Function Description Committee Convenor

This role is vital for good planning of a YM event. This person needs considerable skill to get the best out of the planning process, and to set up a harmonious, effective event.

Workload of the function

Time Interval	Tasks	Workload
2 years out from YM	Work with others to find the venue for YM. Visit possible venues, assess suitability. Engage key coordinators. Gain RM support for venue choice.	Usually significant.
12 months prior to YM start	Form function coordinators into working committee. Support coordinators in recruiting other volunteers into their teams. Formulate broad shape of your YM in your venue. Work with Registration person on registration form. For publication.	Meeting monthly. Many tasks which follow up meetings.
6 months prior to YM start	Liaise with your RM to keep them informed of how your planning is progressing. During this time, consolidate your planning. Stop accepting new ideas for YM. Encourage coordinators to prepare materials for the YM website. Information for AF prepared.	Meeting monthly. Time in liaising with coordinators.
1 month prior to YM start	Collegially develop check-lists of tasks that should be completed across the whole planning process. Set completion dates to minimize last-minute rushes in all functions.	Maybe a significant work-load.
1 week prior to YM start	Review all scheduled tasks, and monitor completion. Convene final pre-YM committee meeting.	Maybe a significant work-load.
First 2 days of YM	Support your coordinators and all who are	Unpredictable, but

	contributing in their roles. Be available for trouble-shooting. Be alert to gaps in planning that may have occurred. Listen to any complaints or issues, delegate where possible, to solve issues. Make yourself visible to the gathered YM	likely to require quite a lot of time for unforseens.
Whole of YM	Same as above	Hopefully settles to where you can participate in some sessions and activities.
1 month after YM	Co-ordinate the writing of (a) report(s) of YM. Better done collegially.	Quite a few hours.
Overall workload:	Quite large.	
Skills required to undertake this function	Ability to delegate effectively. Ability to set boundaries for self and team. Ability to liaise. Ability to segment a task into its component parts. Ability to make lists and set deadlines, possibly well ahead. Ability to engage other volunteers, support them to do their roles. Ability to clerk committee meetings.	
This functions works most closely with:	With the co-ordinators of other functions. With AYM officers. With your RM Clerk.	

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Tasks included in this function

This function includes doing these tasks:

1. Be aware of the roles of function coordinators
2. Provide leadership to support coordinators in their roles.
3. Liaise with your RM—the Clerk in particular, so that your RM knows what preparations are being made
4. Liaise with the officers of AYM. They are responsible for the YM program, but many aspects of your planning will interact with the program of YM.
5. Support function coordinators in their recruiting of team members.
6. Be the central point of liaison with the YM Planning Support Committee.
7. Develop the structure for your team and committee meetings.
8. Convene committee meetings. Ensure that, in the minutes of meetings each task is assigned to a particular person, when it needs to be done, and any financial implications.
9. Develop a time-line for when various tasks should be undertaken and completed, and key decisions made, and monitor how they are progressing. Keep the committee and others on task, on track, on time, on budget!
10. If a coordinator becomes unable to continue in the role, find a replacement, and arrange hand-over to the new person.
11. Liaise with, or ensure that others are liaising with anyone outside your RM who is undertaking any roles for your YM event.
12. Avoid taking on a direct work-load for any on-going aspects of YM. Your role needs flexibility to respond to the many unexpected demands which will arise.

Committee structure

Planning for a Yearly Meeting needs the contribution of a lot of people. However involving all the people in each committee meeting is not likely to be effective. The size may be unwieldy, and each person may find that only a small part of the meeting concerns them.

A more effective structure has been found to be to have a small inner committee, of some eight people, each of whom oversees one or two of the functions listed in this manual. However, it is preferable that no one person is tasked with doing more than one function, for fear of overload or workload clashes.

This would make the committee have:

- Convenor
- Treasurer
- Help Desk Coordinator
- IT (possibly the same person as Help Desk)
- Catering
- Accommodation (possibly the same person as for Catering, if both services are being provided by one provider—combining makes a big role).
- Children and young people

Each of these people will need to liaise with each other to put the event together each of these people will have a team who works with them to achieve the necessary functions.

Other important functions include:

- Coordinator of Friendly School (Summer/Winter School) (link with Convenor)
- Care of people with disabilities
- Transport Coordinator (Link with Help Desk)
- Pastoral Care and Elders
- Meeting Room Manager (including Sound amplification) (Link with Help Desk)

Flexibility may be necessary. We recommend that any one person has only one role (maximum two), and that the planning committee be kept to a workable size. Usually, people who are not members of the planning committee would not come to committee meetings.

Minutes of committee meetings should be circulated widely to keep everyone informed. It should be clear that anyone can contribute to the committee's considerations via the Convenor, or their own Coordinator.

Working with your people

It is important that each person know what their tasks are. Clear briefings help. Others need to know how much the Convenor wants to know—"update me lots", or " tell me when there are difficulties", or what style do you prefer?

Setting up systems

Committee members need to know how communication will happen. Will communication always rely on presence at meetings? How much will email be used? Will there be tasks lists posted for access by the whole committee? Will there be regular meetings for the core committee? For the out committee? Or for clusters with similar purposes?

Monitoring how things are progressing

Knowing your own preferred style of receiving reports is important. Some people don't like micro-management. Some people like to be checked on regularly. Some people prefer written information, while some prefer it in spoken and explained form.

Whatever the preferences, it is important that the Convenor has a good understanding of how planning is progressing. Some tasks must be completed by specific deadlines (numbers to the caterers, for example). If these deadlines are in danger of not being met, the Convenor is the person who should take steps to help their coordinator get the task done in time.

Can you use the Planning Support Committee to assist you or one of your team?

Encouraging your people

Most people respond better to being encouraged than to being criticized. If tasks are not on track & schedule, how can you encourage and support the person concerned?

What level of social interaction helps your meetings run well? What time of day works well for the people? How can those contributing be encouraged to cooperate?

Setting a date for "no more initiatives"

Planning a YM event calls for innovation and creativity. How to make the space and time work well?—no venue is perfect, so the best use is what we hope to achieve.

It is important to hear creative ideas. It is also important to be selective about which ones to implement. Keep workloads reasonable. Do not commit to a set of tasks which must be done at the last minute.

Record/minute the ideas you agree to pursue. Record who is taking responsibility for them. Record when they need to be done by.

A committee can make its working difficult by accepting extra initiatives till quite late in the planning. It can be wise to declare a date past which new ideas cannot be accepted, and the plans made to that point will be consolidated and completed.

Final planning steps

Hold meetings two weeks or so prior to the start, and perhaps one week prior. Work systematically through checking that the necessary steps have been done. Work out how to support anyone who is behind on a task.

Discourage people from accumulating tasks which will be done just at the start of YM—time fills up and runs out quickly!

During YM event

Even the best plans will come unstuck at times. Have effective ways to monitor how the event is going. A meeting of the core planning team each day? What mechanisms do you have in place to help you monitor?

Who can help you get back on track? Who needs to be told if a major plan is coming unstuck?

People will feel stressed. (you will, too!) what will help each person (you too) to feel supported?

YM Planning Support Committee may be able to assist.

Writing a summary report

Your Regional Meeting will want to know how the event has gone. The YM Treasurer will want a financial tie-up. The YM Planning Support Committee will appreciate hearing what went to plan, and what came unstuck.

Don't make a big task out of reporting. Don't describe the obvious. Report your joys and your challenges. Keep in mind what you and other can learn from.