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YWCA Australia leads push for more young women on boards

Australia's leading feminist organisation has launched a new traineeship aimed at boosting the number of young women on boards.

YWCA Australia Chief Executive Officer Michelle Phillips said the average age of non-executive board members in Australia was currently 63.8¹, reflecting the need for greater diversity in boardrooms across the country.

"This new board traineeship program will equip young women with the skills and experience needed to pursue board appointments," Ms Phillips said.

"Young women are the future leaders of our country. As a young women's organisation, YWCA Australia is committed to advancing leadership opportunities for young women. This program will allow trainees to learn the skills needed to effectively lead and govern companies and communities."

The traineeship, to be launched during *Young People on Boards Week* (2-6 March)², is open to all female YWCA Australia members aged 30 and under. It includes the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) three-day *Foundations of Directorship* course, opportunities to attend and observe YWCA Australia board meetings for 12 months, and mentoring sessions with a YWCA Board Director.

YWCA Australia Deputy Chair of the Board Julia Goodall (30) said the traineeship was a unique opportunity for young women to develop to build their communication, business and leadership skills.

"YWCA Australia is committed to investing in young women's development and providing them with pathways to leadership positions through training, mentoring and real-world experience," Ms Goodall said.

"Being part of organisations like YWCA Australia provides opportunities but it also enables young women to become part of a network of female leaders, committed to improving gender equality for women, young women and girls."

Ms Goodall said that half of YWCA Australia's board was comprised of young women under the age of 30.

"Young women bring unique skills, ideas, experience and solutions to boards. We'd like to see more boards across Australia actively aim for greater age diversity," Ms Goodall said.

Join YWCA Australia for free here: <https://www.ywca.org.au/join/>

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¹ <https://boarddirection.com.au/strands-of-board-diversity/>

² <https://communitydirectors.com.au/festival-weeks/youngpeople-week2020>

About YWCA Australia

YWCA Australia is a leading intersectional feminist organisation focused on improving gender equality for women, young women and girls. For 140 years, we have challenged the systems, structures and policies that act as barriers to women, especially young women, achieving their full potential.

Our high-impact evidence-based programs and services are inclusive of all women and offer support with housing, homelessness, safety, wellbeing and leadership. We aim to positively impact the lives of more than two million women, young women and girls by the end of 2023.