

Young Labour Proposal for the Democracy Review

Introduction

Young Labour should have the following functions:

- a) Promote political education in line with the Labour Party's democratic socialist values and principles;
- b) Campaign in support of oppressed groups in society, including people marginalised on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, disability and religion;
- c) Promote the role of young people to advance democratic socialist values and principles within the Labour Party and society at large.

In order to meet these functions, Young Labour must have the structures which ensure autonomy, accountability, and adequate resourcing.

Autonomy

Young Labour shall have constitutional autonomy, with its own rulebook and standing orders to govern its structures. These shall be decided by Young Labour members and amendable by a sovereign Youth Conference, which could at a later date be complemented by a digital democracy platform which through integration with social media networks could be an aid to democratic political participation.

Young Labour shall have organisational autonomy with access to its own membership lists and the ability to organise its own events and campaigns independently. This is crucial for empowering young members to develop their leadership skills.

Young Labour shall have political autonomy, allowing it to take political positions which are independent from those of the main party.

Administrative functions shall wherever possible be devolved directly to Young Labour, so as to further strengthen Young Labour's operational autonomy in tandem with its political autonomy. These include, but are not restricted to, the registration and verification of groups, membership services, internal communications and finances.

Resourcing

Young Labour shall be properly resourced to be able to achieve its objectives. It shall receive an annual grant from the central party over which it has control, which may be financed from the membership fees of its members.

Young Labour shall have at least three staff members who are accountable to its democratic structures and mandated to carry out the political objectives of the Young Labour committee, whether on a UK-wide or regional/national level.

In line with the responsibilities of autonomy and proper funding, Young Labour shall have a Treasurer that gives financial reports of the organisation to Young Labour's annual conference.

Representation

Young Labour shall have representatives at every level of the party from branches through to the NEC. The NEC representative shall be elected by a One Member One Vote (OMOV) ballot, in order to allow as many people to participate as possible, and for options for additional representation for young members to be considered when the NEC composition is discussed at a later stage in the Democracy Review.

Young Labour shall be given a mandate to organise and have local groups in education institutions, ending the historic divide between Young Labour and Labour Students.

Education and Participation

Young Labour shall be encouraged and supported, financially or otherwise, in running both practical and theoretical political education programmes throughout the country.

Young Labour shall have the powers to establish local groups to allow young people the fora to debate and self-organise, encouraging active participation by the whole membership in laying the groundwork for a vibrant left youth culture and socialist future.

Supporting Argument

Deprived of both human and financial resources, Young Labour is currently but a mere shell of what it could be. Despite our party having some 110,000 members under the age of 27, Young Labour is still far too much of an afterthought in the minds of decision-makers. Without a solid, visible and coherent youth movement to develop their intellectual and organisational capacities, our young members are little more than fodder for doorstep campaigning, capable of short-term voter mobilisations. In order to fully harness the talent, creativity, and ideological commitment to transforming society of our young members, Young Labour must be allowed fully autonomy, fair representation in party structures, resources commensurate to its membership. The primary objective of Young Labour shall be to make, teach and keep young socialists. We must encourage and develop the young so that they can both understand and change the world, since to do so would require the unleashing of the creative of potential of hundreds and thousands of committed young people moved by the desire to transform society.