

# Youth Inc.



## INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS (WORK VENTURE STAFF)

### Introduction

This information is intended to provide information to prospective Work Venture staff. Of course, it won't answer all your questions, but we hope that it gives you the 'gist' what we are trying to do, and how. It is intended to give you a *feel* for the type of organisation we are building, in full awareness of the fact that this is still in many ways, a new venture.

### School Profile

Here's a summary of some basic details:

<i>School Name</i>	Youth Inc. Enterprise Academy (or just 'Youth Inc.' for short)
<i>Type of School</i>	Alternative, independent, co-ed., senior secondary 'studio school'
<i>Physical Address</i>	110 Hindley Street, Adelaide SA 5000
<i>Year Levels</i>	Year 11 & 12 (SACE 1 & 2; VET)
<i>Student Target Group</i>	Smart, but disengaged youth; aged 17-24 years (post-compulsory)
<i>Student Enrolment</i>	Around 50 per Team
<i>Enrolment</i>	6 term program, enrolling each July (Term 3 for 6 terms)
<i>Length of Enrolment</i>	Approx. 18 months; as determined by student needs/circumstances
<i>Terms/Semesters</i>	Aligned to private school dates; Plus, non-term 'recharge' programs
<i>Operating Hours</i>	Currently 8.30am until 4.30pm Monday to Friday, but possibility for longer hours if student needs dictate
<i>Principal/Director</i>	John Frederick (Fred) Heidt B.Ed, M.Spec.Ed
<i>Chairperson</i>	Spero Chapley – Managing Director, Commercial Retail Group

### Origins & History

Youth Inc. was established by Spero Chapley in January 2006. The Chapley family has been involved in commercial property development and retail supermarket operations for over 60 years and it currently owns and operates a number of Foodland Supermarkets and retail shopping centres throughout the Adelaide metropolitan area. In establishing Youth Inc. as an independent, incorporated, charitable foundation, the Chapley family sought to apply its resources, connections and support to the development of programs for disadvantaged youth in a deliberate and strategic kind of way. Youth Inc. is now 10 years old, and in that time, it has developed award-winning programs that successfully re-engage young people in formal learning and employment pathways. Securing registration as a 'Special Assistance School' is considered a natural extension of our work with disengaged youth.

## **School Registration**

Youth Inc. is formally registered as a school in compliance with the Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 Part 5, Division 2, Section 42 – as administered by the Education and Early Childhood Service Registration and Standards Board of South Australia.

## **School Purpose and Vision**

To provide transformative learning experiences for young people who are disconnected from education and community.

A safe, dynamic and supportive learning community, where young people can develop their unique strengths and talents, and build the wellbeing, mindsets and capabilities they need to live a life that matters to them

## **Student Target Group**

Our ideal student would exhibit the following characteristics:

- Aged 17-24 years (post compulsory school age)
- Disengaged from school or other formal learning or training for 12+ months
- Unemployed for 12+ months; or never had a job
- At-risk of significant socio-economic disadvantage
- Ready for something new; and
- Suited to a hands-on, group-based, flexible learning program that translates into a SACE qualification (or equivalent)

This includes:

- Early school leavers
- People who are unemployed (52 weeks+, registered with Centrelink or not)
- Young people living in poverty &/or low socio-economic areas
- Young people with mental health issues
- Minority groups – including migrants, refugees, Indigenous youth
- Young people with experience in the youth justice system

## **Educational Philosophy**

Our educational philosophy is based on the belief that first and foremost, young people need self-belief. That is, belief in their own ability to create the life that they want (otherwise described as *self-efficacy*). Overall, we want to engage young people in learning that is interesting, relevant and practical, and then start them on a life-trajectory that is based on a clear understanding of their unique talents, what they are passionate about, and where they want to go. Self-belief requires a positive mindset, sustained effort, and resilience – built on a scaffold of incremental success.

