

THE COMMONWEALTH ASSOCIATION OF PLANNERS

Young Planners Network

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) is a global institution that has served to connect planners and advance planning across the Commonwealth for over 50 years. Today this global institution plays an increasingly significant role in promoting planning as fundamental for sustainable human settlements, mitigating the impacts of climate change and building resilient communities. CAP has Commonwealth and United Nations accreditation.

CAP comprises a grouping of national professional institutes or associations, who have a collective membership of over 40,000 planners across 30 Commonwealth countries.

CAP is a charity, registered in Scotland, and has a formal Constitution, most recently amended and adopted in November 2023, which provides for a biennial General Assembly to be the main governing body of the Association, with decisions between times being taken by the Assembly (for strategic matters) and an elected Board of Trustees (for administrative and corporate matters).

The Constitution allows the Assembly to approve the formation of Networks, which are independently managed groups or communities of individual members of CAP or groups of CAP's member organisations.

Name

The name of the Network is the **Commonwealth Association of Planners Young Planners Network (CAPYPN)**.

Background

The CAP Young Planners' Network connects and mobilises planning students and young planners across the Commonwealth to help address the needs of young planners and youth more generally, and to contribute a youth perspective to the work of CAP. CAP is a co-founding member of the Commonwealth Youth for Sustainable Urbanisation Network

Mission

- **Inspire**
Young people are attracted to the Planning profession and the association.
- **Improve**
Young planners are equipped to confidently meet the immediate needs and future demands of their communities and the global world.
- **Influence**
The value and purpose of planning is recognised locally, nationally, globally across sectors and other Commonwealth Nations join the association.

Objectives

- **Connect**
Provide a platform for members to support each other, network, develop skills and capacity, exchange and share information/ideas, build professional knowledge and ethical practice.
- **Campaign**
Raise the profile of planning profession and the importance of engaging young people and young planners from conception to delivery
- **Collaborate**
Work together with other professionals, relevant national, Commonwealth and international governmental and nongovernmental organisations.
- **Contribute**
Actively participate in improving the quality of life and well-being of communities

Key Results Areas

1. **Connect: Build a Supportive and Professional Network**
 - Establish an accessible platform for knowledge sharing and collaboration among young planners.
 - Increase engagement through regular networking events, mentorship programmes, and professional development workshops.
 - Foster a culture of ethical practice and innovation in the profession.
 - Measure success through participation rates, feedback surveys, and skill development outcomes.
2. **Campaign: Build a Supportive and Professional Network**
 - Establish an accessible platform for knowledge sharing and collaboration among young planners.
 - Increase engagement through regular networking events, mentorship programmes, and professional development workshops.
 - Foster a culture of ethical practice and innovation in the profession.
 - Measure success through participation rates, feedback surveys, and skill development outcomes.
3. **Collaborate: Build a Supportive and Professional Network**
 - Establish an accessible platform for knowledge sharing and collaboration among young planners.
 - Increase engagement through regular networking events, mentorship programmes, and professional development workshops.

- Foster a culture of ethical practice and innovation in the profession.
- Measure success through participation rates, feedback surveys, and skill development outcomes.

4. Contribute: Deliver Community Impact and Social Value

- Actively engage in projects that improve community well-being and address local and global challenges.
- Support initiatives that promote sustainable development, climate resilience, and social equity.
- Share case studies and success stories of impactful community projects to inspire further action.
- Assess impact through community feedback, project outcomes, and alignment with global quality-of-life indicators.

5. Expand and Engage Membership Base

- Grow membership by promoting the benefits of joining CAP Young Planners.
- Retain members through value-driven programmes, professional opportunities, and a sense of community.
- Provide resources and guidance tailored to members' needs, including early-career professionals and students.
- Monitor success through membership growth, retention rates, and member satisfaction surveys.

Membership

Membership is open all planning students or planners with less than 10 years post qualification experience who are based in a Commonwealth country and/or who are a member or student member of a professional planning organisation that is a member of CAP.

Young Planner organisations from within any of the Commonwealth countries may be affiliate members of the CAP Young Planners Network

Administration

The CAP Young Planners Network is constituted as an independently managed group of individual members of the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) professional association.

The Executive committee consists of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and other Co-Leads.

