

Youth Participation in Policymaking in the Digital Age: Discursive change and the maintenance of political barriers

Philippa Collin and Ariadne Vromen

Western Sydney University & University of Sydney

@philippacollin

@ariadne_syd



Participation and Policy



The screenshot shows the Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) website. The header features the AYCC logo and navigation links: ABOUT, PROJECTS, CAMPAIGNS, VOLUNTEER, NEWS, SEED, JOIN, and DONATE. A large banner image of wind turbines over a coastal landscape contains the text: "We're building a generation-wide movement to solve the climate crisis. Join a movement of more than 110,000 young people." Below the banner, there are three main call-to-action buttons: "Become an AYCC Regular Donor!" (with a photo of two young women), "Volunteer" (for local groups), "Sign-up" (for latest updates), and "Donate" (to help them grow). The footer includes social media links for Facebook and Twitter, and a section for "AYCC ON FACEBOOK" with a "Like" button and a count of 1770.

aycc
Australian Youth Climate Coalition

ABOUT PROJECTS CAMPAIGNS VOLUNTEER NEWS SEED JOIN DONATE

We're building a generation-wide movement to solve the climate crisis.
Join a movement of more than 110,000 young people.

Become an AYCC Regular Donor!
By chipping in a few dollars a week, you'll give us the ability to plan for the future and stay independent. Get involved now!

Volunteer
For your local group

Sign-up
For the latest updates

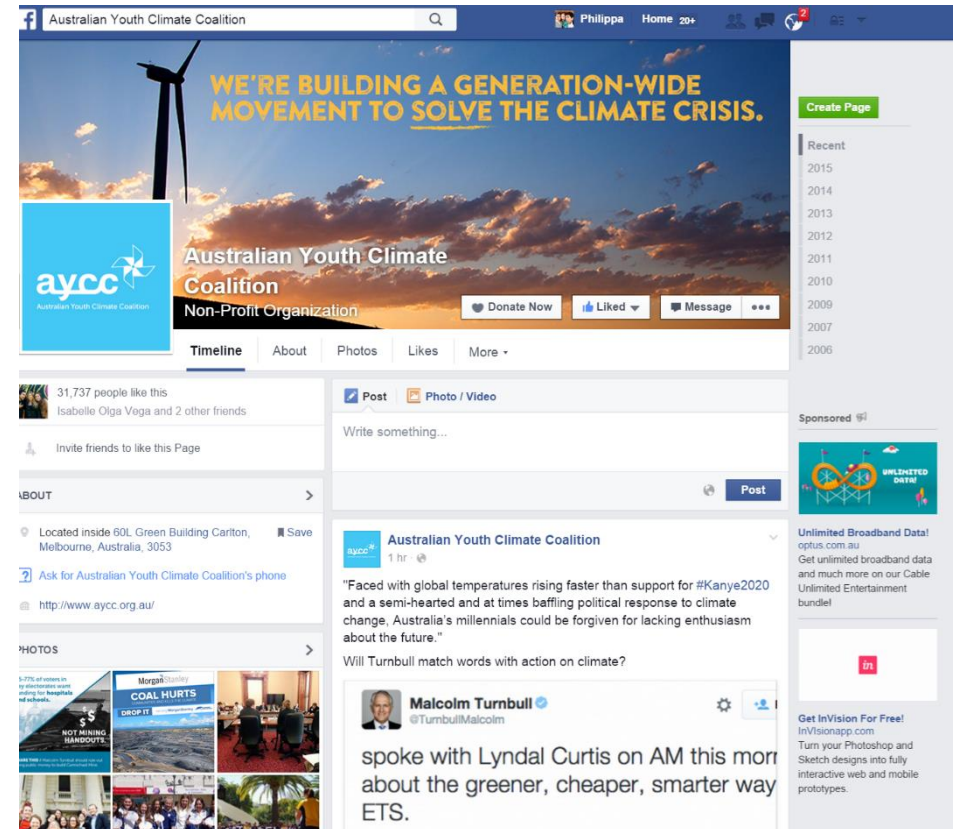
Donate
And help us grow

AYCC ON FACEBOOK
Share AYCC and help fight climate change. Like 1770

VIEW
thanks for sharing our union's perspective @dan_spencer123 - got to b working w/ you & @AYCC on this crucial campaign for our future

VIEW
"If we are going to truly transition we have to be brave and ambitious" @JosephDeaton on just transitions https://share/17481R #climate

VIEW
Hey @TurnbullMalcolm, What's Up With Your "Vision" For Climate Change And Renewable Energy? http://www.theyoc.al/hey-malcolm-



