

**Research**

**Officer**

Candidate Pack

August 2022

# Thank you for your interest in Youth Futures Foundation.



# Welcome letter

## Too many of our young people are prevented from finding a job they love by a lack of access to appropriate information, advice and connections; inadequate support to overcome multiple layers of disadvantage; or as a result of discrimination. It is unacceptable that one in 10 young people in the UK are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Young people from marginalised backgrounds and particular ethnic minorities are disproportionately likely to be neither earning nor learning, or underemployed, and their outcomes vary significantly more by region. This has been compounded by the pandemic that caused significant economic and educational disruption. As the economy recovers, the benefits are not being felt equally as long-term youth unemployment remains higher than pre-pandemic. This is the core mission of Youth Futures – to support young people facing disadvantage into the record number of job opportunities that are now available.

Long-term youth unemployment causes long-term scarring effects on the individual and their ability to fulfil their potential in society. This is worsened by the current cost of living crisis that is hitting young people hard - they pay double on essentials like rent and bills, compared to the over-50s. Yet the personal and economic prize for addressing this issue is significant. Supporting young people to secure good quality jobs is a sustainable way to tackle the cost of living crisis. UK GDP could benefit by £38billion by lowering levels of young workers

classed as NEETs to German levels, according to our

recent research.

We have the opportunity to create a profound change in the way this country supports young people from marginalised backgrounds into employment. Improving employment prospects for all young people is a crucial factor in achieving national productivity gains, reducing the benefits bill, and enhancing health and wellbeing in society.

We are committed to removing the structural and systemic barriers to employment and progression young people from marginalised backgrounds face. We take an evidence-led, structural and systems-based approach that recognises the importance of national learnings and local context. In 2021 we launched our Youth Employment Evidence and Gap Map – the world’s largest, quality-checked evidence base on youth employment – that shows the global evidence base on what works to improve youth skills, employment and job quality.

We promote strong coordination and partnership working across government, funders, delivery organisations and employers. Our flagship£6.1million Connected Futures Fund aims to address fragmentation at a local level to reduce the fragmentation of youth employment and skills delivery in the places that need it most, so that young people furthest from the job market receive consistent high-quality support to address complex needs.

#### As the leader of an organisation that launched in 2019, you will have the opportunity to build on our success to date, work with a new Chair to help shape our long-term strategy and create a values driven and inclusive culture. If you share our passion and commitment to create a society where all young people have equitable access to good quality jobs, then I look forward to hearing from you.

**Sir Tony Hawkhead**

# About us

**Youth Futures Foundation is an independent not-for-profit organisation established in December 2019 to improve employment outcomes for young people from marginalised backgrounds. Youth Futures launched with an initial endowment of £90 million from the Dormant Assets Scheme and, in January 2022, the government announced that we had been allocated a further £20 million.**



**Identify**



**Invest**

**Ignite**

# Our vision

To create a society where all young people have equitable access to good quality jobs.

This includes:

* equal employment outcomes for young people who face discrimination or disadvantage
* a reduced number of young people outside the labour market or in insecure work
* improved progression pathways for young people

# Our mission

To narrow the employment gap by identifying what works and why, investing in evidence generation and innovation, and igniting new ideas that change behaviour and practice.

Our primary beneficiaries are young people aged 14-24 who face at least one personal or systemic barrier to progressing into meaningful work, including:

* ethnic minorities, particularly those most at risk of facing disparities in the labour market (e.g. Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Black; Mixed; Gypsy, Roma and Traveller) And/or: young people legally defined as children in need
* young parents, or those who have a caring responsibility
* economic disadvantage (e.g. eligible for free school meals or living in an area of high deprivation)
* special educational needs or disabilities
* experience of offending
* school exclusion or alternative provision
* experience of homelessness
* a mental health or long-term health condition
* experience of problem substance use

