File name: S2E2 YFF Research_mixdown(1).mp3
Moderator questions in Bold, Respondents in Regular text.
KEY: **Unable to decipher** = (inaudible + timecode), **Phonetic spelling** (ph) + timecode), **Missed word** = (mw + timecode), **Talking over each other** = (talking over each other + timecode).

(TC: 00:00:00)
Moderator: Hello and welcome to the second episode in the tackling youth unemployment series. I am Reena and today I am going to be answering the question, what is the research saying about youth unemployment, what are some of the key issues in youth unemployment right now, according to the research, and how can we make lasting, long-lasting systemic change. In this episode we learn more about what the current trends are in the youth labour market and explore the key issues that are showing up in the research. We'll also discuss, debate and share our reflections on we've heard and consider some of the solutions to the issues that we've noted. And, I am really delighted to be joined by some fabulous speakers who will help me unpack some of the these questions about youth unemployment. So, hello all, thank you so much for joining me. Would you mind introducing yourselves to our listeners and telling us a little bit about yourselves?

(TC: 00:01:02)
F: Hi everyone, thanks Reena, I'm Caroline. In my day job I am a data analyst at a healthcare charity and I'm also a member of the youth reference group with the Youth Futures Foundation. We are a group of young people who have worked to co-produce an evaluation of some grant funding that Youth Futures and Children In Need put in place to support young people with the impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic.

(TC: 00:01:26)
F: Hi my name is Anna Round and I'm Head of Research and Impact at the Youth Futures Foundation. I lead the research team and what we do is bring together research findings on youth employment and unemployment and we analyse data which looks at trends in youth unemployment. We also identify areas where we need additional research and we conduct a wide range of research and work with external organisations to find out what's happening in the youth labour market and also to find out what's the next question we should ask about the youth labour market.

(TC: 00:02:03)
F: I am Becci Newton, I'm Director of Public Policy Research at the Institute for Employment Studies. We are a small charitable institute focused on employment issues across the life course but we do specialise in research looking into the experiences of young people in education and then their transitions into and through the labour market. And so this is how we connected and set with the interest of Youth Futures.

(TC: 00:02:33)
Moderator: Thank you everybody and thanks so much for coming on. So, Anna, I wonder if I could start the conversation with you. Could you give our listeners a bit of an overview of Youth Futures research priorities and the, sort of, strategy our approach to research?

(TC: 00:02:52)
F: Sure. So Youth Futures Foundation was set up to improve employment outcomes and prospects for young people who are at risk of marginalisation or who have experience marginalisation in relation to the labour

market. And so, broadly, it's their experiences, their prospects and it's what works to support them into good jobs and employability skills. Overall the UK is doing okay on youth employment. So, some research that Youth Futures Foundation conducted with PwC, which is called The Youth Employment Index, actually found that for youth employment the UK, in 2020, sat 7th in the OECD. So slightly higher overall youth employment rate than the average for OECD countries. Similarly it was 16th out of 18 countries on youth unemployment, unemployment is a little bit lower than the OECD average. And the rate for young people who are not in employment, education or training was also not as good as some comparable countries like Germany and Switzerland but actually, again, it's okay. So, on average we're doing alright. The problem is that that average hides some really big variations and it's those variations that are our particular area of interest. We're interested in young people who are at risk of marginalisation who, even when things are good, may not get the opportunities that they deserve that will help them to fulfil their potential. And, when you come to a challenging time to take a couple of examples, a pandemic or a recession with an associated cost-of-living crisis, those young people will be at particular risk. So that's the real focus of our research. In 2022 we've published research on various of these issues that includes some work on what employers can do to help young people at risk of marginalisation enter work places. So, how do you recruit young people equitably, fairly to let them show the best of their potential. And then what works to retain young people who are at risk of marginalisation, disadvantage once they are in good quality work.

