



FUTURE PROBLEM SOLVING PROGRAM AUSTRALIA

Developing the capacity of young Australians to design and promote positive futures through problem solving.

Community Problem Solving

Community Problem Solving (CmPS) bridges the gap between school and the real world. Students involved in CmPS learn powerful lessons about creating change, dealing with local authorities and organisations, and making a positive impact. In CmPS, students initiate a project by identifying real problems and implementing real solutions in their local, state, national, or even global community. CmPS projects are student-driven and produce young leaders ready to solve problems they may encounter throughout their lives.

The 6 Step Problem Solving Process

Step 1: Identify Problems & Challenges

Step 2: Select an Underlying Problem

Step 3: Produce Solution Ideas

Step 4: Select Criteria

Step 5: Apply Criteria to Top Solutions

Step 6: Develop an Action Plan

Why Community Problem Solving?

Students learn powerful lessons about creating change, dealing with local authorities and organisations, and about making a positive impact.

CmPS students gain an introductory understanding of Project Management through the use of the provided tools, techniques and templates.

CmPS

- Engages students in the real world using independent thought and action
- Apply the problem solving process to real and current problems in their communities
- Stimulates critical and creative thinking skills
- Fosters collaboration and teamwork
- Encourages students to develop a vision for community improvement

A rubric-based evaluation is provided for competitors, giving student tools for continuous growth.

The skills taught lay the foundations for students to become innovators and responsible change makers of the future.

Does FPS have to be done in the classroom?

Community Problem Solving can be successfully implemented in various ways* – as an extra-curricular program delivered outside school hours or embedded in the school curriculum from P-12, and everything in between. However you choose to run the Future Problem Solving Program, the development of these skills will correlate directly with the expectations and requirements of the National Curriculum.

*For individual student registrations, CmPS is ideal for fulfilling the research and service aspects of the IB Diploma, completion of service hours.

How many students can participate and how do they compete?

Schools can register either individual students or teams of students. Teams may be as few as two or three students or an entire class or group.

Registrations are divided between divisions – Junior (Yrs 5 to 6), Middle (Yrs 7 to 9) and Senior (Yrs 10 to 12).

In a one or two year program, students identify and investigate a real-life concern from their school, community, state or country. They apply our six-step problem solving process to identify the best solution, then both develop and implement a plan of action. They prepare a report and display table for evaluation, and our team at FPS independently reviews each booklet and provides constructive and detailed feedback.

Qualifying teams and individuals are invited to participate in the National Finals, held in October each year. Champions from the National Final are invited to represent Australia at the International Final held in the USA in the following June.

For the cost of a single individual or team registration, teachers can gain access to all the program materials and can teach the program to as many students as they wish. Additional registrations may be added throughout the year.

While CmPS provides the opportunity for students to test their problem solving skills against other students across Australia and Internationally, it is more than a competition. It teaches real-life skills and techniques that are widely used across a range of industries – commercial, government and NGOs.

Submission Requirements?

- **Project Proposal** – functions for students as their planning/guiding document.
Written before taking action. Max of 1000 words.
- **Project Update** – provides a quick update regard the projects progress. Max of 500 words
- **Project Report** – explains the efforts made, obstacles encountered, and accomplishments achieved throughout the implementation of the Action Plan.
Written during/after taking action. Max of 2000 words.
- **Supporting Materials** – provide the opportunity to present evidence of project actions beyond the description included in the Proposal and Report. The Portfolio, Display, and Interview offer additional avenues through which to depict the efforts of the project and the impact it has had on the community.

Characteristics of FPS Participants

- Futuristic Thinkers
- Collaborative
- Effective Problem Solvers
- Analytical Researchers
- Expert Innovators
- Ethical Leaders
- Diverse Thinkers
- Global Citizens

How can I get started with my students?

- Attend coach training
- Register a team or individual
- Purchase recommended publications
- Plan your FPS year