

Position Description

Sustainable Environment Advisory Committee 2021-2024

Volunteer Community Representatives (13 Positions)

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

Council advises that some of the personal information submitted by applicants for this position will be added to our database for communication and administrative purposes only, and will not be disclosed to any parties other than those involved in the selection process. When managing information we abide by the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Victoria) and the Information Privacy Principles.

INTRODUCTION

Yarra Ranges Council is seeking expressions of interest for an exciting and unique opportunity for thirteen (13) volunteer community representatives to take part in the Sustainable Environment Advisory Committee. The 13 positions include:

- Ten (10) general community positions.
- One (1) community representative with links to the indigenous community.
- Two (2) positions for young people with an interest in developing knowledge and networks within the environment sector.

The Yarra Ranges is renowned for its natural environment. The municipality has areas of significant remnant vegetation, valued townships and urban streetscapes, forested mountains, rural valleys and waterways that make up a critical part of Melbourne's water catchment.

Council has a role in maintaining these significant and valued areas for the community and encouraging the community to experience these places. This occurs through Council directly managing its own land, influencing private land management through its planning responsibilities, and partnering with other public land managers.

Much of the work undertaken by Council and other land owners focuses on the threats to Yarra Ranges Council's environmental assets. These include: weed and pest animal invasion; declining water quality; urban development; urban stormwater; climate change; and bushfire. By understanding what the threats are and what the community values, Council is able to make better decisions that strengthen our environment.

A healthy environment provides an enormous range of benefits to the community. Some of these benefits are economic and are linked to our productive agricultural sector and popular tourism industry. There are also social and cultural benefits that encourage physical activity; allow for social interaction; and create a stronger community identity. These benefits can contribute to why people make Yarra Ranges their home.

FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee provides Yarra Ranges Council with informed and constructive advice, input and support, to help guide the Council on environmental sustainability issues and initiatives relevant to the management and stewardship of the natural environment within the municipality.

The Committee will:

- Represent a range of sectors and opinions relating to or impacting the natural environment, including community, agency, industry, etc.
- Provide local knowledge and expertise about the Yarra Ranges' natural environment and impacts on it.
- Provide informed and constructive advice in regard to a wide range of environmental issues and the management of the local natural environment.

- Identify emerging issues of concern to the health of the Yarra Ranges natural environment.
- Provide specific and targeted feedback on a range of Council policies, strategies, and key environmental stewardship initiatives.
- Assist in determining Council priorities in regard to environmental management – industry best practice.
- Support and assist the Council's efforts to consult with and advocate to the broader Yarra Ranges community on environmental sustainability issues.
- Support the Council's efforts to maintain strong and close networks between individuals, groups, organisations, businesses and government agencies in pursuit of environmental stewardship outcomes.

POSITION OBJECTIVE(S)

As a community representative on the committee your role will be to provide local input and perspective into the management directions of the Yarra Ranges. The role and expectations of Committee members are detailed the draft SEAC Terms of Reference 2021.

The community representative positions offer a unique opportunity to network and work closely with other community members as well as with professionals within the environment sector. You will represent your local community and provide input into the environmentally significant Yarra Ranges. This position will enable you to increase your skills, knowledge and experience, particularly in verbal communication and negotiation regarding environmental management actions.

AVAILABILITY AND COMMITMENT

Meetings will be held bimonthly, with 6 meetings held per year.

Meetings are usually held on a weeknight online via Zoom Platform or in person at the Council offices in Lilydale (when possible) and historically have run from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. The first meeting of the newly elected committee is expected to be held in mid-November 2021.

Members of the Committee will hold their position for a fixed term (3 years) and are expected to attending meetings during this term.

Members of the Committee will be appointed by the Council.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Community members will be appointed as individuals based on their experience and qualifications and will be sought through expressions of interest. The following membership criteria will guide the selection of community members to the Committee:

- Demonstrated interest of diverse environmental and sustainability issues as they relate to the Yarra Ranges.

- Basic understanding of the role of local government in relation to environmental management, sustainability and/or related fields.
- Preference for skills, qualifications and experience in environmental management, sustainability and/or related fields.
- Preference for relevant experience in committees and/or demonstrated ability to participate in, and constructively contribute to a group, committee or organisation.
- Ability to regularly attend and participate in meetings as scheduled.
- Live and/or work within the municipality or have a demonstrated connection to the municipality through professional, technical, industry or volunteer alliances.
- Demonstrated commitment to work in a collaborative way with all members of the Committee.
- Ability to communicate with, understand and reflect the opinions of others from the broader community. This may be as a result of association with related or relevant community organisations or employment.
- Preference for individuals that add a diversity of skills, experience or background to the Committee relevant to any aspect of environmental stewardship including but not limited to; water management, biodiversity conservation, energy and climate change, sustainable development, and environmental planning.

SELECTION PROCESS

To assist with the selection process applications should include:

- Cover letter briefly addressing relevant membership criteria and a brief outline of your reasons for applying.
- Please indicate which position you are applying for:
 - General community member position
 - Community representative with links to the indigenous community, or
 - Young person with an interest in developing knowledge and networks within the environment sector
- Short personal resume outlining any relevant life experience or qualifications.

Applications close 5pm Friday 27th August 2021.

Applications are to be submitted to Suzanne Burville
s.burville@yarraranges.vic.gov.au