



**Pacific Perspectives Brunch  
Launch of the Young Pacific Women's Collective Report  
*September 2023***

## Executive Summary

The inaugural launch of the Young Pacific Women's Collective in Sydney, NSW, brought together a diverse and dynamic group of young Pacific women for a vibrant discussion brunch. This visionary initiative emerged through the collaborative efforts of Bridget Cama, Kesaia Takau, and Rosaline Ah Chong, who are committed to fostering empowerment and inclusion. The event celebrated unity and purpose, with participants engaging in thought-provoking discussions, networking, and panel sessions.

A dynamic gathering of diverse young Pacific women ignited a lively discussion, symbolizing a renewed surge of empowerment. Reverend Fa'aimata Hiliau, a highly esteemed figure within the network, inaugurated the day's proceedings. Rev. Hiliau, soon to be installed as the Moderator of the NSW and ACT Uniting Church, shared illuminating insights that set the tone for the event.

A pivotal panel discussion delved into the essence of the Pacific Women's Professional & Business Network (PWPBN), exploring challenges, sources of inspiration, and opportunities that ignited stimulating conversations. The PWPBN, a community interwoven with like-minded professional and businesswomen, serves as a compelling testament to the transformative impact of Sharing, Empowering, and Inspiring.



PWPBN Board Executives Maherau Arona, Jaithoon Venkateshwar, Rev Fa'aimata Havea Moderator NSW and ACT Synod, YPWC CORE Leads- Kesaia Takau, Bridget Cama, Rosaline Ah Chong, Loau Donina Va'a PWPBN Chair, Annete Posimani Board Executive, Seini Afeaki Senior Advisor, Young Pacific Women Collective Delegates

## Young Pacific Women's Collective

The Young Pacific Women's Collective (YPWC) is an inspiring and dynamic initiative that emerged from the Pacific Women's Professional Business Network (PWPBN) with the mission to empower and uplift young Pacific girls and women in pursuit of personal, career, and economic success. Founded in 2017, the PWPBN strives to create an inclusive and safe space where Pacific women can connect, unite, and find empowerment through leadership development, education, and shared experiences.

With a vision rooted in the principles of inclusion, collaboration, openness, respect, and empowerment, the YPWC is a groundbreaking movement that seeks to provide young Pacific women with a platform to amplify their voices, aspirations, and concerns.

The collective was conceived as a result of the collaborative efforts between the PWPBN board and a core group of young Pacific women who were dedicated to fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment within their communities.

Led by visionary champions Bridget Cama, Kesaia Takau, and Rosaline Ah Chong, the YPWC made its mark through an inaugural launch event held in Sydney, NSW. The launch showcased the diverse and vibrant group of young Pacific women who form the core of the collective. The launch celebrated unity, purpose, and insightful discussions through panel sessions and networking opportunities.

The YPWC's role extends beyond its launch initiative. It aims to actively engage with the PWPBN board to shape itself as an empowering space for young Pacific women's voices. The collective is committed to driving projects that are informed and led by young Pacific women, all while receiving the network's support. In alignment with the NSW Women's Strategy 2023–2026, which emphasizes participation and empowerment, the YPWC strives to achieve its goals by fostering economic opportunities, promoting health and wellbeing, and encouraging active participation across sectors. Through shared values like community, family, faith, and diversity, the YPWC creates a nurturing environment that encourages growth and resilience.

Key discussions within the collective have emphasized the significance of community building, empowerment, and the value of youthful perspectives within established networks. By addressing challenges such as stereotypes and cultural expectations, the YPWC seeks to create opportunities through mentorship programs, workshops, and partnerships, empowering young Pacific women to overcome barriers and excel.

The collective's goals and aspirations are centered on empowering, inspiring, and enhancing representation across various sectors of Australian society. Anchored in community, diversity, and faith, the YPWC is driven by its cultural identity and resilience. It aims to foster connections, support entrepreneurship, and celebrate the excellence of Pacific communities.

The YPWC envisions a range of initiatives to achieve its objectives, including cultural sessions, high tea gatherings, educational workshops, and career expos. These events aim to foster cultural celebration, build networks, and empower through knowledge-sharing and mentorship. The collective recognizes the significance of cultural experiences and travel in promoting growth and understanding. The YPWC's impact has already been demonstrated through its successful launch event, which generated overwhelmingly positive responses from participants. Attendees valued the networking opportunities, insights from executive panels, and engaging storytelling moments. The collective's launch event has laid a robust foundation for its mission to make transformative contributions within their communities and the broader Australian society.

In conclusion, the Young Pacific Women's Collective is a vibrant force driven by visionary leaders and shared values. With an unwavering commitment to empowerment, collaboration, and the celebration of diversity, the collective is poised to make a lasting and significant impact on the lives of young Pacific women within their communities and beyond.

## Discussion Key Findings

The discussions highlighted the following key findings:

**Community Building and Empowerment:** Attendees valued the sense of community and empowerment that the event provided. Connecting with like-minded individuals and sharing stories, struggles, and strengths were emphasized as significant aspects.

**Shared Values:** The collective held shared values such as community, family, respect, celebration of diversity, faith, and resilience. These values formed the foundation for a safe and uplifting atmosphere.

