

**Lions Australia
Youth of the Year
Project 2026-2027**

Information

for
clubs, schools & parents



"You just can't lose!"

Youth of the Year is a project of Lions Australia and is sponsored and run by the Lions and Leos Clubs of Australia.

The prime focus is to give youth an opportunity to develop confidence in their ability to talk to community leaders and present themselves as a confident young person worth considering for any position, in any field of interest, in the future. This also includes being able to speak confidently to an audience on subjects of their choosing.



Introduction

The Lions Youth of the Year Program is now in its 6th decade of providing Australian Senior School students a forum to gain experience and confidence in presenting themselves to a selection panel and an audience.

The program is managed and supported by Lions Australia and run by Lions Clubs in each of our 18 Districts in close collaboration with, and supported by, participating Schools.

It looks for students who are contributors to their schools and their communities and, ultimately, selects an outstanding individual to be an ambassador for the Lions Youth of the Year Program and Lions Clubs International.

Aims of the Program

The Lions Youth of the Year Program is designed to foster, encourage and develop leadership and citizenship qualities in our youth at an age when they are about to enter the fields of higher education or employment.

It provides the youth of Australia with the incentive to pay greater attention to the general qualities that are so vital in their development as first class citizens and to provide an opportunity for young people to experience success.

The qualities sought are:

leadership - personality - sportsmanship - public speaking - good citizenship.

The importance of public speaking is recognised at all levels of the program with a specific award to the candidate judged to be the best speaker.

Who can enter?

Entry is open to any Australian youth who is attending, or has attended, a high school or other secondary school or equivalent in the Lions year (July to June) in which the National Final is to be conducted. This includes first year tertiary study students who were engaged in secondary education for part of the relevant Lions year.

Students must also have attained the age of 15 and be under the age of 19 years as of 30th of June in that same year.

Benefits and Opportunities

Youth of the Year provides tremendous benefits for Youth by providing them with:

- opportunities to develop self confidence,
- experience in public speaking,
- experience at being interviewed (as for a job) in a non-threatening environment
- opportunities to meet and interact with other like minded students
- worthwhile additions to their CVs
- attractive rewards at Club and State level

State winners are invited to compete in the National Final at the Lions Multiple District Convention. There they will be accompanied by a parent or guardian where travel, hospitality and meals are covered according to Lions Australia's policies and guidelines.

People who have participated find that they are better equipped to deal with interview situations because they are more confident in their ability and have learned how to handle the associated stress. Consequently they perform better, enhancing their chances of getting that elusive job, scholarship or admission to the course they are seeking.

The Assessment

Initiatives taken at school	15	Public Speaking:	
Activities & Involvement Outside School	20	Impromptu Questions	10
School Academic Achievements	10	Prepared Speech	15
General Knowledge	15	Diction	5
Presentation during the interview	10	Points Allocated:	30
Points Allocated:	70		100

What we Look For

Youth of the Year does not favour any one group such as academics, the sports orientated or the good public speakers. All-round ability is what we look for. People who are lacking in one area can pick up points in another. Because Lions Australia run the Program, we do look for an attitude that demonstrates community-mindedness and an interest in what is going on in the world, hence the weighting is towards leadership, sporting and cultural awareness, personality and general knowledge.



The Judging

There are two stages to the judging process. The first stage is a private judging, where the contestant meets, in private, with the judges. At this stage, the judges are looking to confirm information in your application form. They may ask some questions to determine your level of general knowledge, and to assess your attitude and philosophies on life. It is at the private judging that most of your points are scored.

The second stage is the public judging. In this section, contestants are required to respond to two impromptu questions on topics chosen for you and one five-minute prepared speech on a topic of your choice. This stage is open to the public including friends and supporters.



It is not a requirement for club winners to go to the next level if they don't wish to commit to that part of the program. In the case where the winner withdraws from the program, the next highest scoring entrant will be offered that opportunity.

Some Rules

- No electrical aids like phones or tablets
- No audio/visual or PowerPoint Presentation
- No visible clocks
- No lapel or headset microphones- *(They are generally not available in early rounds and tend to complicate the stage presentation)*

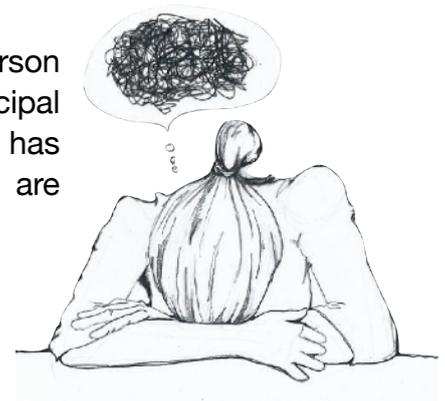
The Public Speaking section is just that- it is about you speaking to your audience. You may have the choice of a lectern with a fixed microphone, or a radio mic if you want to walk around and, of course, one is available.

The Entry Form

This is where the entrant can inform the judging panel about themselves before the interview. The form is a writable Pdf and we request students stay within the confines of that form. The judges may have six forms to read in their own time and like Lions members, they are also volunteers! The form is just like a CV for a job or application to a college or university. Entrants should be encouraged to give a full description of their abilities and activities.

The form will be sent to the entrant by the Lions Club Chairperson and they will need to get a parent/guardian and school Principal or Delegate to check some boxes to confirm that the student has permission to participate in the program and their details are correct.

Then they should prepare their speech and keep up with the news and current affairs.



Prizes

The recommended prizes at Club Finals are-

- Certificates and keepsake memorabilia
- Cash and/or vouchers to the value of \$50 for the overall winner
- Cash and/or vouchers to the value of \$30 Public Speaking winner
- **State Winners**
 - Each State Winner will receive \$1,500 to be presented at the National Final
 - A YOTY Polo Shirt, a Blazer and a Lions Tie or Scarf
 - Attendance at the National Convention for the entrant and a parent or guardian



The National winner receives \$5,000 on their 18th birthday.

The National Public Speaking winner receives \$2,500 on their 18th birthday.

Note: Should the Public Speaking Winner also be the Overall Winner, be the same person they receive \$7,500.

Schedule of Events - 2026-27

Club, Zone and Region Finals

Contact your Club Chairperson for these details.

District Finals: Should be completed by Sunday, 29th March

State Finals: Must be completed by Sunday, 10th May

— **The National Final** —

**Lions National Convention - Adelaide,
SA 22nd May 2026**

**For more information or advice
please contact your local Lions Club**

or

the State Coordinator of your State by filling in the 'Expression of Interest' form on the Lions Website under the 'Thinking about Participating' button.

or

National Program Coordinator for MD 201 Margaret Amm:

Ph- 0419 195 549 or email- yoty@lions.org.au



lions australia
we serve

