

# The journey of Youth Voice



# Implementing Youth Voice

At The National Lottery Community Fund, we fund things that matter. In the last three years alone, we've invested [£861 million in projects for children and young people](#), thanks to National Lottery players, making us the biggest non-statutory funder of young people in the UK.

We aim to make sure young people's voices are included in all our work, whether it's through the grants we make, the people we influence or the things we learn, so that we can support people and communities to thrive.

We believe young people represent the diverse communities our funding aims to reach and have Lived Experience of the causes we are focused on helping. To that end, we have built an inclusive strategy with young people, involving them at all levels of our work in ways that suit their lifestyles.



Artwork created at a Youth Voice Team event in Oct 2022

# The Pyramid of Youth Voice

The Pyramid of Youth Voice enables us to work with young people in a variety of ways.



## 1. Youth Voice Teams

Following the success of Young People in the Lead (YPIL) in 2020 – an advisory panel made up of 10 dynamic young people from National Lottery funded projects, aiming to steer significant and positive change in communities - Youth Voice Teams have now been established across the UK. Members are selected based upon their ability to demonstrate their teamworking skills and their passion to make a change. The Youth Voice Teams meet monthly to set and achieve their action plan, with the aim to improve our funding and impact. Each team member is provided with on-going training opportunities and one-to-one support to develop their skills and knowledge, while also being remunerated. To find out more meet our Youth Voice Teams in [England, Northern Ireland, YPIL 2020](#)

## 2. Youth Voice Hubs

The middle tier is where our Youth Voice Hubs take a deeper dive into issues affecting young people, either regionally or thematically. This is via a youth led peer research model we have used in England, Northern Ireland and Wales in which young people have been recruited and trained to analyse research. The results of this has informed funding portfolios for regional activity and in the UK's countries. To understand more please read one of our examples: [Youth Led Peer Research - Impact and Response report.](#)

## 3. Youth Voice Collective

The final and largest tier at the bottom of the pyramid represents the Youth Voice Collective. This is where The National Lottery Community Fund draws knowledge and information from what young people are saying at events, on social media and in surveys conducted across the UK. The best example of this is illustrated through the [Voice, Influence and Power](#) project - a collaboration with other funders and lead youth sector organisations. It gathered the voices of 470,000 young people while producing important work including a [Typology of Youth Voice](#) and an interactive [Youth Voice database.](#)

# Adding value with Youth Voice representation

Below we spotlight the key areas of work at The National Lottery Community Fund and in Government where our Youth Voice Teams are represented. Here they have opportunities to shape our grant making, and share their thoughts and vision for UK communities.

## Youth Voice positions of representation

Strategy Renewal

Country Committees

The National Lottery  
Community Fund  
Board

Department for Culture,  
Media and Sport

#iwill

The Phoenix Fund;  
Climate Action Fund;  
Platinum Jubilee Fund

## Our journey of Youth Voice

Youth Voice representation across our work has brought a myriad of benefits to:

- **our funding** by advising staff in assessments and decision making
- **other stakeholders** by sharing best practice of how to build youth voice in their own organisations
- **Youth Voice Team Members** by enhancing their personal development and skills through the experiences and training they've received, as part of their involvement.



100% YVT Members  
state improved  
confidence



A £10 million  
fund designed



3,000  
external delegates  
informed\*

\*including youth sector organisations and other funders.

# Here's what people have to say about Youth Voice

## External stakeholders



“It is a powerful message to us that The National Lottery Community Fund is committed to youth voice and investing with a strategic role and the Youth Voice Teams, as it is putting investment and leadership in what they ask us to do in our funding.”

#iwill match funder

## Colleagues from The National Lottery Community Fund

88% of colleagues surveyed told us that the young people brought **different perspectives**, while 79% said they generated **new ideas** in their area of work.



“Young people make you feel a great sense of accountability to get it right for them - they want to see that they have influenced positive change. It makes you work even harder to get it right!”

England Committee Member

## Youth Voice Teams (formerly Young People in the Lead)

All members of the Youth Voice team said their involvement had built their confidence.



“Thank you for all the opportunities you have given us – with each one I grow closer to my goal.”

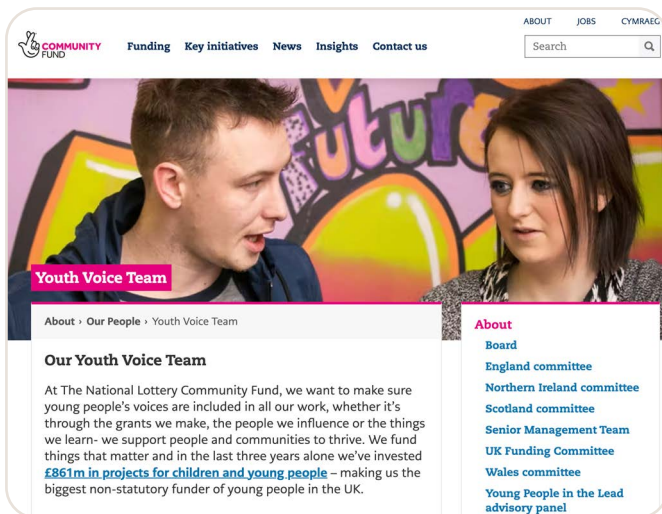
Kianna

## Poem by Dan Williamson (a former Youth Voice Team member)



“Youth voice is so powerful, yet so desirable  
In the actions of the leaders, followers become believers  
Youngers become achievers, leaders, truth seekers,  
New decision makers, rule breakers, rule makers, creators  
Charity makers, life savers, invention makers,  
We are the next generation  
Make our voices be heard”

# Find out more about Youth Voice



Learn about the achievements of the [Youth Voice Team](#) and the role of Head of Youth Voice at The National Lottery Community Fund.

**“The Youth Voice Team has the ability to shape, create and redirect resources to young people. This is the reason I’m part of this mission”**

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Ajuma Salifu, Youth Voice Team and Platinum Jubilee Programme panel member



Whilst studying for my first degree at Ulster University, I had the opportunity to be a student counsellor. Some of the ideas I worked on had a positive impact on the mental health of students, especially during exams. We saw students coping better after introducing more services that aid the reduction of stress.

I was also lucky enough to be involved with a creative voluntary project close to my heart where I worked, with the likes of the [Northwest Migrant Forum](#), [Pieta house](#) and a few voluntary organisations.

[Read this blog](#) to understand how Youth Voice contributed to the Platinum Jubilee Fund decision making panel.

## Mind our Future

**Wales Youth Voice Team**

At The National Lottery Community Fund, we want to make sure young people’s voices are embedded across our work. Mind our Future has been the work of our Youth Voice Team in Wales.



[Watch this film](#) to understand how Youth Voice changed our processes in our £10 million Mind our Future Fund in Wales.

You can also see our Youth Voice work featured as a case study at Philea: Global Funders Network: [Child and Youth Participation in Philanthropy: Stories of Transformation](#).

If you have any queries or would like to discuss the work of The National Lottery Community Fund’s Youth Voice work further, please don’t hesitate to contact our Head of Youth Voice, Joanne Rich [Joanne.rich@tnlcommunityfund.org.uk](mailto:Joanne.rich@tnlcommunityfund.org.uk).