youth futures FOUNDATION

# Head of Youth Participation (Maternity cover)

## Recruitment Pack

Date: May 2023

# 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 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. As the What Works centre for youth employment 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 £16 million Connected Futures Fund aims to address 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 we enter our fourth year under new leadership we are strengthening our organisation and team. This role will play a crucial part in supporting the organisaiton in achieving its vision, mission and business goals. If you are passionate about creating a better future for young people, we look forward to hearing from you.

**Barry Fletcher, CEO**

# 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.**

# 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:

1. **Changing the youth employment system** 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.

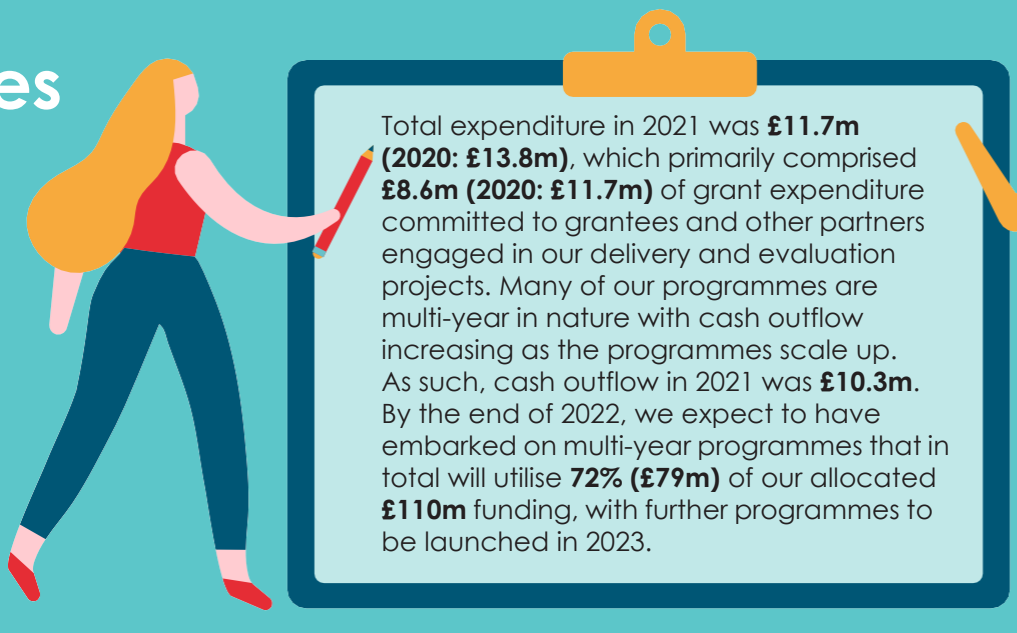
In building the Board, the Future Voices Group, and making external appointments to the Grants Committee, we have also ensured our governance and advisory structures contain a broad diversity of background and experience.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) group within the staff team has senior management sponsorship and leads the creation of a more broad- based EDI strategy.

We are Disability Confident and have committed to ensuring that we attract, recruit, retain, support and develop disabled people in the workplace. We aim to continually improve and develop our talent attraction and inclusive recruitment practices to be reflective of our organisational behaviours and culture.

We are a Living Wage Employer, as we believe a hard day's work deserves a fair day's pay. Our base rate of hourly pay is in line with the London Living Wage.

# 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**

# £3.3 million

**Committed to 23 evaluations**

**11**

**Grantees supported via new awards**

**2**

**Policy papers written** and 1 Government submission with the YEG, and 2 Government submissions by Youth Futures

**8**

**Research and evaluation papers published:** 88% of stakeholder survey respondents say that they trust the evidence and research we produce

**2**

**New grant programmes launched**

# 148

**Organisations supported in total**

# 4,081

**Organisations supported via infrastructure funding**

**3**

**New advisory panels launched:** 13 x members EAB, 18 x member organisations, one evaluation panel, 40+ members of the YEG ethnic disparities subgroup

**1,325**

**Young people reached** (from a cumulative total of 17,757)

**Cumulative total of young people reached**

# 17,757

# Role description

**Term:** Part Time – 22.5 hours per week, 12 months fixed term (Maternity Cover), July 2023 – July 2024

We offer flexible working and consider alternative patterns of work

**Salary:** £50,000 to £55,000 FTE pro rata

**Reporting to:** Director of Policy and Communications

**Direct reports:** Senior Participation Officer

**Location:** This role can be based at any of our hubs located in London, Birmingham or Leeds. We currently operate a hybrid model of two-days per week in the office and three-days from home. You must also be prepared to travel to the other hub locations requiring up to four overnight stays per year of 1-2 nights each.