# Our values

## We are bold

We want to disrupt the status quo and transform the youth-employment system

## We are always learning

We are evidence-driven, we innovate and we aren’t afraid to fail

## We are inclusive

We embrace, celebrate and

champion diversity in all its forms – it’s core to who we are

## We are collaborative

We build partnerships and share power to increase the collective impact

## We are determined

We are relentless in our pursuit of a better future for all young people



# Strategy

## Our strategic priorities

We are an ambitious organisation that wants to tackle the root causes of youth unemployment for young people from marginalised backgrounds. To do that, we will focus on three priorities over the next three years:

#### Changing the youth employment system

**1**

by working in partnership with organisations, policymakers and young people to address structural and systemic barriers.

**2**

#### Creating opportunities with employers

to recruit and retain more young people from marginalised backgrounds.

**3**

#### Building capacity with practitioners

to support and train more young

people from marginalised

backgrounds to be ready for work.

# Equity, diversity and inclusion statement

## The young people we aim to serve - and the challenges they face - are all unique. We need to build a team that reflects this diversity, is highly skilled and committed.

**Our commitment to inclusion across all protected characteristics, experiences and socioeconomic background forms the cornerstone of our work.**

We work hard to ensure we have a diverse and inclusive workforce. We use identity-blind software for all our permanent recruitment campaigns to reduce unconscious bias during recruitment. We have flexible working policies which are kept under review and many of the more flexible working practices we adopted during lockdown have been retained. The recruitment of our team around our three hubs of Birmingham, Leeds and London has enabled us to attract a greater diversity of talent than simply focusing recruitment in one city.

In building the Board, the Future Voices Group, and making external appointments to the Grants Committee, we have also ensured our governance and advisory structures contain a broad diversity of background and experience.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) committee within the staff team has senior management sponsorship and leads the creation of a more broad- based EDI strategy. This committee has been created to support accountability pathways within the organisation to ensure our EDI values are upheld. We also launched a staff diversity survey last year which aimed to understand the sociodemographic characteristics of our staff and be able to compare this information with salary data.

We also ensure, where possible, there is diverse representation on our recruitment panels by actively involving wider team members in recruitment activities to ensure we have diverse perspective and representation.

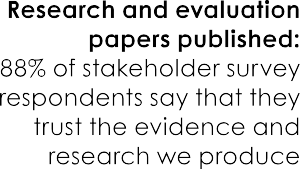
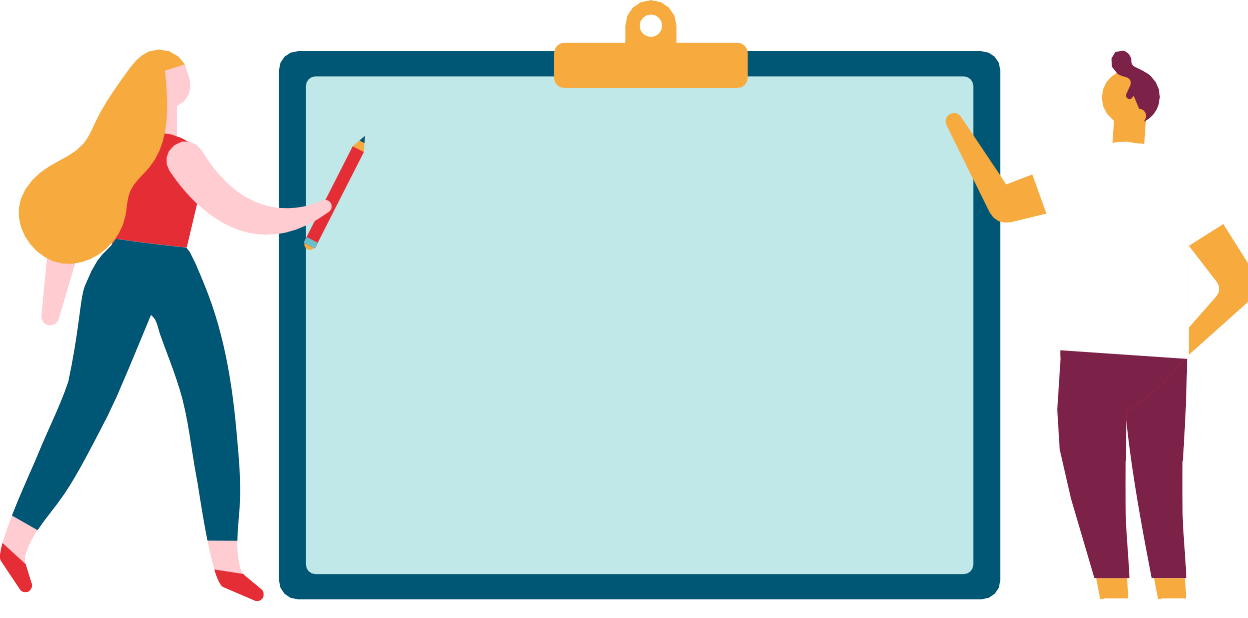
# Finances 2021