Another large piece of work that we did was-, I'll talk a bit more about some of our findings from this, was a survey of young people from minority ethnic backgrounds. To look at their experiences in work, in trying to find work and more generally in the face of those two big challenges that have come up over the past few years, the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. And the survey actually just looked at young people from minority ethnic groups because, what we wanted to avoid doing was say, 'Here's what happens to white British young people and here's what happens to everybody else.' Because that everybody else is a really big and complex group. And those themes of, the specific issues for young people who face marginalisation is something that we're looking to continue into next year. We have some big, ongoing, projects that look at different types of marginalisation. So, obviously, we have that big interest in minority ethnic groups, we're also looking at a wide range of kinds of marginalisation that includes things to do with disabilities, with learning disabilities, things to do with young people who have experience the care system, who have got experience of the criminal justice system. A wide range of different things that can lead to marginalisation. We're also interested in the overlaps between those because many young people face more than one different kind of challenge in relation to the work place. So we're interested in looking at how those things sit together. And we're also interested in looking at what are the gaps in the data that we've got at the moment. What can't we learn from some of the national data sets, again, about those people who are at some of the margins in society.

The other big dimension of marginalisation and, again, this intersects with all of the things I've talked about that we are very interested in at the moment, is place. So, where you live affects what opportunities you have. And that's really, you know, from birth, for education, for learning, for learning about the world and then, crucially, for what work is out there, what's available, how can you train, what might your first job be. And that probably becomes even more acute with a cost-of-living crisis. So we've got some work ongoing that looks at youth employment in places. Another piece of work that we're just embarking on looks at how can we make the best use of young people's voices in our research and what is really good practice in listening to and engaging young people in research. And, at that point, I'm going to let you talk to Caroline on that one.

(TC: 00:08:19)

Moderator: Thank you Anna. I was just going to say, that segways nicely into my question for you Caroline. I just wondered if you could give us some of your reflections on the youth participation side of working in research. What are your, kind of, thoughts there in a sense of a young person's role or your own experience as well working in the other research side of things?

(TC: 00:08:42)

F: Of course. So, there's two projects that I've been involved in with Youth Futures that I'll, kind of, bring some reflections from. So the first, as I mentioned, is evaluating a grant programme that was set up during the pandemic. And, as a group of young people, we were brought in right at the start and were involved in reading the tender bids to choose an evaluation provider or to choose an evaluation provider who we thought would really reflect the youth voice in the work that they carried out with Youth Futures. And then we've worked alongside the provider for the last eighteen months doing things like creating a topic guide so that interview questions that we were going to ask the grantees, the young people that had benefited from this grant programme. And then actually running the focus groups with the young people that have benefited. So we, between us, spoke to eight different charities that had benefited from this funding and spoke to the young people across the country to find out how they had experienced the pandemic and how their employment had been affected by the pandemic. And then we're currently involved in analysing and sense checking those findings and making sure that (TC 00:10:00) the findings themselves are accessible to young people so young people can learn what the charity are doing for them and how they can be supported. And then the other piece of work that I've been doing is an independent research project, and I want to mention the lovely Louise who I've been working with on this, she has done so much work. Which has been looking at how we can, specifically, involved autistic young people in peer research, both myself and Louise are autistic and so this is something that was very important to us.

And one of the things that we focused on is why should we do this, why should we include all young people whatever their experiences in doing research. And we got a couple of, kind of, key findings. So these aren't just applicable to autistic people, these are applicable to everyone. So, it ensures that research findings are relevant and accessible, it ensures that we're asking the right questions. Quite often research, especially for those who are perceived to be less important in society, research has been done to people rather than for people and they haven't been asking the questions that those communities really feel are important. And the autistic community has a saying, 'Nothing about us without us,' no research, no anything, no programme should be done without and autistic voice being involved and preferably multiple autistic voices because it's not one experience. Secondly, and this is something that I experienced in the interviews that I carried out, participants of the research can relate to people who are in their own position more. They might feel more able to open up and describe their experiences more truthfully than if they were speaking to someone who doesn't look like them, doesn't experience the same things as them. And finally, it provides work experience for the young people who are involved. From my perspective the work that I've done with Youth Futures Foundation was absolutely key in getting the job that I'm currently in. The experiences that I gained working with young people were, from feedback from the interview panel, why I was chosen. And I know that that is true for many of the others that I've worked with though Youth Futures.

(TC: 00:12:26)

Moderator: Thank you Caroline. I just wondered if I could maybe ask you to elaborate a little bit more on that because you mentioned there about how your experience helped you secure your position that you're in now. And it sounds like, from your experience, it's quite comprehensive, you

know, the different elements that you were involved in from interviews to the independent research project that you were working on. What are your reflections on that and what would you say are some of the positives about conducting research and what were some of the challenges that you've experienced?

