

Secure the future — homes for young Australians

The Foyer Foundation is calling on the federal government to fund 10 new accommodation sites across Australia that will house and support more than 3000 young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness over the next decade.

A consortium of 13 community organisations known as FoyerInvest is seeking funding to construct 10 new 40-unit buildings to help tackle the homelessness crisis that thousands are facing each day.

Known as “Youth Foyers”, the self-contained units with private bathroom and kitchen facilities would offer safe and secure housing to residents, along with education, employment and training opportunities and holistic support to help young people get their lives back on track.

“Contrary to common perceptions, young people experience the highest rates of homelessness among all age groups in Australia. Forty per cent of people experiencing homelessness are under the age of 24,” The Foyer Foundation CEO Liz Cameron-Smith said.

“The Prime Minister and the Minister for Housing understand the importance of secure and affordable housing for young people’s long-term futures. Now is the time for action and investment in practical housing solutions that will make an immediate impact on housing supply for young people.”

The FoyerInvest group is in Canberra on March 18 and 19 to meet with key decision makers and discuss its budget bid for \$184 million in capital to build the new accommodation facilities over the next three years.

“There are too many young people being forced to couch surf, live in cars, in overcrowded or unsafe homes or even on the streets,” Cameron-Smith said.

“Foyers are a proven solution that gives young people who are ready to learn and earn a way out of homelessness.

“Our partners have identified 16 communities in regional, remote and metropolitan places where a Foyer would make a significant difference to the

lives of the young people and their communities. An investment of \$184 million in this budget will mean we can get to work on delivering 10 more Foyers.”

Funding these services will help the federal government meet its commitment to combat youth homelessness and leave no-one behind.

“Our housing and support system is operating well beyond capacity. Two in 3 young people seeking medium-term housing support are turned away. Youth Foyers address this gap by offering young people a safe and stable home for up to two years, combined with the coaching and support they need to transition from homelessness towards independent, thriving futures.,” Cameron-Smith said.

“This not only benefits each young person, it also has positive impacts for their families, communities and our economy.”

Independent modelling by Accenture found Youth Foyers significantly reduced the cost to state and federal governments of supporting young people experiencing homelessness.

The [Under One Roof](#) report found that every dollar invested by governments in a Youth Foyer generated an additional \$6 in benefits. The benefits of a young person supported through a Foyer were \$172,417 in reduced lifetime costs per person.

The modelling found 65 per cent of young people in a Foyer were in employment on exit, reducing the need for welfare by \$47,330 per person throughout their lifetime.

ENDS

For more information, read the full submission [here](#).

For more information and to arrange interviews please call Alex Sampson on 0400 065 667 or email alex@89degreeseast.com

About The Foyer Foundation

The Foyer Foundation is a national for-purpose organisation that unlocks thriving futures for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We do this by growing the reach and impact of Youth Foyers. Youth Foyers offer 16-24 year olds a safe and stable place to live for up to two years, integrating housing, education, employment and life skills support all under one roof.

We catalyse momentum towards a national goal of 50 Foyers by 2030 by bringing together young people, community organisations, philanthropists and governments in diverse communities across Australia. We connect and align activities nationally; ensure quality services through accreditation, learning and development; build the evidence base; and advocate with young people and our growing network.

About the FoyerInvest Consortium

FoyerInvest is a national consortium of service providers, community housing providers, philanthropists and impact investors seeking to grow the reach and impact of Youth Foyers.

BACKGROUND

The FoyerInvest 2024 budget ask

Sixteen investment-ready Foyer locations have been identified in Queensland, NSW, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

The locations are: Mango Hill (Qld), Caboolture (Qld), Wyong (NSW), Penrith (NSW), Orange (NSW), Dubbo (NSW), Tweed Heads (NSW), Inner Gippsland (Vic), Berwick (Vic), Lilydale (Vic), Mildura (Vic), Clovelly Park (SA), Albany (WA), Broome (WA), Alice Springs (NT) and one additional site in Victoria.

*The budget submission referenced 16 locations, however, on 2 February 2024, the Queensland Government announced funding to deliver eight new Foyers, including in Cairns and Hervey Bay. As a result of this announcement, the list of proposed locations for federal funding has been updated to remove Cairns and Hervey Bay and add Mildura, with one location in Victoria still to be confirmed.

Many have secured land, developed concept plans and garnered local council support. This groundwork enables these opportunities to be activated quickly.

The 16 locations have been determined based on need and all are within close proximity to essential transport, education and employment opportunities

Each Youth Foyer provides a safe and stable home for approximately 40 young people aged 16 to 24. Every resident gets their own unit to call home while they are supported to build productive futures for themselves.

The Foyer model and results

- The first Australian Foyer opened in 2003.
- There are currently 16 accredited Youth Foyers in Australia, with an additional 11 undergoing accreditation or under construction. A further 16 are shovel-ready immediately or within the next two years.
- Community demand for Youth Foyers is on the rise, with 33 additional communities seeking investment to build new Youth Foyers in response to the urgent needs of young people in their community.
- Youth Foyers are delivered through place-based approaches in regional, remote and metropolitan communities.
- Within two years of living in a Youth Foyer, a young person develops the skills and capabilities they need to achieve long-term stability and independence.
- More than 80 per cent of Youth Foyer residents exit into safe and stable housing.
- 65 per cent gain secure and decent employment.
- 60 per cent are less likely to be involved in the justice system.

Key facts about youth homelessness in Australia

- It has never been more difficult for a young person to find stable, affordable housing.
- Across Australia, there are at least 40,000 young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and more than 400,000 living in poverty.
- Forty per cent of all people experiencing homelessness are young people under the age of 24.
- A 2023 Anglicare Survey of rental affordability found that 0 rentals (0%) were affordable for a person on Youth Allowance.
- Only 50% of young people seeking short-term support receive it. 2 in 3 young people seeking medium-term support have unmet needs. 75% of young people experiencing homelessness seeking long-term housing support have unmet needs.
- Homelessness refers not only to visible forms of homelessness, like living on the streets, but also invisible forms of homelessness including couch surfing, living in cars or in overcrowded or unsafe homes.
- One in 10 young people in Australia are not engaged in education, employment or training.

The budget submission is backed by FoyerInvest Consortium members including the Brotherhood of St. Laurence, Uniting NSW/ACT, Mission Australia, Wesley Mission Queensland, Launch Housing, Anglicare WA, For Purpose Investment Partners, Hand Heart Pocket, St John's Youth Service, Junction Australia, The Y (YMCA Queensland) and Brisbane Youth Services.

The FoyerInvest Consortium aims to establish 50 Youth Foyers by 2030, which would support an additional 20,000 young Australians and create \$2.9 billion in net lifetime benefits by 2040.