

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Suleyman MP
Minister for Veterans
Minister for Small Business
Minister for Youth



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YOUNG PEOPLE READY TO LEAD AND CREATE ACROSS THE STATE

The Allan Labor Government is backing the skills and creativity of young people across the state through two grant programs designed to inspire the next generation of leaders.

Minister for Youth Natalie Suleyman today announced the 134 recipients of the Engage! and FReeZA grant programs for 2025-2027 which will fund activities for young Victorians aged 12 to 25.

Engage! grants, which range from \$60,000 to \$180,000, and FReeZA grants, which provide \$45,000 to \$120,000, are three-year funding streams that support community organisations, local governments, and social enterprises.

From Mildura to Yarra Ranges, to Greater Shepparton or Monash, both grant programs will support a wide spread of organisations in Victoria – creating engagement, support and leadership opportunities for young people from diverse backgrounds and communities.

The Salvation Army received funding for two Leadership and Life Skills programs which empower marginalised young people by equipping them with essential life skills, fostering self-confidence, and building community connections in Shepparton and the Frankston-Mornington Peninsula area.

The City of Ballarat received funding for Sonika, a youth participation model where young people lead the planning, development and delivery of music, creative arts and cultural events.

Rural City of Wangaratta received funding for the Spilt Milk project which empowers young people by providing them with necessary skills, resources, training and development opportunities to plan live events, discover future career paths and be an active member within their community.

The Engage! 2025-2027 program will empower young people to co-design and deliver activities that build skills, confidence, and encourage creativity.

This includes supporting programs that strengthen and assist the wellbeing of young people, with a focus on fostering leadership and youth empowerment through education and cultural activities.

FReeZA 2025-2027 supports access to opportunities and career pathways for emerging musicians, artists and aspiring events management professionals, amplifying the future of Victoria's music and creative industries.

FReeZA will also continue to be delivered in partnership with The Push, a leading Australian youth music organisation, which supports young people with access to expert industry advice, training and guidance.

For more information on the programs visit vic.gov.au/engage-2025-2027 and vic.gov.au/freeza-2025-27.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Youth Natalie Suleyman

"FReeZA and Engage! empower Victoria's young people to shape their communities, find their voices and unlock their potential."

"These grants will ensure that young people have the support and resources they need to thrive and contribute to our state into the future."

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