(TC: 00:12:58)
F: So I think the positives are learning about how research just-, how it works in real life. We've been involved in the process, as I said, right from the start. So from, kind of, figuring out who we needed to talk to to do this research, then writing the questions, it's going through the full research life cycle. And that's something that young people quite often-, I think in peer research, quite often, young people are brought in at quite a late stage. And there's definitely a push through Youth Futures and other places to bring young people in right from the start to make sure that the questions that we're asking are really important. I think the challenges, perhaps, have been, although our own experiences are why we've been invited to take part, our own experiences can also cloud our judgement. And so, each of us has our own experiences, our own challenges that we've faced that perhaps feel like, for us, the most important thing in the world, because in our experience they are. And it's balancing our own experiences with those of the young people that we're speaking to who have completely different experiences to us. So, for example, for me and my health and neuro-diverse challenges, the pandemic was fantastic. Working from home has allowed me to do so much more and to reach my potential that I just cannot do in a face to face office. But I know that doesn't reflect the experiences of so many young people where the pandemic has really impacted them in really negative ways. And it's the balance of being aware of that whilst also being proud of the positives that I have taken from the last few years.

(TC: 00:14:49)
Moderator: Thank you Caroline. Yes it definitely sounds like a lot of balancing was involved in that process, a lot of self reflection. So it sounds like a really rewarding process, thank you. So, Becci, I'd love to bring your thoughts here on this. We've heard a little bit about Youth Futures mission and also a little bit about our youth participation work there. So in your role, and at the Institute of Employment Studies, looking at the employment issues that are out there, how does, in your opinion, Youth Futures Foundation's mission and vision align with the wider landscape?

(TC: 00:15:30)
F: I think it's really, really important. I mean as Anna, sort of, described actually rates of employment participation amongst young people are typically high but we've known over many, many years that some people are left behind in that. You know, when I first started researching it, I guess, back in around 2004, it was before we'd seen the policy change to raise the participation age in education. And the key concern was young people who weren't making those transitions in education with the sense of, you know, as an intermediate outcome, achieving those better qualifications are a protective factor for moving into the labour market. So, the key policy focus was trying to get young people to stay in education and training, it wasn't meant to be necessarily full-time, it could have been on the job learning, to then, sort of, have better life time outcomes. And we do know the importance of, sort of, making that transition into employment and keeping active. So, you know, young people-, so at that very young age of 16 to 17 if you can't make progress in work and training or staying in education, you do face some risks of some really long time scarring. It's actually bad for individuals and it's bad for society. You know, we see, sort of, a greater predominance of health conditions coming through in people's experience. That unemployment becomes a long-term unemployment issue versus, kind of, economic scarring that emerged. So we need to act on that group and

it's needed continued action, so while I was looking at it back in the early 2000s, actually when we look now, we've still got, you know-, while we've got high rates of participation we still have some groups left behind as Anna described. You know, young people with experience of care, sort of, ethnic minorities, it's just we need to be doing better.

So what we are seeing as well, is with this high rate-, overall good rate of employment, we are seeing some issues around the quality of work people can access. And actually, you know, we can have these improving rates of attainment coming through amongst young people generally from the education system, but they're not paying off as quickly in the labour market as they once did. So the kind of occupations and the time it takes to, say-, if you have managed to get graduate qualifications, it takes longer for you to get the payback on having, sort of, achieved those qualifications. The other, sort of, side of that is if you don't, sort of, you may be able to access work but the type of work and the quality of that may not really be at your potential. You may not be offered a training place, they not be offered opportunities for progression in work. So you may find yourself becoming locked, somewhat, into low pay, low skilled elements of work. I mean over time we see dropping rates of employers offering training which means there are less opportunities for training on the job and that progression in work. Some of our work has shown some mis-matched expectations on quality and employers, kind of, not really understanding what young people want. I think this speaks to the real importance of lived experience of having, kind of, the voice of young people at the heart of projects. And I know it's really at the heart of what Youth Futures Foundation is doing because we, kind of, need that youth advocacy for employers to understand, actually, some of these decisions. For example, I know young people feel the minimum rate on apprenticeships, the pay rate, is really tough. It means some young people can't take an apprenticeship even though that's a really good quality route (TC 00:20:00) to your future career because you cannot sustain yourself on that kind of wage rate. We need employers to understand it's a minimum, you can pay above it. Many do but we need to have more promotion of that, and also thinking about how you progress people in work so they can bring their full potential in employment. One of the things I've really enjoyed working on over the years is thinking about the benefits of a mixed age workforce. I think there is power in diversity. I'm really mindful of generational labels, I'm not particularly keen on it. I don't think all young people are digital natives, nor do I think all older people are incapable of using IT but what I do think is together we are stronger and the mix of what we bring adds strength to the world of work. I think the more we can do to influence employers on the value of having that talent coming in and then supporting it through the organisation, the more I think they will see-, and the more power from that kind of approach to employment. I could keep going.