The representative assembly consists of young planners nominated by their respective national professional planning associations to bring their national perspectives and expertise to the network as well as serve as the voice of the young planners at the national, regional and local levels.

Network Chairperson

The Network Chair acts as the Network's lead and shall be appointed by the CAP Board of Trustees (BoT). The Chair is the Convenor of the Network and is responsible to CAP for the orderly and proper conduct of all the affairs of the Network.

The Network Chair shall be accountable to the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) Assembly, to which a report shall be presented at least once a year. At other times, and on request, the Chair shall inform the CAP BoT on the activities of the Network. The Network Chair has a responsibility for all decisions that might have significant reputational implications (including significant partnerships or collaborations).

Finances

The network is welcome to pursue grant funding from or in collaboration with CAP. Where it does so, it must send the request to the CAP Board of Trustees, via the Secretary General, setting out the specific purpose for which the grant is being requested. The Board of Trustees will consider the extent to which the purpose matches the Purposes of CAP (defined in the Constitution) and any Strategic Plan in place at the time.

Where funding is allocated via CAP to support the efforts of a network, the Chair or co-Chairs shall provide the Board of Trustees with written confirmation that the money has been applied to the purpose for which it was given, along with evidence of the appropriate application of the money. Any funds will be held and administered by CAP.

Review of Terms of Reference

Date of approval of these Terms of Reference by the Board of Trustees: 17th April 2025

Target date for review of the Terms of Reference: 30th April 2029

Appendix I - Governance Structure

(Executive Committee/Exco and Representative Assembly)

As part of our commitment to fostering the professional development and engagement of young planners within the organisation, we have established various roles within the YPN structure to drive our mission forward.

Each role plays a crucial part in shaping the activities and initiatives of the YPN, contributing to our collective efforts to empower young planners and advance the field of planning. Below is the brief overview of the key roles within the CAP YPN structure:

1. Chair:

- Lead the network by setting its strategic direction, ensuring alignment with the mission of the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP).
- Chair meetings, ensure decisions are effectively implemented, and oversee adherence to the network's constitution or guidelines and represent the YPN in CAP meetings and events.
- Oversee the progress of all the activities and initiatives of the YPN, ensuring objectives are met and the impact is assessed.
- Represent the network at regional and international events, advocating for young planners and sustainable urban development initiatives.
- Foster collaboration and communication with YPN members, partners and with external stakeholders.
- Serve as a liaison between the YPN, CAP Assembly and the Board of Trustees.
- Act as a role model and motivator for members, encouraging active participation and professional development.

2. Vice Chair:

- Support the Chair in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.
- Act as a deputy to the Chair, assuming their responsibilities when needed and providing additional support in leadership functions.
- Lead specific projects or initiatives, ensuring progress and collaboration across different regions of the Commonwealth and as assigned by the Chair and Representative Assembly.
- Collaborate with Co-Leads and other members to develop and implement strategies to engage and support young planners within CAP.
- Strengthen connections among members by facilitating networking opportunities and supporting capacity-building efforts.

3. Secretary

- Ensuring compliance with CAP YPN objectives, terms of reference and programme.

- Leading on scheduling and setting meeting agendas, reporting on their outcomes in the form of minutes, trackers etc.
- Record and distribute minutes of meetings, ensuring accurate documentation of discussions and decision
- Maintain organised records of correspondence, initiatives, and reports for future reference.
- Provide administrative and logistical support to the Chair and Vice Chair to ensure the smooth running of network activities.
- Collaborate with Co-Leads and other members to develop and implement strategies to engage and support young planners within CAP.
- Serves as the Chief Whip of the CAP YPN.

4. Representative Assembly:

- Develop and agree to the work plan of the CAP YPN for the term and review quarterly update.
- Serve as the voice of National Young Planners across the Commonwealth.
- Represent the interests of national professional planning associations within the CAP YPN.
- Serve as the contact persons for the young planners within their countries and support the initiatives of the wider CAP Young Planners Network at national, regional and local levels.
- Support and amplify the initiatives of the CAP YPN at national, regional, and local levels.
- Gather feedback, concerns, and suggestions from Young Planners and communicate them to the CAP Young Planners Network with a view to enable CAP Young Planners Network develop innovative solutions.
- Representing the agreed views, interests and perspectives of the CAP Young Planners Network when recommended to attend CAP meetings, committees, and working groups.
- Facilitate communication and collaboration between YPN members and CAP leadership.