**Transforming youth employment**

Youth Futures Foundation is the What Works Centre for youth employment. We exist to address the significant disparities in youth employment for marginalised groups. We want to ensure that all young people are able to access and keep good quality jobs.

The problem we are aiming to address is growing. It is alarming that there are 788,000 16-24-year-olds not in education, employment and training (NEET), a 13% increase in the last year and more than during the pandemic.

Youth Futures was founded in 2019 as an independent, not for profit organisation with funding from dormant assets to drive systemic change by:

- Giving grants to organisations that provide employment support to young people so that we can generate high quality evaluations
- Generating compelling evidence through conducting and using experimental studies
- Driving evidence-based change in policy and working with employers and practitioners to improve practice. We help to connect and empower those who are commissioning and delivering youth employment support to change the system

Our approach involves both the creation and curation of evidence. We create evidence by funding high-quality evaluations and programmes to understand whether or not interventions are effective. We curate evidence by gathering and presenting information from global studies into interventions that help young people into work.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

We are seeking maternity cover for a Head of Youth Participation to build on our existing activities and infrastructure to inform, shape and deliver the Youth Futures approach to systemic change through youth participation.

Here at Youth Futures, we think youth participation is a vital part of achieving our mission to improve the employment outcomes of marginalised young people and their experience of the system. As the main "users" of the system and the individuals for whom outcomes we are aiming to transform, young people who face barriers to work are central to our mission and are ultimately the reason we were established as a Foundation. This is why we believe in the principle of 'nothing about us without us'. We believe that the young people who are most affected by the system have invaluable perspective and experience, and therefore must be at the heart of efforts to change it.
Building on the existing programmes and structures we have created to enable youth participation to be threaded throughout what we do, you will help to maintain this high-quality delivery and supercharge its impact (on the young people themselves, our organisation and on the wider system).

You will be the strategic lead on youth participation across the organsation – helping to ensure that it is understood, communicated well and is active in the most important parts of what we do. You will work closely with the Senior Participation Officer and staff across the organisation to ensure that activity is always of high quality, is non-tokenistic and can demonstrate impact.

You will be an emotionally intelligent individual, who understands the complex challenges that young people from marginalised backgrounds face in work. Using this knowledge and empathy, you will ensure that their voices and perspectives are built into appropriate activity and you will ensure this is done with sensitivity and regard for their welfare at all times.

You will sit within the Policy and Communications Directorate and manage our Senior Participation Officer. Working closely with the Heads of Policy and Head of Marketing and Communications and across the wider organisation, you will seek to underpin our organisational activity with high quality youth participation and ensure its impact is shared externally.

**Key responsibilities**

- Ensure that all youth participation activity is conducted with the highest regard to safeguarding and the welfare of young people from marginalised backgrounds and staff across the organisation
- Work closely with the Senior Participation Officer to deliver our youth participation programme of work, providing strategic and tactical support wherever necessary
- Oversee the architecture of youth participation across the organisation, ensuring it is implemented with impact and efficiency at all levels, and in close strategic alignment with our business plan at all times
- Identify opportunities to catalyse the expertise and lived experience of young people to effect systemic change, and communicate our work externally with impact
- Lead communication of our activity to senior executives as required, including regular reporting to the Board of Non-Executive Directors
- Work closely with the Connected Futures Team to identify and enable opportunities for youth participation in our national place-based fund
- Work with colleagues to ensure we build in knowledge of "what works" in youth participation into our practice, and oversee the development of a robust approach to monitoring activity and its impact
- Ensure that documentation and processes are clearly communicated across the organisation to equip staff with the means to carry out youth participation with confidence
- Lead the contractual relationship with the British Youth Council, ensuring that the partnership is delivering impact and continues to meet our needs and requirements
- Establish and maintain relationships and networks with key external stakeholders, identifying and exploring effective opportunities to collaborate with others on youth participation and the topic of youth employment
- Attend and co-manage in-person events with young people as required, including our annual residential with our Future Voices Group

**Other**

- Practice our value of "always learning", including keeping up to date about 'what works' in youth participation and across our mission through global research findings uncovered by the Impact and Evidence department, observations of good practice in practitioner and funder delivery made by the Grants and Investment department, and through external partners, to inform your knowledge and understanding of the wider youth employment system
- Manage the youth participation budget with diligence
- Identify, analyse, synthesise and interpret information necessary for strategic choice-making and assessment of trade offs
- Project manage implementation of projects with empathy and adaptability to suit the situation
- Author public reports, blogs, presentations and social media content to build awareness and support for our youth participation strategy and approach
- Develop a supportive and empowering culture of creativity, continuous improvement, learning, collaboration and excellence – encouraging questions and teamwork
- Ensure Youth Futures adheres to the highest standards of probity and judgement

