

POSITION DESCRIPTION: *People and Culture Director*

About Youth Law Australia

Youth Law Australia (YLA) is a national community legal centre that provides free, confidential legal assistance to children and young people across Australia. For more than 30 years, YLA has worked to ensure that young people's voices are heard, particularly at moments of vulnerability and risk. YLA combines direct legal services with advocacy, early intervention, and systemic reform to improve outcomes for children and young people.

YLA has experienced significant growth in recent years, expanding from a very small organisation to a nationally distributed workforce supported by a large volunteer base. This growth brings opportunity, complexity, and a strong imperative to ensure staff are well supported, connected, and able to do their best work.

About the role

The People and Culture Director is responsible for leading and delivering people and culture practices that support YLA's purpose, values, and sustainability as the organisation continues to grow. Working closely with the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer and Principal Solicitors, this role provides both hands-on people support and practical leadership to strengthen YLA's people foundations. It is a trusted, relationship-based role that balances care for staff with organisational realities, including funding constraints, legislative obligations, and a geographically dispersed workforce.

This role has been created to bring in-house people and culture capability that has previously sat across executive and operational roles, and to ensure timely, consistent, and thoughtful support for staff and leaders.

Key responsibilities

People & Culture leadership

- Lead and coordinate YLA's people and culture approach, ensuring alignment with organisational values, trauma-informed practice, and legal obligations.
- Act as a trusted advisor to the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer and managers on people, culture, and workforce matters.
- Contribute to workforce planning, organisational design, remuneration and benchmarking, identifying people-related risks, capacity needs and opportunities for improvement.

Culture, wellbeing & psychological safety

- Support a workplace culture that is safe, inclusive, respectful, and aligned with YLA's work with children and young people.
- Provide accessible, direct and relationship-based People and Culture support to staff, ensuring timely and thoughtful advice and support.

- Champion wellbeing, psychological safety, and sustainable work practices, recognising the cumulative impact of trauma-exposed legal work.
- Manage sensitive people matters with care, fairness, discretion, and sound judgement.

People operations & foundations

- Oversee end-to-end employee lifecycle processes, including recruitment, onboarding, performance development, and exit processes.
- Review, strengthen, and maintain people policies, procedures, and templates so they are clear, practical, and fit for a growing organisation.
- Lead the development and maintenance of people frameworks and systems that support effective volunteer management, working in partnership with legal leaders who retain day-to-day responsibility for volunteers.
- Coordinate employment documentation, contracts, payroll inputs and leave processes, working closely with the Chief Operating Officer, administration staff, external accountants and other providers.

Performance, capability & leadership support

- Support managers to implement clear, fair, transparent performance and development processes, including recognition of staff achievements.
- Provide coaching and guidance to leaders on performance management, conduct, grievances, complex employee relations, organisational change and team dynamics.
- Lead and coordinate YLA's organisation-wide learning and development approach, including identifying training needs and facilitating fit-for-purpose training and development.
- Lead management development, including coaching and practical capability-building for people leaders.
- Support Board development in relation to people and culture matters, liaising with the Board through the Executive Director.

Industrial relations, WHS and compliance

- Ensure compliance with relevant employment and HR-related legislation, awards and agreements across Federal, State and Territory jurisdictions, in liaison with internal and external legal advisors as required.
- Lead and coordinate the people-related aspects of YLA's work health and safety approach, including psychosocial risk obligations.
- Liaise with internal and external legal advisors, EAP providers and other specialist advisors as required.

Systems, data and continuous improvement

- Oversee accurate people records and fit-for-purpose workforce reporting.

- Use available data and staff feedback to identify trends, risks, and improvement opportunities.
- Contribute to the development of fit-for-purpose people systems as organisational needs mature.

Scope and context

- YLA employs approximately 18 staff, with team members located across multiple states, and is supported by a volunteer base of 150+ (volunteer management sits outside this role's day-to-day remit).
- This is currently a standalone People and Culture role with no direct reports and requires someone who is comfortable moving between senior advisory work and hands-on delivery.
- Systems and processes are functional but foundational; this role will strengthen and professionalise what exists rather than introduce unnecessary complexity.
- The role works within a lean operating model and requires a pragmatic and proportionate approach.
- Experience working in an environment that has implemented trauma-informed, culturally safe, child safe and/or victim-centred approaches is desirable.

Key relationships

- Executive Director
- Chief Operating Officer
- Principal Solicitors and people leaders
- Board, via the Executive Director
- All staff
- Administration staff
- External accountants and advisors (employment law, payroll, EAP and other specialist support)