




# 2022 Youth Summit

Key Reflections Report





**Gladstone Regional Council would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Byellee, the Gooreng Gooreng, the Gurang and the Taribelang Bunda people.**

**We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.**

**We would also like to extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our region.**

## Introduction: Creating the conditions to climb

The 2022 inaugural Gladstone Regional Youth Summit was held on Friday, 2 September at the Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct, Gladstone. It provided a forum for young people aged 15-25 years, from across the Gladstone Region, to come together and learn about each other's experiences, perspectives, and passions. The goal of the Youth Summit was to give young people a platform to advocate for issues and matters concerning them and the opportunity to engage with like-minded peers to be a voice for young people on Council related matters and initiatives.

The summit was designed by youth, for youth, facilitated by Gladstone Regional Council to source youth perspectives and recommendations regarding the development and governance of the Gladstone Region. Youth Council members took the lead on the delivery of key components of the project. A World Café of conversations, designed by the Gladstone Region Youth Council, encouraged conversations around the topics of employment, education, health, equity and discrimination, environment, and social issues.

This report will look at the key reflections from the 2022 Youth Summit, highlighting the invaluable knowledge of our regions youth and their desire to make positive changes in our community.



The Gladstone Region Youth Summit logo was designed by Youth Council member Jie Xi Zang who worked collaboratively with the Youth Council to develop an initial concept design.

This was then refined by Council's Brand and Communications team and was shared on event promotions across the region.





## Background: Climb to the Summit

When it comes to the future of our region, there is no greater asset than our youth. Gladstone Regional Council (Council) identified the need for youth across our diverse region to have their say on important topics that impact them.

The lead up to the 2022 Gladstone Region Youth Summit (Youth Summit) included a capacity building workshop for young people from across the region, facilitated by the Jeder Institute, exploring the principals of asset-based community development to assist youth in the co-design of the Youth Summit.







This was followed by a series of meetings with the Gladstone Region Youth Council (Youth Council) to design the key themes of the summit, the coordination of the event and how to engage with all youth present using a strengths-focused lens.

A summary of key findings is presented in this report and will be followed with a list of action items created by the Youth Council for Council to consider and address. Young people will be actively consulted, and a report card of outcomes will be produced in 2024, highlighting the actions taken. Council, in partnership with youth, endeavour to take action in each of the identified topics discussed at the Youth Summit, allowing youth to use their voice to bring about positive change in their communities.

**When it comes to the future of our region, there is no greater asset than our youth.**



## Timeline of events and actions:

Phase	Date	Description
Base Camp 	April 2022	A free community workshop on Participatory Community Building hosted by The Jeder Institute.
Checkpoint 1, 2 and 3 	March – August 2022	<p>A series of planning meetings with the Gladstone Region Youth Council including further training with The Jeder Institute to design the key themes of the Youth Summit.</p> <p>Development of Youth Council member's project management skills with members taking the lead on event management, site planning, talent management, time management and budget.</p>
Youth Summit 	September 2022	A World Café style workshop lead by the Gladstone Region Youth Council members with the support of the Gladstone Regional Council's Community Development Team with approximately 40 youth from across the Gladstone Region in attendance.
Report of key reflections 	November 2022	A summary report of key themes and reflections drawn from the World Café activities at Youth Summit. The report will highlight the invaluable knowledge of our regions youth and their desire to make positive changes in our community.
Actions from findings 	Jan – Dec 2023	The 2023 Gladstone Region Youth Council members will analyse the key findings and create a list of action items for Council from each of the topics discussed.
Report Card 	April 2024	The report Card will look at the outcomes of the Youth Summit and the actions that Gladstone Regional Council have addressed from the Youth Council recommendations.



# Gladstone Region: About Us

The Gladstone Region has a population of 64,304 people and a median age of 36 years. The region is diverse with a combination of global industry and pristine environment including the world heritage listed Great Barrier Reef.

Gladstone Regional Council recognises that youth are the future of our region and has committed resources; funding and time to ensure local youth are represented, are heard, and are involved in decisions that affect them.

**10,489KM<sup>2</sup>**  
Gladstone Regional Council  
Boundary Area

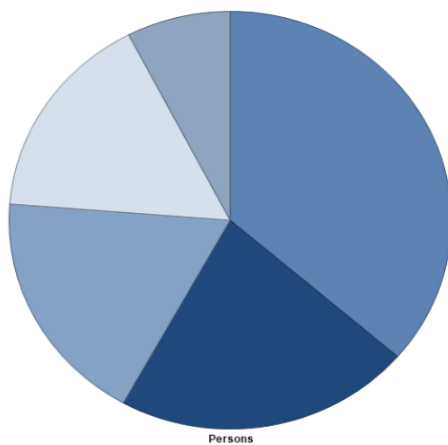
**513.9KM**  
North of Brisbane



## Youth Engagement

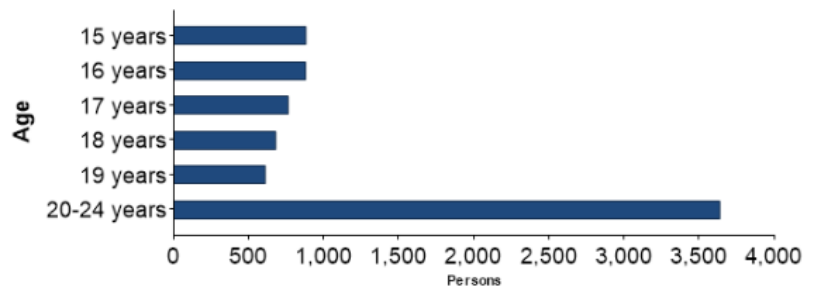
The total number of young people in the Gladstone Region aged 15 to 24 years on Census Night 2021 was 7,166. This represents 11.28% of the total number of people usually resident in Gladstone Region zones.