The screenshot shows the Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) Facebook page. The header features the AYCC logo and navigation links: ABOUT, Photos, Likes, and More. A large banner image of wind turbines over a coastal landscape contains the text: "WE'RE BUILDING A GENERATION-WIDE MOVEMENT TO SOLVE THE CLIMATE CRISIS." Below the banner, there are three main call-to-action buttons: "Donate Now", "Liked", and "Message". The page shows 31,737 people like this page, including Isabelle Olga Vega and 2 other friends. The "ABOUT" section lists the location as 60L Green Building Carlton, Melbourne, Australia, 3053, and provides a link to the AYCC website. The "PHOTOS" section shows a collage of images related to climate change, including a protest sign that says "COAL HURTS" and a photo of a group of people. A post from the AYCC page, dated 1 hr ago, features a quote from Malcolm Turnbull: "Faced with global temperatures rising faster than support for #Kanye2020 and a semi-hearted and at times baffling political response to climate change, Australia's millennials could be forgiven for lacking enthusiasm about the future." The post also includes a photo of Malcolm Turnbull and a link to a video of him speaking with Lyndal Curtis on AM.

Australian Youth Climate Coalition

WE'RE BUILDING A GENERATION-WIDE MOVEMENT TO SOLVE THE CLIMATE CRISIS.

Australian Youth Climate Coalition
Non-Profit Organization

Donate Now Liked Message

Timeline About Photos Likes More

31,737 people like this
Isabelle Olga Vega and 2 other friends

Invite friends to like this Page

ABOUT

Located inside 60L Green Building Carlton, Melbourne, Australia, 3053

Ask for Australian Youth Climate Coalition's phone

http://www.aycc.org.au/

PHOTOS

5-77% of voters in 10 electorates want ending fast hospitals and fast roads.

Morgan Stanley
COAL HURTS
DROP IT

Will Turnbull match words with action on climate?

Australian Youth Climate Coalition
1 hr

"Faced with global temperatures rising faster than support for #Kanye2020 and a semi-hearted and at times baffling political response to climate change, Australia's millennials could be forgiven for lacking enthusiasm about the future."

Malcolm Turnbull
@TurnbullMalcolm

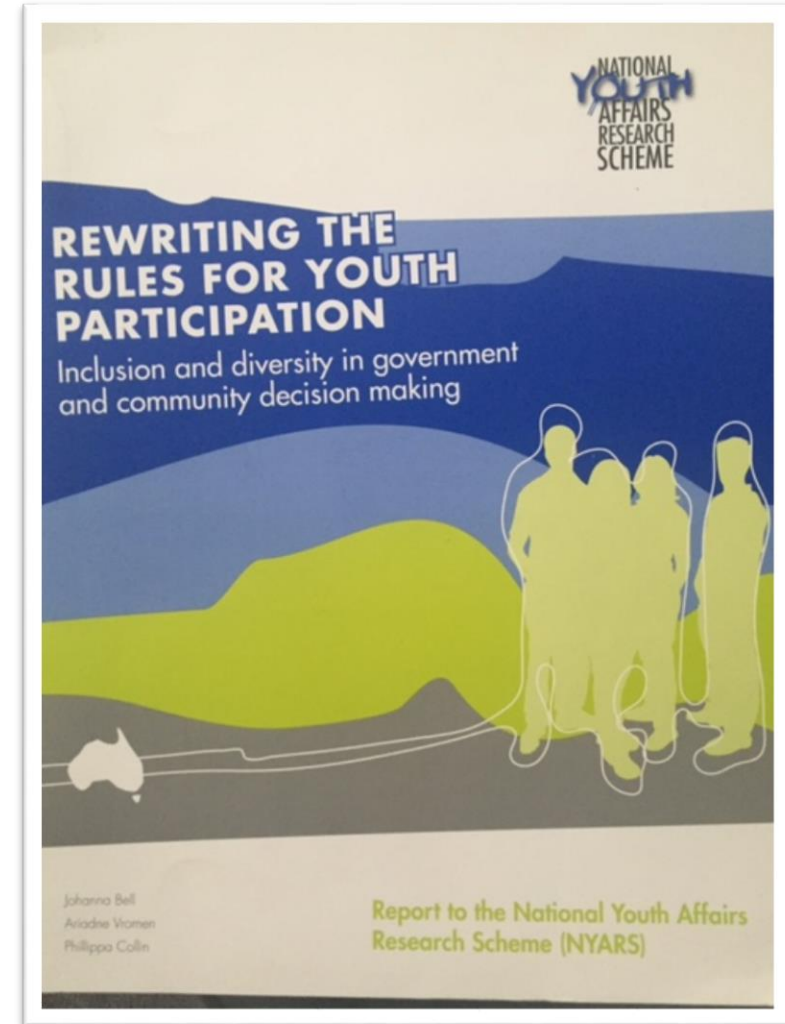
spoke with Lyndal Curtis on AM this morn about the greener, cheaper, smarter way ETS.

