“At London Youth, my opinion matters”

My involvement with London Youth all started because I did work experience at Rathbone – in the youth club. I was working alongside Charline, who is a trustee at London Youth, and she suggested I apply for the Youth Board.

At London Youth, my opinion matters. When we’re asked questions, people take it seriously. I do also feel I know how to be part of wider decision-making in London. Through the Youth Board, I have a better idea of how to get my voice heard.

I attended an event when London Youth’s Patron, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, invited London Youth supporters and staff to Buckingham Palace for a reception. I joined an All-Party Parliamentary Group for Youth Affairs at Portcullis House about the cost-of-living crisis with other young people, and I also spoke at London Youth’s Annual General Meeting. It was my first experience of public speaking, but now I know I can do something like that again.

I’d like to go to university and study politics. I’ve met lots of different people since joining the Youth Board, such as Marina Ahmad, the London Assembly Member for Lambeth and Southwark. I also went to an event at the Royal Society about improving education and met the education minister to the President of Ukraine.

It’s changed my confidence. I used to get a bit nervous that people wouldn’t like or would criticise what I was going to say and not take it on board. Whereas now, it's about realising you’ve got a good point.

I live in a borough where there are literally no youth clubs. Young people don't have anywhere to go. Youth clubs are so important because they offer a place to go and a safe place that isn't school. In some boroughs they have youth clubs, but it's not enough. You can't solve the cost-of-living crisis by going to a youth club, but it can take a lot of pressure off families.

This work is important because it helps represent other people's views and other people’s experiences, because not everyone in London can be on a youth board. Everyone on the Youth Board is from a completely different area, different background, different culture, with different experiences. It's really eye opening.

It helps me. I hear things at London Youth that I can talk about when I am studying politics at school, so it kind of crosses over. I don't think I necessarily want to be a politician, but I like the idea of helping people and making a change. Even if it's a little change. Just something to help somebody.

Elizabeth
London Youth Young Adviser

A message from our CEO

At a time of huge pressure for young Londoners and youth organisations across the capital, our work is needed more than ever. Many young people, particularly those from underserved communities, are feeling the strain, and urgently need the safety of local youth spaces, the kindness of trusted adults, and the inspiration and support provided by programmes that meet their needs.

We're committed to make sure young people have somewhere to go, something to do, and someone to trust. We know that youth work transforms lives, and we believe that every young person, regardless of their postcode, deserves to benefit from life-changing opportunities. I'm delighted that, despite the challenges, we've done our utmost to support over 570 member youth organisations to deliver great youth work and meet young people's needs.

Last year, 215 member organisations benefited from our programmes and our outdoor centres, and over 150 of our members achieved a London Youth Quality Mark. Our team delivered 13 tailored programmes across areas such as employability, social action, arts, mental health, and sports. We proudly supported 24,680 young people through our programmes, events and outdoor centre activities, and delivered over 160 networks and training sessions.

We continued to make sure the voices of young people are heard by those in a position to create change. In the face of cuts and a cost-of-living crisis, being able to help young Londoners speak up on the issues that matter to them is incredibly motivating. Our unique data tool is also deepening our support for youth practitioners, helping us to understand the landscape of London's youth sector, improve our member offer, and advocate for the youth sector to funding and policy decision makers.

I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our membership community, funders and supporters, and our team across all three London Youth sites, for championing the power of youth work and young people. We couldn't do what we do without you. A special thanks also goes to our impressive Youth Board, our Chair Stephen Moss, and our Board of Trustees for all their dedicated efforts, and to my predecessor Rosemary Watt-Wyness for her expertise and hard work.

I'm confident our new strategy will help us create inspiring opportunities for more young Londoners. We must act as one to respond to the urgent needs across London and ensure every child and young person in the capital has an equal chance to thrive.

Pauline Daniyan
Chief Executive

"We must act as one to respond to the urgent needs across London"

Transforming young lives in London

From 2022-23, we continued our mission to champion and strengthen London's youth organisations so young people have the opportunities and skills they need to succeed. We did this with and through our members, a network of community youth organisations spanning the capital, and at our two outdoor learning centres, Hindleap and Woodrow.

Following our 2020-23 strategy to deliver opportunity, drive impact and demand change, we focused on key issues that affected young people, youth professionals and youth organisations in London, including mental health and the cost-of-living crisis.

