

# Policy lab

TURNING EVIDENCE INTO POLICY SOLUTIONS

**Orygen** has been driving improvements in youth mental health policy and services for 30 years. We continue to innovate in how we generate and advocate for evidence-informed policy. Over the past two years, Orygen has implemented a Policy Lab method that facilitates a synergy of expertise into policy design to generate targeted policy proposals to support advocacy with government.

The Policy Lab team is led by David Baker, who has more than 18 years' experience in policy analysis, design and advocacy.

## Policy is...

how governments provide support for people, businesses or community organisations, or aim to change behaviours to improve people's lives.

## Evidence-informed policy...

requires **expertise**, **analysis**, and an understanding of the **political** context.

“A real highlight of taking part in the Policy Lab process was collaborating with such a wide range of experts. In this case, young people, clinicians, policymakers, and academics were engaged to ensure diverse perspectives. Such approaches are required to inform recommendations that can robustly inform critical solutions for managing key healthcare issues.”

“The Policy Lab was a powerful way to bring together diverse perspectives—young people, clinicians, and government—to shape meaningful, consensus-based recommendations. This model should be expanded to ensure lived experience and cross-sector collaboration drives real change.”

## ... and the reality of informing policy

The policy process, while often represented as a cycle, is often “messier”, with competing interests, multiple actors and agendas.

A combined voice is needed to advocate with government, in the media and engage the sector. Having a prepared policy enables advocates to act responsively when opportunities arise.

## Inform policy

A Policy Lab facilitates a gathering of experts, with a range of **expertise** who together answer a focused policy question. Supported by policy **analysis** a Policy Lab generates a proposal and a coalition to support targeted advocacy to inform **policy**.

ory  
gen

If you're interested in the potential benefits of a Policy Lab, or want to know more, we'd be happy to consider this with you.

Contact us at  
[policy@orygen.org.au](mailto:policy@orygen.org.au)

# TURNING EVIDENCE INTO POLICY SOLUTIONS



## Informing policy

Policy includes public health campaigns, the design and delivery of services, and legislation.

Many groups seek to influence policy, including researchers, corporations, peak bodies and advocates.

A Policy Lab is a collaborative process that brings together a range of expertise to inform policy.



## Policy Labs

A Policy Lab is a facilitated workshop with 20-25 people who bring a range of expertise and perspectives, including working inside government.

A Policy Lab enables engagement between those with evidence and a range of expertise to share and policy professionals who understand the policy process and what is possible.

The aim is to collaboratively consider the evidence and context to answer a specific policy question.



## Process

**Include** a broad range of expertise.

**Explore** the policy context and available evidence.

**Prioritise** the most promising opportunities.

**Identify** policy barriers and opportunities, enablers to achieve policy objectives, and instruments for doing so.



## Outcomes

Following the Policy Lab, a proposed policy is drafted from the collected data. This is shared with participants for review.

The final policy is published as a resource for participants to engage with advocacy coalitions and policymakers to shape evidence-informed policy.

## Timeline