Total expenditure in 2021 was **£11.7m (2020: £13.8m)**, which primarily comprised

**£8.6m (2020: £11.7m)** of grant expenditure committed to grantees and other partners engaged in our delivery and evaluation projects. Many of our programmes are multi-year in nature with cash outflow increasing as the programmes scale up.

As such, cash outflow in 2021 was **£10.3m**. By the end of 2022, we expect to have embarked on multi-year programmes that in total will utilise **72% (£79m)** of our allocated

**£110m** funding, with further programmes to be launched in 2023.



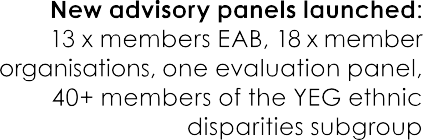
**£5.2 million**

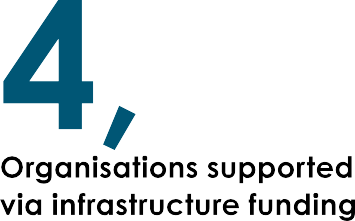
## Grant funding awarded

















# Job description

**Role title: Location:**

**Remuneration:**

**Reporting to:**

Research Officer

London, Leeds or Birmingham

£25,000 - £30,000

Research Manager

**Overall objective**

We are looking for a dynamic Research Officer to support the creation and collation of research and evidence that has a transformative effect on the youth employment ecosystem.

You will work with the Research Manager and other members of the Impact and Evidence team to support the design, delivery and management of commissioned and in-house research projects striving to understand the complex, systemic issues faced by marginalised young people in their employment journey, as well as potential solutions.

This is an exciting opportunity to work directly with young people on research projects. A part of the role will also be working with other teams, such as policy and communications, to translate complex research and evaluation findings into accessible, user-centred outputs and briefings for internal and external use.

**Key Responsibilities**

Support the YFF approach to research and impact, including:

* Conducting literature reviews and/or desk-based research on topics related to youth employment outcomes for marginalised groups for a variety of purposes, e.g. initial scoping for research tenders
* Supporting evidence curation, including resources such as YFF’s Youth Employment Evidence and Implementation Issues Gap Map
* Supporting the delivery of in-house research projects on youth employment and related themes, e.g. systems change, place-based approaches to youth employment
* Supporting the delivery of commissioned research projects, e.g. co-ordinating commissioned researchers, organising meetings, quality assuring project outputs
* Supporting the engagement of young people in planning and delivering research projects (e.g. working with Youth Futures’ Future Voices Group)
* Translating research outputs into accessible, user-friendly content for internal and external use (such as research briefings, executive summaries and presentations), working with evaluation, policy, communications and research team members.
* Sharing updates and findings of research projects internally and externally, through internal communications channels and external events
* Co-ordinating, and managing communications with research stakeholders, including advisory and user groups and young people working with Youth Futures
* Supporting the Research Manager to track and monitor the status of research projects
* Creating and maintaining a research database, collating and cataloguing relevant academic articles, research reports and briefings