(TC: 00:21:26)
Moderator: How do we enact systemic change for youth employment?

(TC: 00:22:28)
F: For me it is about thinking about who is recognised by young people as the system that they might access to think about employment support, to think about transitions, to think about their career goals and how they might achieve them. Also to think, and I think this is where Youth Futures Foundations work has been really powerful, is actually to think about some other aspects of people's contexts and lives. It links to the wider social determinants of health so safe and secure housing for example is a crucial element of the system as well as that sense of financial security, food security. There are the wider elements alongside the options around, you know, needing to understand opportunity locally related to your goals nationally. We did some really interesting research of hot spots and cold spots for one of our clients and what keeps people in what would be an economically cold labour market and it can be because they're doing rewarding work in the

community. So there's something about understanding the goals and helping people to work towards that in that play space, being able to overcome a range of obstacles that face people and to recognise there will be a range of different things and we need to act together. So I suppose the system change is the shared objective to act together to get to that goal for young people. That's my start.

(TC: 00:24:17)
F: I really agree with that. I think that working in places-, because the way that we learn and work is so place based, you are very situated, I know we've heard a lot about people who can work anywhere but actually anywhere is as much a place as a particular town so it's how you orientate yourself to places. Having policies and methods of funding that make that place based logic of joining up practical. Also methods of governance and power so that you are getting the voices of people with power and people who are affected by that power being listened to and used in developing systems so I think that's really important. The image I have in my head is that cartoon of, 'Equality is difference' you know, with the animals so you have the giraffe and the horse and the rabbit all trying to see over a wall and equality isn't giving them all a bench of the same height, it's giving them each a bench that helps them to see over the wall. I think helping build those benches that work for people who are starting from really different places. I think one of the things that is interesting with young people is that actually they come to the labour market with such different levels of resource behind them in terms of broadly what they will get from a family and a place. That's a no fault comment what your resources are, what your opportunities have been over a long period of time. Sometimes there are people that have worked very hard and very useful work but actually haven't had opportunities to build up the kinds of resource that make you resilient to shocks in a challenging environment so I think that is really important.

I think one of the other things-, it's interesting looking at systemic change because systems don't stand still as you try to change them so one of the things that we need to enact systemic change is a good understanding of how systems work and how the particular systems we're dealing with work, and how they're impacted by wider factors. Becci gave the really great analogy of, 'Why do determinants of health-,' which we're learning more about, 'Why do determinants of youth employment,' would also sit there. You can have the best programmes and interventions in the world but they need to mesh with your context and respond to that context.

(TC: 00:27:10)
Moderator: What are your thoughts on young people's perspectives on their place, their identity and the importance of understanding that?

(TC: 00:27:53)
F: To be honest it's not something I've thought particularly about but it's definitely something that came up in the case studies that we were involved in. In interviewing the young people who lived, as I said, across the UK and especially those living outside of London, their experiences of getting into certain industries was really impacted by where they live and their lack of resources to move somewhere else and especially during the pandemic, everyone's lack of resources to move to different places. I think going forward the change in the labour market, virtual online working has the opportunity to be really beneficial but also to really leave some people behind. I think a lot of people forget that it's a great privilege to have somewhere safe to live, to have a quiet space in their home where they can work, to have appropriate childcare so that you're not at home with any children or other people that you're having to care for. Actually for a lot of people they can't do that, they can't work from home and so the changes we're seeing that are benefits for a lot of young

people and for others, and I think those people can face being left behind as we're moving to a more hybrid and virtual way of working.

