that holds us back. Why Change Our Game for girls in sport and recreation? Because what happens on the sports field doesn’t just stay on the sports field. What role will you play in pursuing a just world?”

**A call to action over Twitter by Tal Karp, National CEO, on International Women’s Day, 2022.**



*We believe in the power of  
inspired young people*

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