

Year in Review

From the WA YP Convenor



Emily Robertson - City of Subiaco

Late last year, when I nominated for the Young Planners Convenor role, I set out to accomplish two main goals: first, to carry forward the legacy built by past convenors and committees, and second, to bring something fresh and valuable to our committee. Thanks to our dedicated committee, I'm proud to say we've achieved both.

This year, we've expanded the reach of our existing events, like the Young Planners Summit. We've also introduced new initiatives, including Lunch & Learn sessions and our Winter Failures Night. I'm incredibly proud of the committee for bringing fresh ideas, taking on new responsibilities, and making things happen.

Leading this group has been a rewarding experience for me personally, as I've enjoyed helping the team achieve our goals. As Convenor, I also represent WA's Young Planners on the WA Divisional Committee and the National Young Planners Convenor Committee, ensuring our voice is heard at all levels and aligning our goals with PIA National's vision. It's been a privilege to connect with so many inspiring people in this diverse industry.

Thank you to everyone who attended our events, supported our initiatives, and contributed in any way. 2024 has been fantastic, and I'm excited for the committee to keep building on this momentum in 2025.

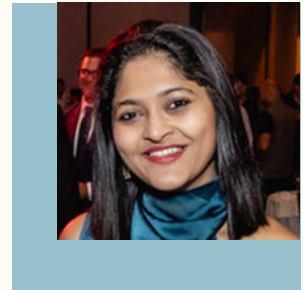
Committee members

- Alex Brooksbank** - Deputy Convenor - City of Joondalup
- Mary Chandu** - Secretary - City of Belmont
- Srinivas Nanjangud Balachandra** - Town of Port Hedland
- Tim Gates** - City of Wanneroo
- Bella White** - element advisory
- Luka Martins** - Taylor Burrell Barnett
- Eoghan McElwee** - Taylor Burrell Barnett
- Keyon Yang** - Shape Urban
- Vanessa Kalau** - Curtin University student



As the Secretary of the Young Planners Committee, I've had the opportunity to support the convenor and deputy convenor in organizing our monthly meetings by preparing agendas and minutes. My role has allowed me to engage closely with the committee's strategic initiatives.

In addition to this, I've supported PIA events when needed and participated in Advocacy Subcommittee meetings, where I provide a Young Planners' perspective and support various initiatives.



Mary Chandu



Keyon Yang

This year, I have met a bunch of kind-hearted new career planners in WA. Being on the YP committee has given me a safe space to discuss challenges facing emerging urban planners in Australia.

I'm incredibly proud of the events we created, including the YP Summit, Lunch & Learn the Winter's Failure Night and most of all, our committee members who presented the affordable housing topic from the YP perspective at the state conference.

I initially joined the YP Committee with some hesitation, unsure of what I, as a student, could contribute. However, being part of the committee has become a transformative experience in my development as a planner.

There have been moments where I've observed and learned from more experienced members, and others where I've been encouraged to step outside my comfort zone and take on challenges that seemed daunting. It's in those moments of uncertainty that I've experienced the most growth.

What I value most about the committee is the diverse range of people I've had the privilege of meeting, which has deepened my appreciation for the power of both our differences and commonalities, professionally and personally. This diversity fosters a richer understanding of the multifaceted world of planning, and I hope it continues to expand.



Vanessa Kalau



Curtin University - Student Engagement

In March, Emily, Luka and Vanessa presented to Curtin University students about PIA and the YP committee's initiatives, followed by a lunch. Young Planners encompasses students, graduates, and people who are up to five years post-graduation, allowing us to engage with all levels of membership!