# Person specification

**Knowledge and Experience**

**ESSENTIAL**

* A track record in supporting successful research projects from design to impact
* Experience of using qualitative and quantitative research methods
* An understanding of key issues and principles in social research
* Knowledge, understanding, and/or a strong interest in youth employment and the barriers faced by marginalised young people
* Experience in effectively communicating research findings and producing user-friendly content for different audiences
* Experience of working effectively as a member of a busy team
* Experience of working with diverse stakeholder groups and co-ordinating activities

**DESIRABLE**

* Experience of working in the context of youth employment, learning and/or skills
* Experience in review and evidence synthesis methods, such as literature reviews and/or rapid evidence assessments
* Experience of participatory research
* Relevant qualification in an economic, social science or related discipline - or on-the-job experience or training - The ability to interpret quantitative and statistical data in evaluations

**Skills and Competencies**

* Strong analytical skills, ability to critically appraise, analyse and summarise research outputs and literature
* Quantitative and qualitative research skills
* Excellent writing and communication skills, ability to turn complex information into plain English for non-specialist audiences
* A collaborative, flexible team member who understands when to take the initiative and work independently, and collaborate with others
* Ability to build effective working relationships across teams and wider networks
* Good organisational and time management skills, ability to manage own workload, prioritise tasks and competing demands and deliver in a high-quality work in a fast-paced environment
* Strong IT skills, including use of MS Office applications (Teams, Word, Excel, PowerPoint etc), or equivalent, shared online folders, calendars and contacts

**Mindset**

* Commitment to Youth Futures mission, vision and values
* Ability and energy to think differently with an open and innovative mindset
* Strong commitment to inclusivity and championing young people’s strengths, talents and needs
* As YFF was only set up in 2019, many of the systems and processes that are normal in an established organisation either do not exist or are newly forming. To be successful in this role, the candidate will need:
* to thrive when operating in uncertainty
* a proactive and flexible approach, able to identify and take forward opportunities and work effectively in partnership with others.
* a positive and can-do attitude, willing to roll their sleeves up to get into details where necessary

**Summary of Terms, Conditions & Benefits**

**Probationary Period**

All offers of employment are subject to a three-month probationary period. Reviews will be undertaken at six and twelve-weeks.

**Holiday Year**

1st January to 31st December.

**Holiday entitlement**

28 days holiday, plus 8 statutory bank holidays. Entitlement is pro-rata for part-time employees. Holiday can be requested via the Who’s Off app. We are also flexible for employees to work on occasional public holidays (except Christmas, Boxing or New Year’s Day) in lieu of taking a day off to celebrate an alternative significant religious day. Please discuss this further with line manager of Head of People.

**Hours of work**

Full time hours are 37.5 per week, standard working hours are 9:00am – 5:30pm including one hour lunch. Core hours of work are between 10:00am and 3:00pm.

**Lunch break**

Lunch breaks are a minimum of 30-minutes . Refreshment facilities are provided in each of our hub locations.

**Flexible working**

We offer a range of different working patterns such as variable start / finish times part-time or compressed hours. Please speak with your line manager or Head of People to discuss any variation to current working pattern or hours.

**Location**

Each employee will be given a hub location as their place of work, however there is a requirement to visit or work from other hub locations as necessary, including to attend the periodic face to face, all staff away days (which involve an overnight stay). The hub locations are London, Birmingham and Leeds.

**Hybrid working**

We currently offer an arrangement that allows you to work three days per week from home (which can be averaged out over a few weeks). However, if your home working situation or general working preference means that you prefer to work in an office, there is no upper limit to the number of days working in the office. We provide all relevant home office equipment to ensure you are properly equipped to work effectively from home. A catalogue of equipment is offered for you to select the required equipment.

