

Media Release

The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC
Minister for Families and Children
Minister for Early Childhood Education
Minister for Youth Affairs



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Wednesday, 26 September, 2018

INVESTING IN VICTORIA'S YOUTH WORKERS

The Andrews Labor Government is funding more projects that help young people live better, more connected lives.

Minister for Youth Affairs Jenny Mikakos today announced the organisations that have been selected to deliver five new Empower projects, while also presenting the inaugural YACVic Rural Youth Awards at Queens Hall, Parliament House.

The five projects will share in over \$2.5 million, as funded through the *Victorian Budget 2018/19* and include:

- Support for young people in Swan Hill, Lake Boga, Robinvale and Nyah to achieve their education and employment goals, led by Swan Hill Rural City Council
- Targeted support in Ballan and Bacchus Marsh for those at risk of disengaging from school or work, led by Moorabool Shire Council
- Engaging youth workers in the design and implementation of Empower projects in Geelong, in partnership with other provider organisations and led by Centacare
- Building the capacity of culturally diverse youth in major centres including Cranbourne, Narre Warren, Endeavour Hills, Doveton and Clyde, led by South East Community Links
- Youth mental health training and volunteer opportunities for young people in Whittlesea become more included in their community, led by Whittlesea Community Connections.

This funding boost will see at least five more youth workers employed through the Empower Youth program - in addition to the 15 youth workers employed in the first round of Empower Youth.

The new funding will support at least 250 young people per annum for the next four years.

Meanwhile, five youth workers, five young people and five innovative youth projects were today shortlisted for the first YACVic Rural Youth Awards, which are supported through the Labor Government's \$2 million Regional Presence Project.

It's all part of the Labor Government's support for young people in having their say and participating in program development and decision making, through *Youth Policy: Building Stronger Youth Engagement in Victoria*.

For more information, visit youthcentral.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Youth Affairs Jenny Mikakos

"The Empower Youth program has led to the employment of at least 20 youth workers across the state, who each play a vital role in supporting young Victorians reach their potential."

"Our funding boost to the program will support five organisations across Victoria build the capacity of local young people and help them feel part of and contribute to their community."