Young Planners Summit

Exploring the Future Diversity of the Planning Profession

12 Speakers | 1 Walking Tour | 1 Workshop

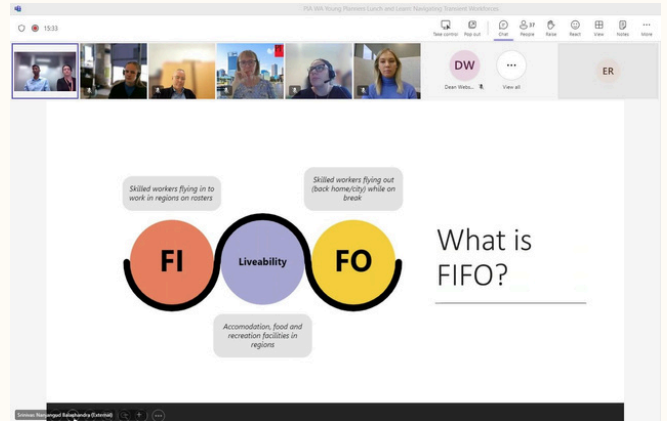
In April, the YP committee hosted their annual Young Planners Summit, extending it to a full-day event due to the success of prior years. This year was another sold-out success, and we aim to broaden our reach even more in 2025. We explored a wide array of topics within the realm of 'urban planning' to highlight the diversity of our profession.



Online Lunch & Learn Series

In June, the YP committee launched its inaugural lunch and learn series. This initiative was created to enhance engagement with our regional members, given the challenges of attending in-person events. Srinivas, one of our committee members, who resides and works in Port Hedland—12 hours away from Perth—presented during the session.

The event was a remarkable success, attracting over 50 participants from across Western Australia and beyond. We look forward to continuing these Lunch and Learn sessions in 2025. If you're interested in presenting, please get in touch!



I particularly enjoyed launching the Lunch-and-Learn series, which focuses on urban and regional planning, fostering knowledge sharing and connections among planners across WA and beyond.”

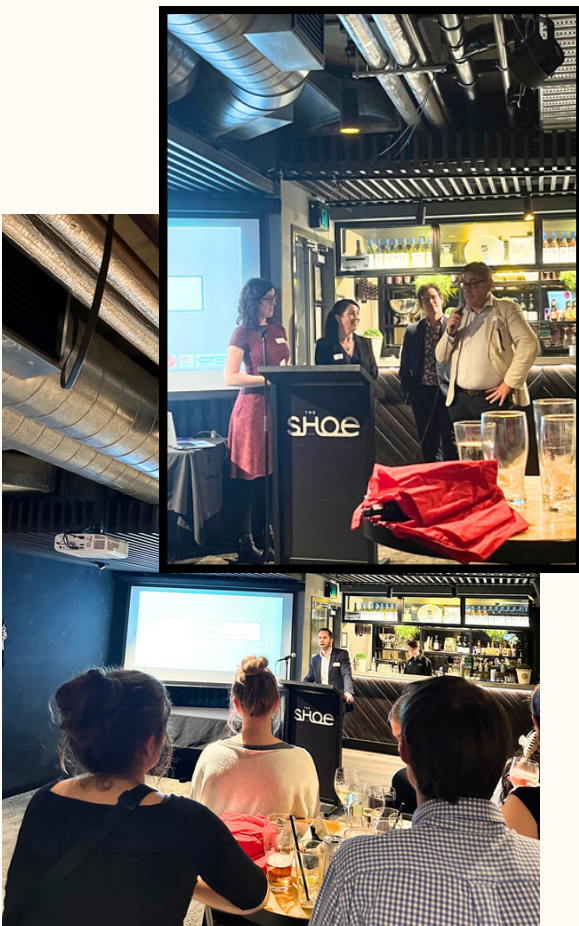
- Srinivas NB

Winter Failures Night

5 Speakers | Several failures

In July, the YP committee successfully hosted its very first Winter Failures Night. This event was inspired by the Victoria YP committee's 'F*ck Up Night.' Our team embraced the challenge of organising a fresh event, and it turned out to be a remarkable success!

We collaborated with AITPM Emerging Professionals and invited five seasoned professionals from the fields of planning and transport engineering to share their experiences of career setbacks. From engineering blunders to struggles with maintaining a work-life balance, we covered it all. We plan to continue this event in the future, so keep an eye out for it next winter!



National Congress - Melbourne

In May, Emily represented the WA Young Planners at the National Congress.