Creating a strong network of support

Last year, 571 youth organisations were London Youth members. Together, these community and youth organisations are active in every single London borough. We bring them together to share knowledge and experience, to voice their perspective on London's youth sector, and to discover new ways of providing high quality youth work.

We support members to provide young people with opportunities they may not otherwise have and help youth organisations to increase and diversify what they offer, so they can continue to provide critical support to young Londoners, right where they live. *Last year, our members made London brighter for more than 650,000 young people.*

Throughout another tough year, our members helped young people to reconnect with each other and their community – and feel proud and passionate about their part of London. With demand for youth services rising and many organisations struggling to keep the lights on, we listened to youth practitioners' concerns and continued to adapt our offer to meet our members' needs.

Mapping London's youth sector

Our youth organisation members are diverse, from small community clubs to large, pan-London organisations. Last year, we collected data from across our membership to build a clearer picture of the youth sector across London – to find out more about the work they're doing, their workforce, and the young people they serve. Our new interactive data tool will help to inform our offer to members and to advocate with them for better youth sector provision.

Insights from our membership

56%
of our member organisations are led by women

59%
of our members work across multiple boroughs

12k+
staff members are employed by our members - and 60% of these are youth workers

89%
of our member organisations provide services that support young people's mental health and wellbeing

25k+
volunteers dedicated their skills and time to working with our members and supporting young people across London

<£500k
Most of our members are small organisations, with a turnover of under £500,000

Explore more insights at **londonyouth.org/datatool**

Delivering opportunities

Our programmes transform young people's lives and kickstart their futures, encouraging them to try something new and have fun. Through *employability, sport, arts, youth social action,* and *mental health and wellbeing* programmes, we provide tailored and inspiring opportunities to children and young people across London.

During 2022-23, we delivered *13 programmes* with *178 members*, directly providing *9,682 opportunities to young people*. We continued to reach more young people from marginalised communities, including those with disabilities. We're proud that 80% of the young people participating in our programmes last year were from Black and minoritised communities.

92%

of young people surveyed said they enjoyed taking part in our programmes

"I liked being able to do my own interviews, like setting up the interviews and experiencing how oral history is documented. Doing it myself rather than just watching or listening to someone else do it. It was nice to get the experience of doing it myself."

Young person, Heritage programme

76%

of young people who took part were doing better physically and/ or emotionally, including improved confidence, resilience and motivation

"I have been waking up earlier on my weekends and feeling more productive with my day. Starting my day off with breakfast and exercise gives me more energy and helps with my wellbeing."

Young person, Getting Active programme

"I can work in a team and communicate with people. I am also able to start up conversations with people I have never met before."

Young person, HeadStart Action programme

81%

of young people have gained skills, knowledge and access to networks and opportunities following the programme

"It gave me the skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications needed to become employable. Without even needing a degree – something I never thought was even possible."

Young person, Digital Talent programme

81%

of young people were inspired and supported to make a positive contribution to their communities – they felt their connections improved and were more able to participate, take on leadership roles and have a greater voice

"They started their own recycling scheme around college. They help with picking up litter in the alleyway. Students sent various emails to get support from different companies. They had an overwhelming response from the community to support the project."

Youth professional, HeadStart Action programme

Delivering opportunities

Our stories

“I’ve learned a lot about myself and how I can approach situations better”

Sienna’s leadership journey

Our Summer Skills Grants programme, funded by CVC, with additional funding from RDAS, provided employability-focused activities for 910 young Londoners from 36 youth organisations. Sienna, a 17-year-old student from Brent, was one of the young people involved in the programme who completed an apprenticeship with our member Beyond the Bias.

Sienna is passionate about making a difference in the lives of young children. Despite facing challenges, Sienna emerged from the programme as a remarkable leader with new found confidence. Her once-shy voice became assertive, and her growth extended beyond practical skills to benefit her personal development, resilience and leadership skills.

“As a result of getting involved, I’ve learned how small gestures like smiles, high fives, and kind words can really make a difference in someone’s life, not just children.”

She has learned that leadership isn’t just about giving orders; it’s about collaboration, understanding, and effective communication. Sienna also received a unique blend of coaching and first aid certifications and plans to apply the skills and confidence she gained in her future career.