**Volunteering days**

We offer three paid volunteering days per year, pro-rata for part time employees, unless otherwise agreed at our discretion each year (January to December) to allow employees to undertake voluntary/charitable work. This time can be split into half days. Volunteering time can be logged on the Who’s Off app.

**Personal/professional training allowance**

A personal training allowance of £750 is allocated to each employee per year to use in a variety of methods such as conferences, events, books, journals, professional subscriptions/memberships, contribution to qualifications, coaching, to support with CPD, and £250 per head for functional teams to pool and engage in collective training.

**Salaries**

Paid via BACS direct into bank accounts on the 25th of each month, where the 25th falls on a weekend, payment will be made the Friday before.  Payslips are issued electronically via Xero.

**Enhanced Maternity Pay**

Weeks 1 to 26 on full pay, weeks 27 to 39 on Standard Maternity Pay (SMP), weeks 40 to 52 unpaid (eligible at 6 months service).​

**Enhanced Paternity/Partner leave**

Three weeks at full pay.

**Absence reporting**

Employees are expected to contact their line manager and/or Head of People to notify of any absence at your earliest possible opportunity and by no later than 10:00am.

**Sickness absence payments**

Employees with less than six-months service will be paid at the current SSP (Statutory Sick Pay) rate, where eligible. More than six-months but less than 1 year is four weeks full pay, more than one year but less than five is up to 12 weeks full pay. After this period the below income protection policy will then apply.

**Travel card loan**

The company can provide financial support to purchase travel cards. This is then deducted on a monthly basis from salary for an agreed time period.

**Income protection**​

Provides replacement income if an employee is absent from work through long-term illness or injury. After 13 weeks of absence, the income protection plan provides 75% of basic salary for a two-year period.

**Pension**

There is an auto-enrolment pension scheme provided by People’s Pension.  If you meet the auto-enrolment criteria, you will automatically become a member of the scheme. Youth Futures Foundation pay an employer contribution of 6%, with an employee contribution of 5% of salary.  An opt in to an additional 2% matched contribution can be made with a contribution totalling 15%. Membership details will be issued to you upon commencement. You can choose to opt out the scheme should you wish.

**Employee Assistance Programme**

A 24-hour helpline with access to a range of legal, consultancy, 24/7 crisis assistance support and signposting. Provided by Assured Health.

**Health Cash Benefit**

A cash plan insurance policy that helps cover the cost of everyday health care, such as dental, optical and therapies. The plan reimburses some or all of the cost of routine and/or unforeseen healthcare costs and appointments. Full details of entitlements and support available will be issued to

you direct from the provider Medicash. Totalling £995/year.

**Group Life Assurance**​

A policy which enables employees to provide a tax-free lump sum benefit payment, and/or a longer-term income to their family and dependants in the event of death whilst in Service. Cover provided by Aviva. Payment is based on 4 x basic salary.

**Season Ticket Loan**

An interest free loan for a 6 month or 12-month season ticket with monthly deductions from salary.

**Cycle to Work Scheme**

Allows you to buy commuter bikes and cycling accessories through us, so you spread the cost and making savings through a tax break.

**Expenses**

Reasonable expenses incurred in line with the Travel & Expense Policy will be reimbursed against receipts.    Expenses can be claimed back via the Zoho app.

**Dress Code**

We do not have a dress code.  It is expected that you will dress appropriately for the work in which you are carrying out.

# How to apply

To apply for this role :

**Recruitment timetable**

**Deadline for applications:**

13 September 2022

**Interview dates:**

TBC

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact lisa.metcalf@youthfuturesfoundation.org

Follow this [link](https://app.beapplied.com/apply/ifpx1wmfhq) to BeApplied



**Questions**

If you any questions or wish to find out more details about this opportunity please contact:

Lisa Metcalf

Head of People

lisa.metcalf@youthfuturesfoundation.org

