



SCIENCE AND
INDUSTRY
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FUND



STEM Community Partnerships Program

Blacktown local scenario

Engaging youth in the community

Blacktown City is the largest local government area in NSW. Young people aged up to 24 years old make up over 36% of the population, with the median age being 33 years old compared to 42 years old in NSW.

A younger population could be a potential workforce for growing local industries and bring about increased productivity, innovation and growing families. However, Blacktown City shows a higher rate of youth disengagement than the average across NSW – 12% compared to the state average of 8%.¹ Youth disengagement is a term that refers to young people who are not enrolled in full-time study or working. Young people were also amongst those most impacted by COVID-19, both from an employment and education perspective.

Blacktown is home to a diverse range of cultures with 40% of the population being born overseas² and nearly 3% being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander descent.³ Young people can face various challenges related to the additional vulnerabilities due to their age and social/parental pressures, with cultural backgrounds and experiences also having a role to play.

Community organisations, government and non-government organisations provide support services and a range of programs designed to create opportunities for young people to actively participate in the Blacktown community. SydWest Multicultural Services and Mission Australia are two service providers in the Blacktown area helping to tackle language and cultural barriers, educational disadvantage, unemployment and youth homelessness.

Blacktown City Council has a range of initiatives for local youth, including outreach programs, youth centres and youth-focused events. There is also a Youth Advisory Committee which enables young people to voice their opinions and provide feedback to Council on decisions that affect them.

How your Council tackles the complexity of this issue impacts you and your community now and in the future.

Your task

Your task is to use the information above and resources provided below as a start to identify a local problem and design a STEM-focussed solution.

(Question, Design, Explore, Communicate)



Blacktown Sustainability Hub

<https://www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au/Community/Sustainable-living/Sustainability-Hub#section-5>

Resources

CSIRO research

- Bright Futures: Spotlight on the wellbeing of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, Data61 and VicHealth, November 2017
<https://data61.csiro.au/~media/D61/Files/Bright-Futures-Spotlight-refugee-migrant.pdf?la=en&hash=9C2FD36C6D3AA8D25A7878DE6F9B69FE062857F2>

Reports

- Blacktown City, Profile ID, 2016 <https://profile.id.com.au/blacktown/birthplace>
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities - A Social Profile, Blacktown Council, 2016
www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/community/social-profile/2016/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people.pdf&usg=AOvVaw34VRpl9NVulMEyRC3wQ9JR
- Navigating Resettlement, Western Sydney University
<https://www.sydwestms.org.au/images/documents/Navigating-Resettlement-Report-updated-030718-2.pdf>
- Blacktown City Council Social Profile, Blacktown City Council, 2020
www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/community/social-profile/social-profile-2020.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2rTOA9kpkvVPOhVO6T_IRD
- Youth Unemployment in Western Sydney, Western Sydney University, 2017
https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1269064/YA_unemployment_fnl_V6.1.pdf

Articles

- Blacktown Youth Services Association needed for 'disengaged' youth, Daily Telegraph, March 2016 <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/blacktown-youth-services-association-needed-for-disengaged-youth/news-story/81df04fa8a13acdea2d8e36ea250aaa8>
- NSW's unemployment rate is 6.7 per cent — but in these parts of Sydney it's a very different story for young people, ABC, September 2020 <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-09-23/nsw-coronavirus-puts-youth-unemployment-higher-in-western-sydney/12689512>

Generation STEM is managed by CSIRO and made possible by an endowment from the NSW Government to the Science and Industry Endowment Fund (SIEF).