



## Youth Voice Agreement 2019/20

### A young person's journey

*"British Youth Council has made me a better person on the whole. Hand on heart, it has changed my life. Before, I could not communicate with other people efficiently and did not know about the magnitude of the power of my voice and what other young people can do. I now have the ability to publicly speak in a confident manner, including speaking at the House of Commons. It has opened so many more doors, I am now a confident leader. I highly recommend more young people to take part in Youth Voice in BYC".*

### **Young person involved in the 2018/19 programme, London**

### **What we do**

As the national youth council of the UK, we are proud to support a national network of member organisations who champion youth voice. We believe that young people have the power and the potential to take action and make positive social and political changes for themselves and others and we work with our members to achieve this.

### **What is Youth Voice?**

In addition to the standard [British Youth Council Membership](#) offer, and working with the Government, we offer a national youth voice programme to support the 11-18 year olds involvement in decision-making at both a local and national level in England. The programme offers training, support and greater recognition of young peoples' achievements.

Our work supports Ofsted's Framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspections of local authority children's services (163):

*"We will also want to see and hear the impact of local consultation with all children and young people. This includes children in care, care leavers, carers and birth families. We will want to see how their feedback has been asked for, both individually and collectively, and taken into account to approve practice and services (Ofsted, 2018)*

### **Youth Voice outcomes in 2018**

- Over 130 Local Authorities engaged and supported
- Over 1.1 million (1,106,788) young people reached through [Make Your Mark](#), the UK's largest youth consultation
- 18 regional Conventions held, with over 1000 training opportunities
- 93% of young people felt they had been trained in skills relevant to their role at our [Leadership Programme](#). 96% of all attendees would recommend the event, based on their experience

- Celebrated and recognised achievements through our [Youth Voice Star Awards](#)

### **Adding value**

We act as a hub for external organisations and partners to engage with young people, building leadership skills, and giving young people the opportunity to have their voice heard. For example:

- **Education:** participants at Conventions have been consulted on the new Ofsted inspection framework for a Curriculum for Life,
- **Health:** we run the NHS Youth Forum, which gives a voice to young people to express their thoughts on the health issues that matter most to them. It works directly with NHS England, Public Health England and Department of Health enabling the Forum to have a real impact on the health services that young people use
- **Campaigning:** our work with [WE Schools](#) will see young people benefit from support through the year, with further offers of support to schools locally.

We have recently won a government contract as part of the Civil Society Strategy. The **Youth Voice Pilots** programme will test how youth voice and meaningful youth participation can be embedded in national policy making by enabling young people to have their voices heard and participate in decision making on a national policy level. We're working with [The Mix](#), [YouthFocusNW](#), the [Youth Work Unit - Yorkshire and Humber](#), and [YouthFocusNE](#), the three project elements in this grant will:

- Provide opportunities for young people to have a meaningful role in early policy development.
- Provide opportunities for young people to help commission, monitor and evaluate programmes.
- Explore how digital methods could enable large numbers of young people to be involved in national policy making.
- Provide a model for how young people can be meaningfully engaged in national policy making that could be adopted across government.

### **Our commitment to you**

*Supporting young people, and the staff that support them. We will:*

1. Create leadership skills and capabilities of youth representatives; providing opportunities to put these skills in to action through range of regional and national training and development activities and events, and publish key dates to support you to plan your year (please see the end of this document)
2. Provide resources and training to enabling young people to track and measure their personal development progress during their term
3. Provide access to a range of [accredited learning awards](#) to recognise and reward young people's amazing involvement and dedication in youth voice and community involvement activities
4. Support staff locally by giving access to (online, on the phone and in person) support and guidance around working with young people in youth voice vehicles
5. Support staff nationally through a national steering group for support workers, and will provide:

- Sessions at national events, and provide space for networking at regional events
- Continue to work with the steering group, to enable workers to pool and share materials used locally
- Deliver Youth Voice Star Awards to celebrate and recognise outstanding practice in Local Authorities

*Sharing and celebrating practice within Local Authorities. We will:*

1. Share and showcase how young people have influenced decision makers, both locally and nationally decision-makers
2. Conduct an annual audit of youth elections, reviewing turnout and involvement in youth democracy locally, regionally and nationally

### **Make Your Mark**

Make Your Mark is a UK-wide ballot which gives young people aged 11-18 the chance to decide what Members of Youth Parliament should debate in their sitting in November. Following this debate they vote for which of these issues should be their campaign for the year ahead. Last year over 1.1 million young people took part, with published results broken down by LA to enable the priorities to be used locally.

### **UK Youth Parliament**

*"We want young people to have a central role in shaping the future of our society.*

*The UK Youth Parliament is enabling precisely that, supporting government to understand the issues which are important to young people and, thanks to the commitment of its members who volunteer their time, benefiting wider youth voice projects."*

### **Mims Davies, Minister for Sport and Civil Society**

For those Local Authorities who run the UK Youth Parliament you will be entitled to access: the Annual Conference, House of Commons Sitting (including MYP travel bursary from Parliament, subject to confirmation), online networks for MYPs, and a regular e-bulletin.

### **Your commitment to the Youth Voice**

*By participating in this programme, you agree to:*

1. Attend activities laid out in the calendar regionally e.g. Conventions
2. Support and record young people's progress through their journey using the resources provided, Make Your Mark, and campaign activities
3. Celebrate and share local success, and feedback using case studies,
4. Provide young people with the opportunity to take up leadership roles within their community, and in decision making processes
5. Provide mechanisms to feedback on the programme, when things are working, and work with us to make improvements when they're not
6. For those taking part in the UK Youth Parliament, to adhere to the rules as laid out in the UK Youth Parliament Rulebook, including running bi/annual direct MYP elections (or indirect elections where the youth council are directly elected themselves).

