



Terms of Reference – Young Professionals Network (YPN) Working Group

Purpose

The Young Professionals Network (YPN) Working Group exists to provide strategic advice, insight, and support to Business Illawarra in the development and delivery of initiatives that engage, support, and empower young professionals across the Illawarra region.

The Working Group ensures that YPN activities remain relevant, inclusive, and aligned with the needs and aspirations of emerging leaders across industries.

Objectives

The Working Group will:

- Provide insights into the needs, challenges, and priorities of young professionals in the region
- Contribute to the development of YPN programming, events, and initiatives
- Support the growth and visibility of the YPN within the business community
- Encourage diverse participation from across industries, backgrounds, and career stages
- Collaborate with Young Professional Ambassadors in line with the Ambassador framework

Scope

The Working Group is advisory only and does not have decision-making authority.

Its role is to:

- Recommend event themes, speakers, and formats
- Identify partnership and collaboration opportunities
- Provide feedback on YPN strategy, communications, and engagement
- Support initiatives that align with Business Illawarra Young Professional Network priorities.

Membership

Composition:

The Working Group will comprise approximately 6-8 members representing a diverse cross-section of industries, professions, and backgrounds across the Illawarra.

Eligibility:

Members should:

- Be early to mid-career professionals
- Demonstrate leadership potential and engagement within their industry or community
- Have a strong interest in professional development and regional growth

Appointments:

- Members are appointed by Business Illawarra
- Expressions of interest (EOI) may be used to ensure inclusivity and diversity

Term:

- Members serve a term of 12 months, with the option for renewal.

Meetings

Quarterly meetings facilitated by Business Illawarra (or as required).

Agenda and materials to be set by Business Illawarra and circulated in advance. YPN Working Group Members may send through agenda items to be added, at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

Roles

Business Illawarra (Facilitator):

- Provides coordination, administration, and strategic direction
- Oversees delivery of YPN initiatives
- Ensures alignment with organisational priorities

Working Group Members:

- Attend meetings and actively contribute
- Provide constructive input and feedback
- Advocate for the YPN within their networks

Ambassadors

Members of the Working Group may apply to serve as Young Professional Ambassadors. Ambassadors are drawn from the Working Group and operate in line with the approved Ambassador framework below, supporting engagement, promotion, and delivery of YPN initiatives.

Governance

- This Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually
- Membership performance and contribution may be reviewed periodically
- Business Illawarra reserves the right to amend the structure or composition as required

Young Professionals Network (YPN) Ambassadors – Roles & Responsibilities

Purpose of the Ambassador Program

The Young Professionals Network (YPN) Ambassador Program supports the growth and visibility of the Young Professionals Network by engaging passionate volunteers to represent the network, promote events, and foster peer engagement across the region.

Ambassadors play a key role in building a vibrant, inclusive, and connected young professional community.

Role of a YPN Ambassador

YPN Ambassadors are volunteer representatives who actively support the promotion, engagement, and success of the network.

They act as connectors, advocates, and champions of YPN initiatives.

Responsibilities

Ambassadors are expected to:

Promotion & Advocacy

- Promote YPN events, programs, and opportunities within their networks
- Share content via LinkedIn and other professional channels
- Encourage colleagues and peers to attend and participate

Engagement & Community Building

- Actively welcome and engage attendees at YPN events
- Foster a positive and inclusive environment
- Prompt conversation and insights within the YPN Whatsapp Group and LinkedIn Group, including regular posting and engagement.

Feedback & Insights

- Provide feedback on events and initiatives
- Share insights into emerging trends or needs among young professionals
- Suggest ideas for future topics, formats, or collaborations

Event Support

- Attend key YPN events (where possible)
- Assist with informal on-the-ground support (e.g. welcoming attendees)
- One Ambassador per event may be invited to provide a brief YPN update

Expectations

Ambassadors are expected to:

- Demonstrate professionalism and alignment with Business Illawarra values
- Commit to a minimum level of engagement (e.g. attendance at key events and promotion activity)
- Act inclusively and respectfully at all times
- Maintain a positive and solutions-focused approach
- Attend a min of 50% events and meetings.

NOTE: Ambassadors must not speak to the media or represent Business Illawarra or the YPN publicly without prior approval from the Director.

Eligibility

Ambassadors should:

- Collaborate with Young Professional Ambassadors in line with the Ambassador framework
- Be enthusiastic about professional development and networking
- Have strong communication skills and a willingness to engage others
- Young Professional's organisation must be at minimum of a Free Member with Business NSW / Business Illawarra
- Must provide a letter of support from Young Professionals employer to be a part of the program, see draft letters below.
 - Employer Supported Ambassador
 - Independent Ambassador

Term

- Ambassador roles are typically for a 12 month period
- Opportunities for renewal may be offered based on engagement.
- Business Illawarra holds the right to terminate ambassador roles based on reputation and participation.

Benefits

Ambassadors will:

- Receive 1 x complimentary ticket to each Young Professionals Network events
- Opportunity to attend other Business Illawarra events, as the opportunity arises
- Build their professional profile and network
- Gain leadership and engagement experience
- Access professional development and networking opportunities
- Contribute to shaping the future of the local professional community
- Business Illawarra will formally recognise the Ambassadors at events and online.

APPENDIX 1: DRAFT LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Option 1: Employer Support (Business Illawarra / BNSW Financial Member Organisation)

Letter of Support – Young Professionals Network Ambassador Program

To whom it may concern,

[Organisation Name] is pleased to support [Employee Name] in their application to participate as an Ambassador within the Business Illawarra Young Professionals Network (YPN).

As a financial member organisation of Business Illawarra / BNSW, we recognise the value of the YPN in developing emerging leaders and strengthening connections across the regional business community.

We confirm that:

- We support [Employee Name] attending Advisory Group meetings and selected YPN events during work hours, where required
- We endorse their participation as a Young Professional Ambassador
- We are comfortable with our organisation being publicly associated with [Employee Name] in their Ambassador role

☐

We do / do not welcome opportunities to be recognised as a collaborator of the YPN, including the use of our organisation's name and logo where appropriate.

We see this as a valuable opportunity for professional development and broader engagement with the Illawarra business community.

Signed,

[Name]

[Position (MUST BE AUTHORISED BY ORGANISATION)]

[Organisation Name]

[Date]

Option 2: No Objection (Individual Capacity)

Letter of Acknowledgement – Young Professionals Network Ambassador Program

To whom it may concern,

[Organisation Name] acknowledges that [Employee Name] is seeking to participate as an Ambassador within the Business Illawarra Young Professionals Network (YPN).

We confirm that:

- We have no objection to [Employee Name] undertaking this role in line with the Terms of Reference.
- Their participation will be conducted in their own time and in a personal capacity
- Their involvement is not formally associated with, or representative of, [Organisation Name]
- [Organisation Name] will join Business Illawarra under the free membership option in support of the Young Professionals Network, however, does not wish to be formally recognised or acknowledged

We wish them well in their involvement with the Young Professionals Network.

Signed,

[Name]

[Position]

[Organisation Name]

[Date]