

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS YOUTH PARLIAMENT 2014

The National Indigenous Youth Parliament (NIYP) is a week-long leadership program for young Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people aged 16 to 25 who are interested in learning about Australia's democracy.

NIYP will bring to Canberra future Indigenous leaders from around Australia to talk about issues affecting their communities. The participants will learn how laws are made and have the opportunity to speak to and learn from the lawmakers.

Aims

The aim is to help to close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage in electoral participation. Indigenous Australians, particularly Indigenous youth, are less likely to enrol, less likely to vote and more likely to vote informally than other Australians.

About

NIYP is run by the AEC's Indigenous Electoral Participation Program in collaboration with the YMCA and the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House.

Fifty young Indigenous people from across Australia will participate in the week-long leadership program in Canberra from 28 May to 3 June 2014. NIYP promotes youth advocacy, active community leadership and a commitment to democratic processes.

No specific skills are required and participants will be chosen based on their community leadership activities, what they can bring to the event and the benefits they will take home. Six people will be selected from each state and territory, and two from the Torres Strait Islands.

The program includes expert training in how government works, how laws are made, public speaking and dealing with the media. Participants will have the opportunity to meet with and learn from the

nation's leaders, members of Parliament, dignitaries, the parliamentary press gallery, Indigenous community leaders, senior public servants and academics.

The centrepiece is a two-day simulated parliament in the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, where participants will debate bills and issues of importance to their communities.

NIYP is an opportunity for young Indigenous Australians to build networks and meet other young Indigenous Australians from remote, rural, regional and urban settings. It is an opportunity to talk about community issues, to develop awareness about the matters that affect their everyday lives and to make their voice heard. Former youth parliamentarians will support and mentor this year's participants.

Background

The first Indigenous youth parliament was held in 2012 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Indigenous Australians gaining the right to vote in federal elections.

The 50 parliamentarians in the 2012 NIYP were selected from a field of more than 180 applicants – 35% came from remote communities, 45% from regional centres and 20% from urban communities. More information www.aec.gov.au/Indigenous.

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