## **Key dates (subject to change)**

March	<b>1<sup>st</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> 31<sup>st</sup></b>	MYP Term of Office starts Youth Voice Star Awards, national ceremony Deadline to register MYPs and Election Results
April	<b>12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup></b>	Youth Voice Leadership Programme, Swindon
June	<b>22<sup>nd</sup></b>	Convention 1
August	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	UK Youth Parliament Annual Conference, Leeds Make Your Mark Launches
October	<b>12<sup>th</sup></b>	Convention 2
November	<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	UK Youth Parliament House of Commons Sitting
January 2020	<b>18<sup>th</sup></b>	Convention 3

## Theory of Change – our work is underpinned by:

AIM	HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE IT (Objectives)	WHAT ACTIVITIES/METHODS WILL WE USE	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS	HOW WILL WE SHARE THE RESULTS	DESIRED IMPACT
1. equip the young people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to become active citizens and engage with democracy in the UK	We will work with young people to:  explore what it means to be an active citizen  explore what it means to live in a democracy  reflect on their own experience and skills in these areas and what they want to change  Share information about Structured Dialogue and how they can get involved.	Bring young people together at a series of one day training events in different areas of the UK  Use staff with expertise in youth work, facilitation and social action  Create a safe and fun learning environment, using creative non-formal facilitation methods to allow young people the freedom to explore issues	Number of young people who attend the training days  Ask young people at the end of the project what they feel they have learnt, what skills they feel they have developed and what they have done that they feel is a result of participating in the project  Capturing personal stories through blogs and videos about the difference the project has made	We will produce an evaluation report from the project, summarising the activities that have taken place, issues discussed and the competencies young people developed  Publish personal stories through blogs and videos about the difference the project has made	Young people who participate take control of their own lives and realise their potential to take action and make positive changes for themselves and others.  Young people who participate become advocates for democracy and Parliamentary processes in the UK  Young people who participate encourage their peers to be active citizens  <i>Assumption:</i> that they wouldn't have done this anyway.
2. raise awareness of the inequalities that young	We will:  Minimise the barriers to participation in the project	Bring young people together at a series of one day training events in different areas of the UK	Number of young people who attend activities  The reach of certain	Key information on the background of participants will be included in the end of project report	All young people feel valued by their peers, decision-makers and wider society.

	<p>people from marginalised groups face and amplifying their voices across BYC's work</p>	<p>Consult directly with young people who identify as women, BME, disabled and/or LGBT+, and those with faith, to capture their experiences and share these across the project</p>	<p>Keep some events and spaces available only to those who identify as women, BME, disabled and/or LGBT+, and those with faith</p> <p>Use staff with expertise in youth work, facilitation and social action, and work with organisations with experience in working on liberation campaigns</p> <p>Create a safe and fun learning environment, using creative non-formal facilitation methods to allow young people the freedom to explore issues</p>	<p>dissemination activities (e.g. how many people download the report)</p>	<p>We will create a short snapshot report of the young people consulted, the issues they identify, and the views of decision-makers on the project</p> <p>We may explore the use of film to capture young people's stories and experiences.</p>	<p>Youth policy in the UK is developed in line with all young people's views, experiences and needs, and seeks to bring about equality between all young people regardless of their background, identity and experiences.</p>
<p>3. provide opportunities and encouragement for young people and decision-makers to</p>	<p>We will work with young people to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the role of decision-makers in achieving change</li> </ul>	<p>Bring young people together at a series of one day training events in different areas of the UK</p> <p>Use staff with expertise in youth</p>	<p>Number of young people who attend the activities</p> <p>Number of decision-makers who actively participate in the project</p>	<p>Social media promotion and live reporting from panel debates/round-tables</p> <p>We will create a short snapshot</p>	<p>Decision-makers actively seek, listen to and act on the views of young people.</p> <p>Young people feel valued, are offered opportunities to</p>	

<p>engage in meaningful dialogue with each other, to help young people achieve the change they want to see</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the decision-makers that they need to engage with to make a change on issues they care about</li> </ul> <p>We will work with young people and decision-makers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide spaces for young people and decision makers to engage in meaningful dialogue with each other</li> </ul>	<p>work, facilitation and social action</p> <p>Invite decision-makers to attend one day training events where young people will be, to engage in dialogue on issues identified by young people</p> <p>Facilitate these conversations, encouraging young people to engage with decision-makers</p>	<p>Number of young people who contact a decision maker as a result of participating in the project</p> <p>Feedback from decision-makers on any influence young people have had on their decision-making</p>	<p>report of the young people consulted, the issues they identify, and the views of decision-makers on the project</p>	<p>speak out about issues that they care about, and ensure their voices are heard.</p> <p>Social and political change occurs which has a positive impact on the lives of young people.</p>
<p>4. Influence the development of national youth policy by feeding in to the British Youth Council's wider work as National Youth Council and maximising our existing</p>	<p>We will:</p> <p>Provide information about the project to the Government's youth policy team, inviting them to observe/participate in the project</p> <p>Invite Government decision-makers to attend and participate in activities</p>	<p>Attend quarterly meetings with the government's youth policy team</p> <p>Be pro-active in sending dates and opportunities for involvement / attendance in BYC events and activities throughout the year</p>	<p>Number of opportunities BYC receives from Government for young people to share their views</p> <p>Feedback from civil servants on how they use BYC's evidence and young people's views to influence their work and any changes that have occurred as</p>		<p>Youth policy in the UK is developed in line with young people's views, experiences and needs</p>

networks and partnerships with UK Government, Parliament and across the third sector	Disseminate the outcomes of the project across our networks and the wider third sector		a result		
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