**Youth Perspectives:** Incorporating youthful perspectives into established networks like the Pacific Women's Professional & Business Network (PWPBN) was seen as vital. The integration of a youth collective onto PWPBN's board exemplified the power of collaboration across generations.

**Challenges and Opportunities:** Challenges included overcoming stereotypes, cultural expectations, and the undervaluing of education. Opportunities to address these challenges included mentorship programs, workshops to enhance self-worth, and collaboration with other groups aligned with their initiatives.

**Proposed Priorities and Initiatives:** The collective proposed priorities such as expanding their reach through social media, mentorship programs, career expos, education opportunities, and workshops.

**Key Points: Young Pacific Women's Collective Goals and Aspirations**

### Reasons for Our Attendance

- **Fostering Community and Collaboration:** To cultivate a strong sense of community among like-minded individuals and organizations. By coming together, we aimed to lay the foundation for collaborative efforts and mutual support.
- **Learning and Networking:** To enhance our knowledge and expertise. Attending this event provided us with opportunities to learn from experts, share experiences, and establish valuable connections within our network.
- **Support and Empowerment:** We believe in the power of supporting one another. By attending, we intended to offer our support to fellow attendees and receive it in return. Empowering each other is essential for personal and collective growth.
- **Inspiration and Fresh Perspectives:** We sought inspiration and engaging with diverse perspectives with innovative ideas allowed us to broaden our horizons and explore new ways of thinking and problem-solving.
- In summary, our presence was driven by our commitment to building a vibrant community, learning and sharing knowledge, offering support and empowerment, and seeking inspiration to drive positive change.

### Proposed Objectives

- Provide opportunities for career, professional growth, and networking.
- Empower through sharing stories, struggles, and strengths.
- Create a safe space where authenticity is valued.
- Draw inspiration from the vision of younger individuals.
- Increase visibility for young Pasifika women.
- Foster connections and networking within the Pasifika community.
- Enhance representation of young Pacific women across all sectors in Australian society.

### Proposed Values

- Rooted in community, family, beliefs, and respect.
- Celebration of diversity, faith, and resilience.
- Upliftment and empowerment in a safe space.
- Continuous learning

### What We Bring

- Youthful energy, diverse perspectives, and lived experiences.
- Mentorship, role modelling, and innovation.
- Unique stories for a broader narrative.
- Networks, knowledge, and resilience.

## We Feel Empowered By

- Being heard and valued as Pacific women
- Collaborating with like-minded individuals towards shared goals.
- Engaging in community development and celebrating success.
- Challenging stereotypes and fostering positive change.

## Our Strengths

- Cultural identity, family values, humility, and accountability.
- Resilience, faith, vision, and tradition.
- Bridging intergenerational gaps and sharing learnings.
- Overcoming challenges with determination and humour.

## Our Challenges

- Dealing with stereotypes, self-worth issues, and cultural expectations.
- Addressing knowledge gaps and undervaluing education.
- Navigating intergenerational differences and peer pressure whilst maintaining Pasifika roots as Australians.
- Promoting representation, acceptance, and financial empowerment.

## Proposed Priorities

- Expand awareness through social media engagement.
- Grow the collective to reach more young Pacific women.
- Revitalize Pacific culture and celebrate diversity.
- Foster connections through regular catchups and mentoring programs.
- Create a network and directory of women for support and collaboration.
- Organize Pasifika events, educational workshops, and career expos.
- Support entrepreneurship and collaborations with other groups.

## Suggested Initiatives

- Cultural arts and crafts sessions, promoting cross-ethnic learning.
- Giving back through volunteering and mentoring.
- High tea gatherings for celebration and relaxed networking.
- Cultural experiences and travel to enhance understanding.
- Engaging summits for empowerment and cross-cultural learning.
- Gala event showcasing Pacific excellence, featuring panels and performances.
- Career pathway workshops, education opportunities, and scholarships.



## Evaluation

The response from participants was overwhelmingly positive, as all attendees expressed immense satisfaction with the event. The experience of listening to the empowering executive panel, engaging in networking with fellow likeminded young Pacific women and exchanging personal narratives was particularly noteworthy. The prevalent theme of connectivity and networking was evident, with participants valuing the chance to connect with others who had similar backgrounds and ambitions. Additionally, the intimate and secure environment of the event played a pivotal role in enabling meaningful interactions among the present group of young women.

Several participants found value in the breakout sessions and storytelling moments, where they could learn from the experiences of others in their professional journeys. The power of collective voices and the empowerment to give back to the community were highlighted by some attendees as key takeaways from the event. The presence of an executive panel and opportunities for networking stood out as positive aspects, allowing participants to gain insights from successful Pasifika women and to build connections with those who shared their vision.

While many participants expressed a positive outlook, six individuals indicated interest in being part of the Core Leads, five noted a "Maybe" and others were happy to attend events. Overall, the event seemed to have successfully fostered a sense of camaraderie, empowerment, and shared purpose among Pasifika women aiming to contribute positively to their communities and futures.

The launch successfully fostered a spirit of empowerment, connectivity, and collaboration among the young Pacific women, setting the stage for a transformative era of positive contributions to both their communities and Australian society.