“Being a leader is more than just having the ‘spirit’. Staying motivated is more than just being resilient. Discipline never has a limit. Learn it. Live it. Teach it.”

New sports opportunities at TAG Youth Club

Getting Active is a pan-London programme supporting youth organisations to tackle inactivity and inequality in key under-represented groups – girls and young women, Black, Asian and ethnic minorities, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, those with disabilities or who identify as LGBTQ+.

TAG Youth Club was one of 100 organisations from across 28 London boroughs that benefited from our programme. TAG operates across multiple facilities in Richmond, Kingston and wider Surrey area, providing a safe, stimulating and engaging environment for anyone with a disability or additional needs.

After the pandemic, TAG consulted London Youth about growing its sports provision. The TAG team decided to use their funding from Getting Active to offer young people parkour classes a few times a week. The success of this – not only in the form of feedback from young people, but also in subsequent grants that enabled the purchase of new equipment – gave the team the confidence to expand the provision much further.

“Through London Youth we’ve attended sport workshops on golf and attended National Governing Bodies training courses for fencing and boccia, which has meant our youth workers have received coaching qualifications. In October 2019, we only offered parkour. As of February 2023, we’re offering 11 sports activities through our sport programme.”

“We found there was a place for sport in youth work”

Delivering outdoor learning

Connecting with the natural environment can have a profoundly positive effect on young people's personal and social development. At our two outdoor learning centres, Woodrow and Hindleap, young people learn through inclusive, fun activities that help them develop lifelong skills and confidence.

Many young Londoners have increasingly limited opportunities to leave the city for a day trip or an overnight stay. That's why we support our members to offer unforgettable experiences at our centres – to ensure more young people have access to new and exciting chances to learn.

In 2022-23, our centres hosted day visits and residentials for schools and youth groups. Last year, our centres hosted ***15,000 young people.***

We were also thrilled to welcome our Patron, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, at Woodrow. It was a pleasure to watch him honour the work his late father did for London Youth and make brand new memories with young people and staff.

"I'm really passionate about adventures but never been able to go. But I feel like Woodrow High House has changed that."

Young person

55%

of the young people visiting from our member organisations said it was their first ever trip away from home, or their first since the pandemic

86%
of the young people felt that being in nature as part of their visit made a positive difference to their wellbeing

72%
of young people told us their wellbeing improved after visiting our centres, including feeling more confident and better connected, with improved resilience and motivation

"A lot of students have a fear of heights and were tentative about trying new things, but all the instructors made each of our students feel so comfortable and they all had a go at everything as a result. Their confidence and connection to each other has greatly improved."

Group leader, Jack Petchey Adventures residential

"For some of our younger members, our trip to Hindleap was their first experience away from their parents, helping them to become more resilient. Having to share rooms and groups with others outside of their regular friendship groups enabled them to make new friends and build confidence."

Youth worker

Demanding change for young Londoners

Throughout 2022-23, we continued to advocate for long-term sustainable funding, backed by a robust strategy, to support and maintain London's vital youth sector. For over 135 years, London Youth has brought together the voice of the capital's youth sector to speak as one.

Last year, we increased our efforts to unite the voices of youth workers and give young people a platform to speak out, so they could share their insight and experience and challenge decision makers to make changes that support young people. We created around ***30 opportunities*** for young people from our Youth Board and from member youth organisations to speak directly with decision makers.

"We continue to call on Government to do more to ensure that young people are supported through this crisis – and that starts with listening to them."

Deputy Mayor for Children and Families, Joanne McCartney

Mayor's Question Time

One such opportunity saw young people from our Youth Board consult with Green London Assembly Member Caroline Russell on the topic of policing in London.

We set up this consultation in response to the conversations we'd had with young people in our network, as well as the deeply concerning news in London media and official reports. This gave our Youth Board a platform to express concerns about the breakdown in trust between young Londoners and the Met Police and raise questions about police officer training, especially in mental health and neurodiversity. Caroline Russell put our Youth Board's questions directly to Sadiq Khan during Mayor's Question Time in March 2023. She also secured commitments from the Mayor to review the Youth Board's suggestions to mitigate the impact of interactions with the police through advice to Londoners, strip-search protocols and aftercare.

London Youth Awards and Youth Work Week

To showcase and celebrate the incredible youth work happening every day in communities all over London, we convened the capital's youth sector at our annual London Youth Awards.