(TC: 00:29:30)
Moderator: (TC 00:30:00) What are some of the challenges in researching youth unemployment?

(TC: 00:30:13)
F: Something that's springing to my mind as we were talking about systems and the sense of what you need for systemic change is you also need the voice of the people who it's there to support. I suppose in leading place based work, it is understanding that local context as it is experienced by the people within the system that it's trying to support. It needs innovation to bring through ideas so in some ways it's being able to be formative in research and almost lead quite action oriented research to say, 'Well actually, this seems to be the issue that is being experienced. Is there something different we can do in the solution?' I think some of the infrastructure we've developed over time around some regional partnerships and combined authorities give greater strength to really think about how place based systems can work and how you bring together-. I think we're seeing lots more opportunity, I mean we saw the youth hubs evolve for a start and that brings together education, employment with organisations concerned with housing and welfare and childcare to actually start to bring that together. It's having that youth voice as well to think about, actually what more do we need from that collaboration to actually make the system work and I think that peer research models and formative research models can be really powerful in starting to surface the need as well as enable some of the experimentation which might see the right solutions result.

(TC: 00:32:16)
F: I mean youth employment is probably a particular issue of this, there are different things that work well at different geographies so there's, kind of, a policy challenge to make sure that things are being organised, managed, planned, assessed at the right geographical scale because actually that will be different for different things that relate to youth employment. Then making sure that those different levels have broad, supported opportunities to talk to one another that take account of things like per (ph 32.51) imbalances like the way that funding flows. It is quite challenging but the prize is big if you can get it right. I think the increasing local governance structures, combined authorities youth hubs are a good example because they are that mezzanine level of bringing things together over quite big subnational areas and also bringing in some good structures for dialogue and the flexibility to tailor things locally. So we've got some good examples there.

(TC: 00:33:25)
Moderator: Anna, you're working on really exciting projects including the data dashboard and other tools. Could you tell us more about that?

(TC: 00:34:17)
F: So the youth employment dashboard is something that we're developing at the moment and it will be available on our website. Essentially one of the things that is quite a challenge for a lot of our stakeholders is getting data on youth employment specifically so the data are published within bigger data sets that relate to employment for whole populations, things like breakdowns by region, by ethnic group, by gender you sometimes have to look for within that. The data can be difficult to get hold of. One way to empower stakeholders, so from policy makers, people in local and central government, practitioners, employers and young people themselves, is to give them access to good quality, reliable data quickly along with some

narrative on what it means and how you can use it. That's essentially what we're going to try and do with the data dashboard.

It will include some quick access tools, nationally available statistical releases so things like the labour force survey on youth employment, figures on how many young people are not in education, employment or training and also some associated data so things like consumer price index, some things that talk about the context, the economy.

We're also going to include some of our own data sets so that where we've identified a data gap and worked as much as we can around it, there will be data on things that actually at the moment isn't elsewhere so we'll be trying to use it to fill in some of the data gaps that people have told us about. For example the survey that I mentioned earlier, we commissioned a survey of over 2000 young people from minority ethnic groups in England earlier this year, the data from that will be on there and that will mean that you can actually get a snapshot of how young people in large numbers from minority ethnic groups felt about some key issues in employment, impacts of the pandemic, impacts of cost-of-living.

We've also included some analysis of big national data sets that we commissioned, again so you can see what can you do with those big data sets and where are some of the data gaps. To give an example, a gap that we hear about quite often is a real dearth of findings on young people belonging to Traveller communities, Gypsy communities, Roma communities. We know that these groups face lots and lots of challenges in relation to employment and other things within society, a heavily marginalised group but a lot of big data sets don't provide sufficient numbers, there aren't sufficient numbers of people in a lot of the surveys. So we've talked about that gap, that's something we're hoping to address ourselves. Again, you'll be able to access some of that data from our work. It will be a live resource so those data sets will be updated regularly when the national releases come out, the updates will go straight into the dashboard. We'll update our own data in there, we'll put project data in there so there will be ongoing updates so it will have that responsiveness. We're hoping to build in as much as we can about regional and maybe also sub regional data breakdowns.