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10 years ago

- Government commissioned Bell, Vromen, Collin (2008)
- Political (cycle) response:
 - (re)Creation of youth advocacy peak
 - Online Australian Youth Forum
 - Attempt to diversify youth reps
- 2013 - defunding and delegitimising of youth representation



"This government does not believe that a single peak body is necessary for it to hear the views of Australian youth, nor that a single peak body is capable of representing the diverse interests, experiences and background of young Australians,"

"The government is currently developing plans to consult with young Australians using a more focused and targeted approach."

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education Scott Ryan

Canberra Times May 20, 2014

Concepts and Questions

Right to 'Participation' as relational (Moosa-Mitha, 2008)

Underpinning discourses of structures and processes (Edwards, 2009)

Active/Failed Citizen (Harris, 2012)

Participation 1.0 / Participation 2.0: new norms (Micheletti)

Political agents / political opportunity structures (Vromen & Collin, 2010)

Why isn't youth participation institutionalised / mainstreamed into government frameworks in a digital age?

Youth Engaged Policy (YEP) Project

February – May 2016

Literature Review

International case studies

Forums with policy makers (n = 60)

Key Informant Interviews (n = 5)

Critical Issues workshop (n = 18)

Youth Engagement Index

Online survey

Youth Engagement Profile (n = 54)

Co-Design workshop (n = 35)



Engagement for young people

Discursive construction of young people's engagement has changed

- Beyond apathy, issues matter
- The right of young people to participate
- Diversity and marginalised
- Monolithic category of 'young people'

“the bright things”

“there is a marginalisation of Aboriginal young people and CALD young people”

Engagement for policymakers

Discursive construction of value of young people's engagement for policy has not changed

- Engagement is for voice, not co-creation

“policy making utilises a clinical, brief argument, there are restrictions, boundaries ..it's not effective to have young people there, ‘in the room’” (Canberra forum)

- Individualised/youth-led focus, expects youth voices to be representative
- Questioning of advocacy organisations

Engagement *for* policymakers

Value of successful processes of engagement are distinguished *from* policy outcome:

- Mobilization **over** policy change
- Informing **over** co-creating policy
- Models of participation **over** policy.
- Individualised view **over** relational view

Engagement for policymakers

Digital media seen as risky for engagement

- Insufficient resources or training or knowledge to engage 'properly'

“Young people are skilled in social media. They are active in existing networks and share information and there has been a failure by policymakers to see this” (Melbourne forum)

- Risks/fears of digital outweighs benefits
- Representations of how/what young people do and say online over engaging with young people online

Rights over engagement?

“It’s recognised that [Article 12 is] the gateway to realising all the other rights. If you don't have a voice, if you're not engaged and if you're not respected then your views are not respected...

...One of my biggest mantras is **it should be the norm to consult and engage children and young people in decisions that impact on them, either as individuals or as a group.** Virtually, every second bit of legislation and every second bit of program that gets developed has an impact on children, from everything from social security to family law to health policy to education policy, and yet consultations with children are not the norm”.

(Interview with Megan Mitchell, Australian Children’s Commissioner)

Child Rights (to Participation) & Policy Modes

	Participation 1.0	Participation 2.0
Internet	Voice	Action
Repertoires	Speaking to	Speaking / doing with
Actors	Expert Citizens / Reports	Everyday Makers / Failed Citizens
Communication	Vertical	Horizontal
Targets	Government/policy makers	Peers, community, industry
Data	Representations of young people	Representations by young people
Citizenship	Managed	Autonomous

Tensions for future policy processes

- Engagement vs rights
 - Outcome vs process
 - Advocacy vs inclusion
- Organisation vs individual
 - Youth-focussed vs youth-led
 - Action vs expressive
- Individualised vs Relational

Power and authority not delegated or shared, but now harder to question.

Thank You

Philippa Collin

Institute for Culture and Society

Western Sydney University

p.collin@westernsydney.edu.au

Ariadne Vromen

Department of Government and International Relations

University of Sydney

ariadne.vromen@sydney.edu.au