Beyond a sense of self-belief, our aim is for young people to be *enterprising* – in both senses of the word – meaning, the world of work and business, and as an attitude, wherewithal or resourcefulness. We

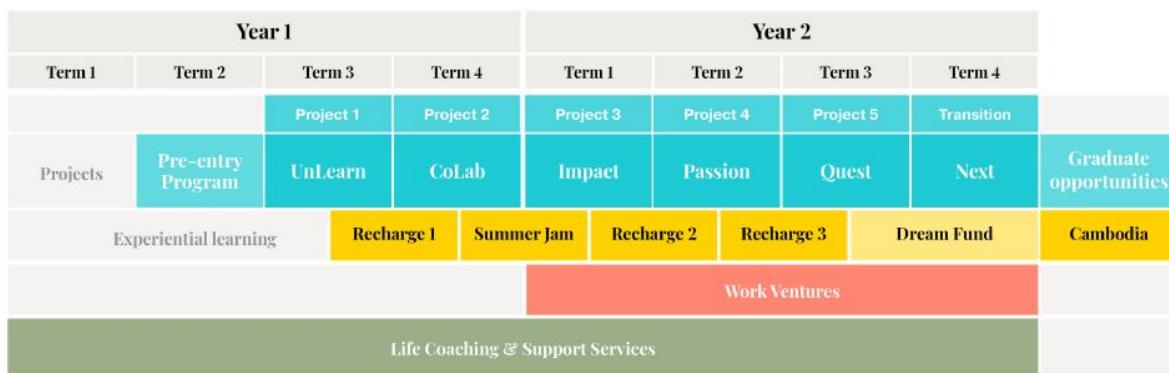
want young people to be able to undertake difficult and important things (projects); to be creative and energetic in anything they set their mind to; to be able to deal with setbacks, failure and disappointment. And to maintain a sense of mental health and wellbeing that enables them to thrive.

This educational philosophy is rooted in the principles of holistic and progressive education, and is concerned with the development of each student's intellectual, emotional, social, physical and creative potentials. It aims at helping students to make the most of who they are, and what they want to become. Finally, it is about engaging them in a learning process that encourages personal and social responsibility, in the context of living a purposeful life.

### **Learning Model**

Our model seeks to deliver a project-based learning experience, utilising the SACE Framework with vocational, coaching and support services to achieve an effective response to the needs of young people that have disengaged from formal learning and employment pathways.

## **Our Learning Model**



**Includes:** Mid-year enrolment; pre-entry program; 6 Phases; project-based learning; work ventures (paid employment); life coaching and support services; and a vast range of experiential learning opportunities.

### **A Word about Academic Achievement**

A specific mention of academic achievement may be warranted here. Much has been written about the benefits of cultivating high standards and expectations of *academic* success for at-risk of socio-economic disadvantage. However, and without seeking to limit the pursuit of academic excellence, we will apply a broader view of what constitutes achievement and success. We will value learning over results; personal growth and development over standardised measures; and learning for life over preparation for work. Ours will be a culture of high expectations in regard to personal responsibility, learning together, and making a positive contribution. We are clear that our educational offer is not for everyone.

Our learning programs *will* provide a new pathway to SACE completion (or equivalent) but it is less likely that students will achieve a direct pathway to higher education through an ATAR score. Instead, students who show an aptitude and a desire to undertake university education will be enthusiastically encouraged to access those opportunities via Foundation Studies, Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) and other forms of entry.

### **Project-based Learning**

Above all, we promote action, project-based learning as a primary medium for engagement and learning. Research confirms that project-based learning (pBL) is an effective medium in which to initiate and sustain the interest of disengaged learners. Contextualising this learning in a community-based setting promotes student engagement, experience and understanding.

### **School Facilities**

We are based in the heart of the Adelaide CBD at 110 Hindley Street, occupying the Basement, Ground Floor and the First Floor. The site has many positives including:

1. Space, functionality, style/look and feel, general amenity
2. Proximity to major transport facilities – including bus, tram and train services (accessible to participants living throughout the greater Adelaide metropolitan area)
3. Proximity to other learning facilities – including Adelaide TAFE, UniSA, and Registered Training Organisations located on Currie Street
4. Access to other community facilities and services
5. Relevance to contemporary youth culture

The building includes a student lounge, a shopfront, meeting rooms, student collaborative spaces, and staff areas.