We introduced several new award categories to reflect the changing landscape and were delighted to welcome record numbers of nominations and attendees. The awards bring together hundreds of youth professionals, young Londoners, funders, politicians and key sector figures, and we look forward to continue marking Youth Work Week with our annual flagship event.

The same week, we launched a bold campaign to highlight why London needs community youth organisations. The campaign featured individuals – including Jawahir 'JJ' Roble, the UK's first female Muslim referee – who credited their fulfilment and success to the support they received from youth clubs.

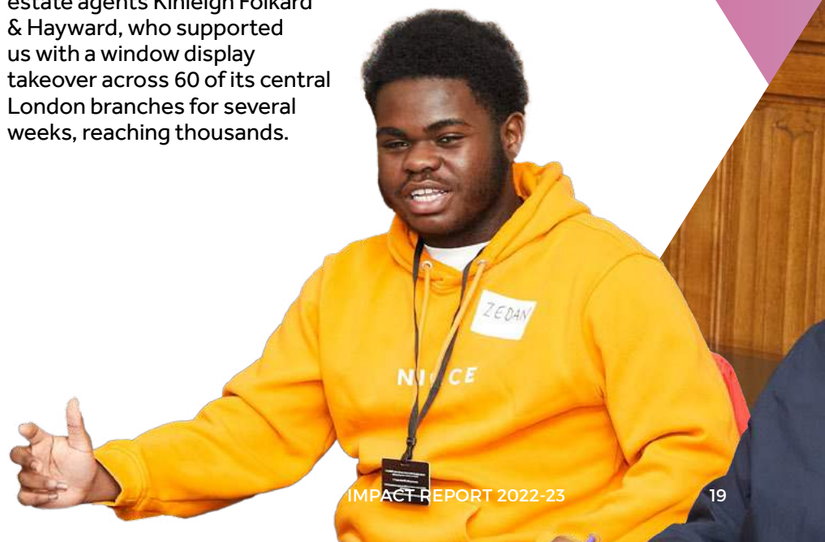
Ambitious Applications campaign

At the end of March 2023, we wrote an open letter to London asking for help to keep vital spaces like youth clubs open, so that young people can continue to get life-changing support and develop skills needed to enter the world of work.

The letter was part of a campaign we launched in collaboration with marketing agency RAPP UK, and thanks to their support and FleishmanHillard, our open letter became a 65-foot mural in the heart of Shoreditch. The sheer scale of this exposure, so close to the capital's finance hub, was unprecedented for London Youth. Our campaign message was further amplified by our partner, estate agents Kinleigh Folkard & Hayward, who supported us with a window display takeover across 60 of its central London branches for several weeks, reaching thousands.

"The youth centres I went to were not like school, and not like home, they were a safe, joyful space in-between where I could talk to friends and be playful. Every young person deserves that."

Jawahir 'JJ' Roble



Driving impact

Youth organisations are facing unprecedented demand for their services and are playing an increasingly vital role in communities across London. To keep our diverse network strong, we help our members to further their impressive work by building skills and resilience, and making sure their voices are heard.

From 2022-23, we delivered free leadership training through the Rise Up programme. Youth professionals gained new skills, knowledge and confidence which benefited members' quality of provision, compliance and governance, connections and funding.

Throughout the year we supported over *170 members* on their Quality Mark journey, helping them to improve their policies, procedures and practice. We ran *142 training sessions* to support almost *1,000 youth professionals.* We also delivered *22 network sessions*, which helped over *300 youth professionals* share knowledge and support.

158

members held a Bronze, Silver or Gold London Youth Quality Mark from 2022-23

"Undertaking the Quality Mark allowed us to rethink our physical space and explore where there are opportunities to make our environment as safe, secure and inclusive as possible. The process also enabled us to embed some of our learning across our policies and procedures. Achieving the Quality Mark has demonstrated to our partner organisations and funders that we're serious about improving not just our programmes of work, but our practice as a charitable organisation."

Lewisham Music

358

member organisations took advantage of at least one aspect of London Youth's offer

"We take advantage of these networks and opportunities to enhance our youth offer, develop our organisation's abilities, and upskill the team."