5. Co-Leads (Media & Communications):

- Develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy to promote YPN activities and initiatives.
- Manage YPN's presence on social media platforms, websites, and other communication channels.
- Draft and circulate newsletters, updates, and other communications to keep members informed and engaged. Liaise with media outlets to secure coverage for key events and initiatives, preparing press kits and organising interviews where necessary.
- Maintain organised records of correspondence, initiatives, and reports for future reference.

- Create engaging content, including articles, blog posts, and newsletters, to share with YPN members and the broader planning community.
- Act as the primary point of contact for the network's members, facilitating clear and consistent communication within the network and with external stakeholders.
- Coordinate with other YPN roles to ensure consistent messaging and branding across all communication channels and increase awareness of the network's activities and impact.
- Lead the promotion of the network's events and initiatives by creating compelling content and implementing targeted outreach strategies to maximise participation and impact.

6. Co-Leads (Research & Capacity Building):

- Identify research topics and capacity-building opportunities relevant to young planners.
- Coordinate research projects, surveys, and knowledge-sharing activities within the YPN.
- Organise workshops, webinars, and training sessions to enhance the professional development of YPN members.
- Develop and promote opportunities for skill development and professional growth among members.
- Collaborate with academic institutions, research organisations, and industry partners to leverage resources and expertise.

7. Co-Leads (Membership Engagement):

- Develop strategies to recruit and retain YPN members.
- Organise networking events, social gatherings, and professional development activities to foster a sense of community among YPN members.
- Maintain an updated database of members and facilitate communication between the leadership team and the wider membership.
- Collect feedback from YPN members to continuously improve the membership experience.
- Facilitate mentorship and peer support programs to facilitate knowledge exchange and career advancement.

8. Co-Leads (International Partnership):

- Establish and maintain partnerships with international organisations, professional associations, and youth networks.
- Explore opportunities for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and joint initiatives with international partners.
- Represent the YPN in international conferences, forums, and events.
- Coordinate with other YPN roles to integrate international perspectives and experiences into YPN activities.

9. Ad Hoc Committees (Events/Conferences/Awards | Study Tour | Mentoring):

Events/Conferences/Awards Committee:

- Plan and organise events, conferences, and awards programs to showcase the work and achievements of YPs.
- Coordinate logistics, speakers, sponsors, and promotional activities for YPN events.

Study Tour Committee:

- Plan and coordinate study tours, field trips, and educational excursions to explore planning practices and challenges in different contexts.
- Arrange site visits, meetings with local stakeholders, and cultural experiences for participants.

Mentoring Committee:

- Develop and manage mentorship programs to support the professional development of YPs.
- Match mentors with mentees based on their interests, goals, and areas of expertise.
- Provide guidance, resources, and networking opportunities to mentorship pairs throughout the program.

9. Ex-officio Members

- **These are the Immediate Past Chair, Immediate Past Vice-Chair, Immediate Past Secretary (Mandatory).**
- Provide guidance and support to the new leadership team by sharing knowledge, experiences, and insights gained during their tenure.
- Act as an advisor to the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and other members of the leadership team, offering strategic input on ongoing projects and initiatives.
- Mentor incoming leaders and other members, helping to build their capacity to effectively manage the network's responsibilities.
- Represent the network at events, forums, and meetings as needed, maintaining strong relationships with stakeholders and ensuring continuity in representation.
- Take responsibility for overseeing or completing ongoing projects initiated during their term to ensure successful implementation and handover.
- Assist in reviewing and refining the network's strategic goals, providing continuity and alignment with the network's long-term vision.

Period of Appointment:

Each role within the CAP Young Planners Network (YPN) operates on a term basis, with each term lasting for two years. Individuals serving in these roles (**except for the Ex-officio members**) may be re-elected for a maximum of three terms, totalling six years of service in any specific position. The Ex-officio members are expected to serve for a minimum of 3 years until there is another qualified member. This term limit is established to ensure regular turnover, fresh perspectives, and opportunities for diverse leadership within the YPN structure.