Our aim has been to develop a learning facility where young people come in and say ‘wow’! We have created an environment that speaks to the quality of learning, and a sense of value that we place on our students; one that raises expectations of who they are, what they’re entitled to, and what they are capable of. We want the School to be the epicentre of a community-based learning approach where students are actively immersed in projects outside of the School itself. We want the School to be a home-base – a place where students feel safe, a place where they feel they belong.

### **School & Daily Operations**

In general, the School runs more as a co-working space than a traditional school setting. Meetings, workshops, seminars, one-to-one conversations, project teams, small-group meetings, coaching sessions, functions, laptops, whiteboards, presentations, collaboration, personal work, lots of coffee... no formal classrooms, no rows of desks, and no uniforms. The student lounge has a coffee machine and a sandwich press. No yard duty, no extra-curricular sports.

## **Staff Profile, Expectations & Culture**

We are serious about developing a learning model that is recognised as world-class. For that to happen, we need exceptional people. We need wellbeing staff who are passionate about working with young people and meeting them where they are at. We need wellbeing staff who operate like facilitators, people who can think on their feet, and team teach with their colleagues, who can respond to the needs and interests of young people in a flexible setting.

We are looking for people who are more interested in supporting strength-based, person-centred learning than in delivering discrete content in a traditional way. We want to build a culture of mutual respect, personal responsibility, participation, collaboration, inspiration, contribution, and relentless support. We want this to be a positive place.

## **Work Ventures Team**

The Work Ventures team manages, supports and provides employment opportunities for our students. This is done through a series of small social enterprises. The main aim of these ventures is to provide a real world work environment for our students to learn new skills and get ready for work outside of the Youth Inc. community. The team is made up of people who have

- A demonstrated empathy and passion for disengaged youth
- A strong work ethic
- A willingness to collaborate in an organisational culture of sharing, support, and continuous improvement – based on delivering world-class learning programs for our students.

## **Staff Health & Wellbeing**

We know we are asking for a lot – passion, professionalism, and performance. But, we do not expect staff to work themselves to an early grave. High stress and chronic fatigue will not be the accepted norm. We expect uncommon effort in the context of work-life balance. As such, we have an employee benefits package that includes: non-contact time, flexible holiday periods, professional development, and life-coaching services.

## **Employment Awards and Benefits**

### **Industrial Awards**

As an Independent School, non-teaching staff will be employed in accordance with the Educational Services (Schools) General Staff Award 2010. Go to:

<http://awardviewer.fwo.gov.au/award/show/MA000076>

## **Employee Benefits Package**

The school needs great people. And our intention is to treat you as our most precious asset\*. As such, our employee benefits package is comprised of the following:

1. Flexible salary packaging
2. Flexible holiday arrangements
3. Positive working environment

*\*Maybe you've heard/read this before? Maybe it sounds a bit over the top? But, in our case, we really mean it. How else can we ensure that we have exceptional people who are willing to go 'over and above' for our students?*

### **Flexible Salary Packaging**

- Youth Inc. is a Public Benevolent Institution and therefore can offer flexible salary packaging
- Basically, this means that staff are entitled to pre-tax deductions for approved expenses which reduces the taxable income saving you thousands of dollars in tax
- We will explain this to you in detail, and it will be customised to your individual circumstances

### **Flexible Holiday Periods**

- The school will be open for *50 weeks of the year* – based on 4 terms (aligned to private school term dates); plus, non-term ('Recharge') programs
- This, along with the flexible nature of our program means that it is possible for staff to negotiate holidays. This, of course, will be subject to formal approval

### **Positive Working Environment**

- Our flexible schedule looks very different to a normal school timetable and it comprises of short meetings, group sessions, one-to-one discussions, extended workshops, and a seemingly unlimited range of other interactions; the curriculum is delivered in a highly varied way; it will be both exciting and demanding
- You will have more non-contact time, and less parent-teacher engagement compared to a conventional school setting
- Staff have access to shared offices and amenities in the form of an 'activity-based workspace' which includes lockable storage, and time-out space. In this regard, we want to achieve a balance of providing dedicated/private working space without the territorial and hierarchical issues that you sometimes find in a conventional setting

Hopefully, you will begin to understand the importance we place on an elite group of people – healthy, happy, and energetic – working together in the spirit of positive collaboration.

**This is truly a rare opportunity for you to be involved in an innovative, alternative learning model.**