Young Planner Convenors from all over Australia came together to tackle the challenges faced by YPs across the country. It was a truly inspiring session hearing from fellow YPs exploring topics such as event types, committee structures, and leadership approaches.



State Planning Conference - WA

Bella, Emily & Tim | 30 minutes | Topic: the housing crisis from a YP perspective



Speaking at the State planning conference was a really rewarding experience for me. Although I was out my comfort zone, I feel really proud to have raised an important issue currently facing the planning industry.

Emily and Tim were really encouraging throughout the whole process, and I felt that we worked really well together as a team. I couldn't have done it without them.

- Bella White

As part of the Emerging Planner's Committee, I shared my insights into the current housing affordability crisis from the perspective of a young planner. Specifically, practical responses that could be implemented by individuals and government authorities. I discussed non-market and built to rent housing models, creative built strata subdivisions that prioritise meaningful communal space over driveways, and my personal experience with my parent's decision to rent out the back of my childhood home.

While it took considerable research and rehearsal time to prepare, I thoroughly enjoyed the public speaking aspect - the positive feedback and interest we received at the convention was also very rewarding.

- Tim Gates

Mentoring Program

The YP committee launched its annual Mentoring Program in August. We match mentors and mentees according to their experience and individual goals for the sessions! Emily and Keyon shared valuable insights on how to make the most of the program, at the launch event.

We wish all pairs good luck this year and hope they maximise their learning experiences!



Representation on Sub-Committees

YP committee members serve as representatives on the divisional committee sub-committees, ensuring our ideas and perspectives are heard. These meetings occur every six weeks, and then the YP reps share updates on initiatives and campaigns back to our YP committee.

Policy and Advocacy:

Mary Chandu
Keyon Yang

Membership and Outreach:

Alex Brooksbank
Vanessa Kalau

'Become a Planner' - Schools Campaign

This campaign aims to promote planning as a career in high schools. Initially, the committee intended for all members to visit a different school this year.

However, the resources have only recently been released, and the YP committee have shifted focus to outreach in 2025.

In October, Emily was able presented at her former high school, with the new campaign resources available. Interested participants can reach out, or visit the 'Become a Planner' website by PIA for more information.



Favourites from the team 2024

Working as a regional planning professional away from Perth makes it challenging to engage with events primarily hosted in the city. My involvement in the PIA WA Young Planners Committee has been invaluable for networking.



Keyon Yang

I realised that the power of collective voices is better heard than individual voices, and the YP committee is a great platform to start.



Srinivas NB



Tim Gates

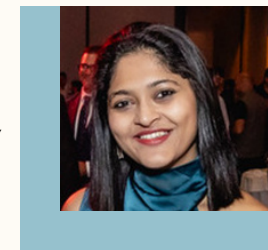
Being part of the committee is an excellent way to start and progress a career in planning. It offers the opportunity to get involved with PIA events and connect with other like-minded emerging planners. PIA also offers free and discounted tickets to events to committee members who get involved with organising them. In my experience, being a member has been highly regarded by employers and a common talking point in interviews. There is also free food at the meetings sometimes - I took a whole box of squid rings home once.

What I enjoy most about being on the committee is the chance to network and broaden my professional connections while actively promoting planning as a career choice. It has been an incredible experience for both personal and professional growth, and I find it rewarding to collaborate with passionate individuals who are truly committed to shaping the future of the planning profession.



Bella White

My favourite thing about the committee was the amount of connections I made throughout the year. I was able to really grow my network despite working in an engineering consultancy.



Mary Chandu

One of my favorite aspects of being on the committee is the chance to confront the 'elephants in the room'—the ingrained practices and assumptions in the planning field. As a young planner, sustainability is a priority for me, both for the present and future generations. While I respect the foundations laid before us, I also believe it's essential to challenge these 'elephants' if we are to evolve. There's a saying that you can only eat an elephant one bite at a time, and being on the committee gives me the opportunity to take those critical first bites.



Vanessa Kalau