



# GLEE:

Guiding Lived Experience  
Engagement (Youth)

## Checklist

# Foreword

The Guiding Lived Experience Engagement – Youth (GLEE) Project is an initiative by the Brisbane North PHN Regional Youth Advisory Group (RYAG). This GLEE Checklist outlines a set of recommendations that can be applied to any lived experience engagement opportunity and is accompanied by the [GLEE Checklist Guide](#) and [Project Report](#). Together, these three documents aim to provide youth service providers with information and tools to ensure they are set up for successful and sustainable youth engagement and participation. Whilst the context of this project was to support youth mental health services to have better engagement strategies for the purpose of service design and improvement, the recommendations outlined in these documents can be broadly applied to any organisation that is working with young people and wants to uplift the youth voice. We would like to thank all the participants who generously gave their time to contribute to this piece of work and for sharing their insights.

All work for this project from the initial concept to stakeholder consultation and report writing was completed by young people, for young people. The GLEE Project has been one filled with earnest passion and commitment and is a powerful testament to the work that young people can do to drive system reform when given the right platform and supports.

We would also like to acknowledge the contributions and support of all the current RYAG members without whom this project would not have been possible: Mahalia King (lead author), Kai Boswell, Jesse Cotter, Jasmin Murphy, Kennedy Schroeder, Hannah Walker, and Jeyden Young.



*We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the first people of Australia and custodians of the land on which we live, work, and learn. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual connection to land, waters, and community. We acknowledge that we are on stolen land, that sovereignty was never ceded, and this always was, and always will be Aboriginal land.*

## Dos and Don'ts

The following are a list of broad recommendations that can be applied to any lived experience engagement opportunity. They are foundational staples to ensure the work you are doing has the best chance of success.

- Be authentic. Young people aren't wanting (or expecting) you to be 'cool'. Please don't try to use slang or lingo in the hopes it will make you seem relatable... it won't.
- Don't be condescending. As long as you create a safe space where young people can ask questions, trust that they will tell you if they don't understand something.
- Overestimate how much time is needed.
- Start engaging with young people as early as possible. A big frustration for young people is when services only consult at the end to get a 'tick of approval' for a project or idea. This is not collaborative and makes young people feel like their voices and ideas get manipulated to fit a preconceived idea of what services want the outcome to be.
- Be openminded. The ideas that come up may be unexpected, be ready and willing to let young people navigate the direction.
- Provide context. Young people may not know how the work they are contributing to fits within your organisation and then how your organisation fits within larger systems. Explaining what the end goal is helps young people to understand how their contributions will be used.
- Be creative and engaging.
- Be flexible!

# Before the consultation (fail to plan, plan to fail)

## SYSTEMS CHECKS

- ☐ Does your organisation have a process in place to facilitate regular, ongoing collaboration with young people for the purpose of service delivery improvement?
  - Is there an evidence-based framework in place to guide this process?
- ☐ Does your organisation support lived experience engagement across different levels of participation? Have a look at Hart's Ladder of Participation and Shier's Pathway to Participation for ideas on different types of participation.
- ☐ Does your organisation have a policy that outlines a commitment to youth participation for service design and improvement?
  - If yes, were young people involved in the creation of this and other organisational policies?
- ☐ Does your service have a policy that outlines how it values and supports the lived experience of staff members?
- ☐ Are your staff members chosen in collaboration with young people? e.g., having young people on interview panels.
- ☐ Is mandatory staff training provided to support a work culture that values and understands the importance of lived experience engagement in the youth space?
  - If yes, was the training facilitated or created by young people?
- ☐ Is your organisation ready to share decision making powers with young people?

## BUDGET - MONEY AND TIME!

- ☐ Is there protected funding for conducting lived experience engagement activities in a sustainable and ongoing basis?
- ☐ Is there a budget to remunerate young people for their time and expertise? Remember – even on the smallest budget there is always something that can be done to thank people for their time!
- ☐ Is lived experience engagement (or community consultation) assigned within a staff members position description to ensure there is continuity of activities?
- ☐ Have budget considerations been made to support capacity building and personal development for young people who are engaged on ongoing consultation activities?

# The consultation process (the fun part!)

## PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

- ☐ Have you promoted your opportunities widely and in a range of locations? e.g., public transport hubs, social media platforms, schools, etc.
- ☐ Are you confident that the spaces in which you are advertising your opportunities are safe and accessible for young people?
  - If yes, how do you know?
- ☐ Do you have a strong induction process that supports young people to engage in lived experience work, including the opportunity for personal development?
  - If yes, were young people involved in the creation of this process?
  - Are young people involved in the facilitation of this process?

## THE PURPOSE OF CONSULTING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

- ☐ Have you provided young people with a clear outline of the purpose of this consultation?
- ☐ Have you provided young people with the opportunity to ask questions on how findings from the consultation/s will be used? e.g., anonymous questions, organisational point of contact.

## ETHICS AND SAFETY

- ☐ Have you explored if parental consent is needed for young people to participate in lived experience work at your organisation? e.g., are there any considerations needed for working with vulnerable populations including young people under the age of 16 and people with disabilities.
- ☐ Have you created a wellness plan with all young people (and staff!) that outlines agreed upon steps that can be taken if young people are experiencing distress or ill-health of any form?
- ☐ Do you have the capacity and skills to provide ad hoc support to a young person who becomes distressed while engaging in consultation activities? This could include access to an employee assistance program (EAP) or on-site mental health practitioner.



## CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

- ☐ Are there multiple ways in which young people can engage with these processes? e.g., advisory group, feedback forms, focus groups.
- ☐ Are there different versions of engagement activities to accommodate different support needs and communication styles? e.g., one on one and group interviews, written and verbal, using imagery and video, online options.

## FACILITATORS

- ☐ When consulting with young people from diverse and marginalised groups, do you have representatives who are happy to share their identity as part of those groups to help increase feelings of safety? e.g., having someone who identifies as LGBTQIA+, First Nations, or as having a disability in the consultation?
- ☐ Was the consultation format developed with people from the community you are seeking expertise from to ensure it is culturally safe?

## LOCATION

- ☐ Have you provided young people with multiple location options for where consultation activities can occur? e.g., online, at school, on-site.
- ☐ Have you prioritised young people's preferences for where they would like participation activities to occur?
- ☐ If consultation must happen in a specific location, have you provided options to increase accessibility? e.g., taxi vouchers or travel stipends.

## TIMING

- ☐ Have you provided multiple options for times when young people can engage in consultation activities that includes opportunities outside of typical business hours?

## After the consultation process (ensuring longevity)

### EVALUATION

- ☐ Do you have a process to evaluate the evaluation? Do you have a measurable way of gauging if lived experience voices are being used effectively?
- ☐ Are there opportunities for young people to evaluate your lived experience engagement processes?
- ☐ Is there ongoing communication with young people to share how their contributions are being used?
- ☐ Do you have structures in place for a transition to other roles or other types of involvement for young people who age out of the youth bracket?