The other thing as well as being a live resource in terms of what goes into it, is we want this app to be, just right, 'Here's the data, go away and do something with it,' we want people to engage with us, talk about what they've done with the data, how they found the dashboard, was it useful? Did it work for you? What did you do with the data? What would you like to do with the data? We hope also to connect dashboard users with each other so we want it to be as interactive a resource as possible to get people using data, talking about it, talking to us about it. So it will be linked from the Youth Futures website I think later this year. If you access it when it's launched keep coming back because it will be regularly updated.

We're also trying to make it as user friendly so we hope data for people who love data and feel comfortable with data, but also it will be user friendly actually for people who don't necessarily feel very at home with data but need to become more comfortable with using it, so we want to make it really, really accessible and empowering.

(TC: 00:39:19)
Moderator: You're collaborating with Becci and others on the youth employment toolkit. Would you be able to share what this is and what it will do?

(TC: 00:39:40)

F: Yes so the first Youth Futures youth employment toolkit will be launched in the spring of 2023. We're What Work Centres, a lot of What Work Centres offer a toolkit as a free online resource which provides (TC 00:40:00) short, accessible summaries of evidence on interventions that can be used to make a difference to a particular social problem. At the moment, there isn't a youth employment tool kit in the UK, so this is the first one and in the first iteration we'll be presenting a number of themes. We'll talk about what do we know about it, so what's its impact? How do we understand its impact? What is the evidence for this impact like? What do we know? How much evidence is there? Are there any evidence gaps? What's the intervention like and how do you do it well? We're working as a team of writers within Youth Futures to make sure that we make that evidence really accessible to a range of users, to make sure that the evidence is really high quality, working with teams of researchers who are developing evidence reviews to look at the international evidence on some key interventions and get us a really robust sense of, 'What evidence do we have and what's it saying?'

(TC: 00:41:21)
F: I think the tool kit is a really exciting opportunity from a researcher perspective. It's a really interesting opportunity to bring together an evidence base on a particular topic and to lead a very robust interrogation of what that means for practice, you know, whether you could rely on this approach, you know, if you were to replicate it, would you see a good result for young people who you were aiming to support? So, we've looked into, or we're starting to look into, a number of intervention types, so we had a look at wage subsidy programmes. So this is similar to the Kickstart programme that we saw in the pandemic, so giving an incentive to employers to take on a young person then to see what outcomes result from that. We've also got with colleagues at the Centre for Evidence and Implementation, really in the lead on that, but looking into the impacts of different forms of training and work based learning on later employment and to understand which, you know, from apprenticeships to different forms of on the job learning, to classroom based vocational education, which ones had that impact on better outcomes for young people. Across this, we are trying to get to actually the groups of most interest to Youth Futures Foundation, which are those young people who are marginalised and underserved in our current context. So, those are the first reviews being undertaken and being fed forward and translated by Anna and the team into accessible content for people to use and then dig into technical reports, but this will also expand to include many other topics, so it's a really exciting tool kit.

I think it's very different from some of the other What Works Centres doing these things. Employment is a much fuzzier, definitely more of a social world type of intervention, it's a little bit messier, the employment system that we've talked about touches on so many facets, whereas some of the other What Works Centres can, sort of, have more of an off the shelf intervention, we explore that, that's been well evidenced, we can say, 'If you do this, you will get that.' Actually, in this kind of social system, you know, when we look at a wage incentive introduced in the UK versus one that was introduced in Europe, you know, the contexts differ. The circumstances differ, the education traditions differ, so you're trying to take account of all that in interpreting and bringing that result for people to use and to think about. I think it's a really exciting tool kit.

(TC: 00:44:19)
F: I think that context makes it both more challenging but also more interesting to do because you really dig into the evidence and look at, 'What does this mean?' I've had to explain what the tool kit is several times and I've kind of come up with this metaphor of it's like the perfect espresso. So you have a coffee bush, which grows lots of berries, then you have a roastery and you have all the sort of work to get the perfect blend of coffee, then you've got a barista who's trained for hours and a massive coffee machine that's

plumbed into your water system and you have all that and out of it you get this very small but very powerful and rather wonderful little cup of coffee. I think that's what the tool kit themes are like, so they're potentially really powerful information with an enormous amount of stuff behind them.