London Youth member

215

members used our programmes and outdoor centres

94%

of participants rated our networks highly

"In the face of exceptionally difficult operating environments, it's helpful to feel part of something and that we aren't alone."

London Youth member

91%

of participants rated our training highly, with 87% gaining new knowledge and 70% gaining new skills

"[The trainer] provided us with tools to take away which can be applied to crisis situations and food for thought for consistency across the organisation for a code of conduct."

Youth professional

Building skills and resilience

Last year, we continued our work with partners to deliver the Rise Up leadership programme. Our training and mentorship supported 114 youth professionals who work directly with those affected by violence or have lived experience of violence.

Participants learned that their own lived experience is not only valid, but a critical part of what they bring to their role as youth practitioners. Through the programme, we equipped youth professionals with tools to manage conflict, provided access to support and advice through networks, and helped them develop confidence in their leadership abilities.

"Rise Up has been an incredibly valuable experience for me and has allowed me to meet amazing, like-minded individuals. I have enjoyed training alongside people who work within this field and are able to share their knowledge to help me better myself."

Youth professional, Rise Up programme

96%

of Rise Up participants rated it highly, and said they would recommend it to peers

Our stories

> *"The impact of Rise Up is clear – it definitely works"*

Upskilling youth professionals

Spiral, a youth organisation based in Brixton, south London, has been operating for approximately 10 years. As one of our members, they actively engaged with the Rise Up programme by sending two staff members, Luis and Dimitri, for training, which has had a positive impact on the organisation and their work with young people.

Luis and Dimitri both credit the programme with developing their skills and ability to work effectively with young people.

"[Rise Up] meant I was picking up new skills, getting more knowledge and experience, and developing new tools [...] Now, I'm in meetings with senior management, I project manage, I'm coordinating, and I'm managing some young people."
Luis

"From the first session that we did, they enjoyed the fact they were able to talk. Even little things like that are very good at keeping energy in the room and making sure everyone's getting the most out of it."
Dimitri

This upskilling has also been noticed by young people - and their carers. A parent of a young person at Spiral shared: "Last year at college my daughter got a double Distinction in Art and Design. This year she has started making patterns and upcycling her clothes. I really liked the way you worked with her."

This young person also provided feedback: "I just wanted to say that you helped me more than anyone and inspired me so much to do fashion properly as a career – thank you so much for everything."

Powering the grassroots

Youth clubs and youth groups aren't just a place to have fun, they're something young people need – a place to be heard, feel safe and explore who they are. Through the power of youth work, children and young people can develop the confidence, skills and resilience they need to be at their best.

Building on our impact this year, our new 2023-26 strategy will help London's valued youth workers take their essential work even further. In the coming years, our focus will be on strengthening more youth organisations, empowering more youth professionals, championing the work of the youth sector, and creating a wide and inspiring range of opportunities for young people across the capital.

Find out more at **londonyouth.org/about-us**

Through 2023-26, we will work to:

- Create vital opportunities for 25,000 young Londoners who have the greatest need
- Develop youth organisations and lead the sector into a sustainable future
- Inspire young Londoners with outdoor learning and trips away from home
- Secure our financial sustainability; galvanising a network of supporters
- Be a forward-thinking, inclusive organisation, where people feel motivated, heard and valued

We're a charity supporting London's youth sector to improve the lives of young people. We do this with and through our membership and at our two incredible outdoor learning centres, Hindleap and Woodrow.

For over 135 years we've helped community youth organisations to provide a constant lifeline and a vital safe space outside the family and formal education, so young people can develop confidence, resilience and skills.

Thanks to our members, young ambassadors and Youth Board, funders and supporters, and our dedicated team, more young people can access opportunities outside school to have fun with their friends, to make a positive change in their communities and to shape the city they live in.

We couldn't do what we do without our supporters. Without you, we couldn't offer vital opportunities to children and young people across the capital with the greatest need, and ensure they have an equal chance to thrive and succeed.

Thank you.

London Youth

London_youth
London-youth
LondonYouth

For more information, visit our website **londonyouth.org**

© 2024 London Youth

The information in this document is based on monitoring and evaluation data from 2022-23

The Federation of London Youth Clubs (operating under the name London Youth) is a registered charity: 303324. Registered company limited by guarantee (England and Wales): 258577. Registered office: London Youth, 47-49 Pitfield Street, London, N1 6DA