**Youth Employment and Education 15-24 years - Gladstone**



- Youth Engaged in Employment 2,700
- Youth Engaged in Education 1,612
- Youth Engaged in Education and Employment 1,354
- Disengaged Youth 1,201
- Not Stated (Fully or partially not stated) 564

**Age 15 to 24 Gladstone Region**



Data from 2016 shows the number of young people engaged in employment and education in the Gladstone region below.

Youth 15-24 years	Gladstone (R) (2016)	
	Persons	%
Youth Engaged in Employment	2,700	36.33%
Youth Engaged in Education	1,612	21.69%
Youth Engaged in Education and Employment	1,354	18.22%
Disengaged Youth	1,201	16.16%
Not Stated (Fully or partially not stated)	564	7.59%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,431</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## Key reflections from Young People

### Environment

- Simple actions to care for our environment can have a large and positive impact for individuals and the community both now and for future generations
- With the Gladstone Region being at the doorstep of the Great Barrier Reef, youth are concerned about the negative impacts humans and local industry have on our reef and believe a better balance should be achieved
- Awareness of community programs, volunteering opportunities and partnerships with our First Nations People are essential in safeguarding the future of our environment
- We are fortunate in Gladstone to have so many beautiful green spaces
- Young people can help raise awareness on the effects of pollution and littering to help the environment

**‘We need to work with our First Nations Peoples to understand and rehabilitate our land.’**



## Education

- Homeschooling throughout the covid pandemic has put increased stress on students and teachers, particularly with the introduction of the new ATAR system.
- Young people have noticed a need to support disengaged students in schools
- The education system needs to value all types of learning, encouraging different job pathways outside of university and local industry jobs.
- Youth want to feel comfortable not knowing what their career may look like and be exposed to a variety of opportunities to make informed decisions about their careers
- Students feel unvalued if they don't want to go to university or get a trade

**'We need to support disengaged youth in schools and provide other pathways.'**

## Equity and Discrimination

- People need to be equipped with knowledge on other cultures, minority groups and marginalised people to create understanding and be more open minded
- Youth should be encouraged to be different and to be their authentic selves
- Sharing stories of bullying make people less prone to bully someone
- Social media plays a big part in the lives of youth and can often be misleading. Racism is a big thing on social media
- Be kind, be respectful.

**'It's hard to be kind when you're struggling.'**

## Employment

- Young people perceive Gladstone as an industrial region with a strong focus on careers in heavy industry. They would like to see more work experience opportunities in diverse fields such as science
- The lack of on-campus university options in the Gladstone Region was highlighted by many youths, which results in many school leavers pursuing opportunities in larger cities such as Brisbane
- Showcasing local job opportunities, including opportunities for those with a physical or mental disability, and gaining a better understanding of what the local industries do is important for young people
- Training and incentives should be provided to business owners on how to have a meaningful HR process and develop initiatives to include young people
- Local businesses need support to improve youth employment

**'A lot of youth has had to leave Gladstone for work and study.'**



## Key reflections from Young People

### Health

- Young people want to see equity in the community by providing for those who need greater support
- The Gladstone Region needs better hospital and health systems
- It is important to young people that discussions around mental health are normalised, and barriers are broken down
- Youth of the Gladstone Region are aware of the lack of health services available in our region and believe action needs to be taken to attract specialists and more health services to improve the health of our residents

**'Youth should be talking to young people about Mental Health.'**

### Social Issues

- Existing spaces can be adapted to be more youth friendly, for example a 'Young East Shores'
- Public transport accessibility could be improved for getting around the region and to events
- Youth would value more social, interactive, and fun events targeted at them
- Education programs around social issues could be delivered to increase awareness
- Youth need encouragement to be different and authentic - education leads to understanding and connection

**'Education leads to understanding and connection.'**









## Next steps: View from the Top

The goal of the Youth Summit was to give young people the opportunity to engage with like-minded peers to be a voice for young people on Council related matters and initiatives.

The Youth Summit prompted some quality discussion around employment, education, health, equity and discrimination, environmental and social issues, as well as some lively debate on what's strong in the Gladstone Region and what can be done to strengthen liveability in the region for youth.

Through the co-design and delivery of the Youth Summit, the region's youth have been provided with a platform to express opinions on topics that are meaningful to them and to reduce barriers to participation and active youth citizenship.

The findings from the Youth Summit and this report will form the basis for a future action plan developed by the Gladstone Regional Youth Council.

**'The Youth Summit was a place and time where everyone's opinion could be heard and voiced, and it meant a lot to me as I could openly talk about issues that concern me. It was a fantastic event that I was extremely proud to be a part of'**







To learn more about the Gladstone Region Youth Summit, please visit

<https://www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/youth-summit>

or email

[communitydevelopment@gladstone.qld.gov.au](mailto:communitydevelopment@gladstone.qld.gov.au)



[www.gladstone.qld.gov.au](http://www.gladstone.qld.gov.au)