(TC: 00:45:09)
Moderator: Becci, you mentioned earlier about your interest in the mixed age workforce and your perspective on that. In terms of thinking about solutions, what do you think are some of the key areas that need to be explored when it comes to youth employment?

(TC: 00:45:31)
F: Yes. I mean, I think, one, we want to get that access. I mean, you've kind of got a causal pathway from getting into the labour market and I think we need to make that a more equal experience and have more young people having a better entry point and to be able to secure good quality work, but we also need to be thinking about getting on in work. So, you know, from these early experiences, how you then progress and make your way in the labour market. I think the labour market is quite changed. I'm not saying it was in our time that we would've stayed in one job throughout our lifetime, however, I think the likelihood of doing so is quite a lot less, even for somebody my age now, and actually being able to build your portfolio to think and make transitions in the labour market becomes more important. We've got some of the mega trends setting in, you know, we can talk about an ageing population but we've got climate change where we really need to change what we're doing and how we're doing it to have a sustainable world, let alone sustainable employment but that hopefully will come driving some different employment opportunities and we need to think about how we build people towards that and also the rise of technology that we started to talk on and Caroline's points about how inclusive that is for different young people and for different people generally. But also think about what technology enables and what still remains a, kind of, human skill within the employment mix.

I think if we can think about those things we kind of create the opportunities and start to think about what people need to be resilient to develop careers and I think it needs to be fulfilling and meaningful, I don't think we should measure careers in terms of high pay. That's not necessarily the result that is fulfilling, it's not the result we all need, actually. You know, if we feel through our work we're serving community, that goals are being met, good things are coming out through our work, that can be a powerful outcome for us.

(TC: 00:47:50)
Moderator: What does inclusivity in research look like to you?

(TC: 00:48:25)
F: I was thinking about this question before we started recording and I wrote about 20 things down and then narrowed it down to a couple. I think the first thing, and I know that this is quite a big debate in the youth participation sphere, is around paying young people for their time if they're providing their skills and experiences and their time, then they shouldn't be expected to do that for free. By not paying people, that places a massive barrier to true inclusivity in youth participation, it only enables the same people to participate, those that don't need a financial incentive to do so, which, especially considering the current crisis that we're living through, is going to be fewer and fewer young people and more specific subsets of the population, so I think that's really important. I think on the whole there's a really big push towards participatory research and that's great and it's definitely becoming more common, but I think the other thing that needs to change is bringing young people in right at the start. I've touched on this earlier, it's something that Youth Futures did in the projects that I've been involved in, but for true participation, young people

need to be setting the agenda, not just coming to the table when the agenda has already been decided (TC 00:50:00) because the agenda that's been decided might not be important to them.

(TC: 00:50:05)
Moderator: What do you think needs to change to support young people from marginalised backgrounds into work?

(TC: 00:50:28)
F: I think truly entry level jobs are really important. There are so many jobs that are advertised, I'm sure we've all seen LinkedIn posts about this, that are advertised as an entry level role and then the job description says you need 2, 3, 4 years' experience, or you need a degree. That's not an entry level role, that's not accessible to so many people. Equally, clearly advertising the pay on jobs and Becci touched on it earlier in terms of the pay for apprenticeships, but also the minimum wage is lower for under 23s. I don't know of any electricity company that's going to let you ring up and say, 'I'm under 23, I'm being paid less so can I pay less to heat my home.' Life doesn't cost any less when you're younger and that really limits young people, especially, again, from certain backgrounds where they might need to move out of a housing situation that's unsafe or negatively impacting their mental health. The final thing is I think high quality mentoring and work experience for young people. We've all heard the phrase, 'You've got to see it to be it.' If you don't see yourself in the workforce, if you're female identifying person who wants to go into construction, if you're a disabled person and there's no disabled people working in the company that you might want to work for, if there isn't someone with the accent that you speak with in a company, you don't picture yourself in those jobs and that even unconsciously limits what you think you can achieve and so enabling young people to have access to people like them in the places that they want to get to really gives young people the motivation that they need to believe that they can achieve whatever they want to achieve.

(TC: 00:52:44)
Moderator: Thank you so much for joining me.