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

| | Essential | Desirable |
|---|---|---|
| **Knowledge, experience and abilities** | | |
| Experience of working directly with young people from marginalised backgrounds, and deep knowledge and understanding of effective youth participation practices | X | |
| Demonstrable experience of managing youth participation programmes across complex areas of work with impact | X | |
| A track record of idea generating, strategic planning and management of complex projects | X | |
| Developing and delivering creative yet practical solutions to highly complex problems | | X |
| Empathy with young people who face barriers to entry and progression as a result of personal lived experience, work or volunteering roles | X | |
| Knowledge of youth employment, the not-for-profit sector and related government policy | X | |
| Excellent knowledge of how to safeguard young people and adults at risk | X | |
| Excellent knowledge of the youth employment system | | X |
| Good knowledge of the labour market | | X |
| Experience of diverse stakeholder management | X | |
| Demonstrates a high standard of delivery | X | |
| Displays the potential to motivate and develop staff to maximise their individual potential and build a strong team culture | X | |
| **Skills & competencies** | | |
| Strong organisational and project management skills | X | |
| Ability and energy to think differently | X | |
| Empathy: ability to apply excellent social and emotional skills at all times when working with young people and other internal or external stakeholders | X | |
| Strategic thinking and analytical abilities: ability to dissect complex challenges, understand root causes and develop creative yet sound approaches to problem-solving and decision-making | X | |
| Partnership and relationship building; effective relationship management with colleagues at all levels and external partnership building | X | |
| Decision-making: ability to evaluate risks and opportunities, using analytical and strong problem-solving skills | X | |
| Integration: ability to draw on expertise from across the organisation | X | |

| | Essential | Desirable |
|---|---|---|
| Demonstrates inclusiveness, collaboration and respect for all stakeholders | **X** | |
| Communication: interpersonal communication abilities internally and externally; exceptional listening skills, excellent written and verbal skills | **X** | |
| Strong IT skills, including use of MS Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint etc), shared online folders, calendars and contacts | **X** | |

## MINDSET

- a genuine personal commitment to Youth Futures mission, vision and values
- a willingness to collaborate internally and externally to achieve our mission and apply commitment to Youth Futures Foundation values to everyday working
- to thrive when operating in a growing and evolving organisation
- a proactive and flexible approach
- a positive and can-do attitude, willing to roll sleeves up to get into details where necessary
- Demonstrate inclusiveness, collaboration and respect
- a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion
- to contribute to and help build a strong team culture
- follow internal policies, processes and practices

## THINGS TO KNOW

As part of Youth Futures Foundation's safeguarding policy, all employees are subject to a basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check

*The young people we aim to serve – and the challenges they face - are all unique. We are looking to build a team that reflects this diversity. Our commitment to inclusion across race, gender, age, class, religion, identity, and experience forms the cornerstone of our work. We are an equal opportunities employer, welcoming applications from all sections of the community.*

*We are particularly keen to encourage people with lived experience of the challenges facing young people in the labour market, and committed to supporting you in your application. Please contact us if you require any additional support.*

*Internally, we encourage an open, collaborative and inclusive working environment.*

# Benefits and General T&C's

**Probationary Period** - all offers of employment are subject to a six month probationary period. Regular reviews will be undertaken during this period.

**Holiday Year** – 1st January to 31st December.

**Holiday entitlement** – holiday is issued in hours 210 per year equivalent to 28 days holiday, plus 8 statutory bank holidays. Entitlement is pro-rata for part-time employees. Holiday can be requested via the HRIS BreatheHR system. 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** – are as specified within individual contracts of employment. Our standard working hours are 37.5 per week, standard working hours are 9:00am – 5:30pm including one hour lunch.

**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 working pattern or hours. Requests for flexible working can be made informally or formally.

**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. 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 is recorded on the HRIS BreatheHR system.

**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** – salaries are 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, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave 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. Absence is recorded on the HRIS BreatheHR system.

**Sickness absence payments** – for the first 6 months of service you will receive a maximum of four weeks full pay, after 6 months you may receive up to 12 weeks full pay. After this period the below income protection policy will then apply.

**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. Provided by AIG.

**Smart Health** – an early support scheme provided as part of the above income protection plan. It provides a range of services and support which are available following one week of absence, to prevent or reduce longer term absences. The scheme provides unlimited access to six Smart Health services, as follows; 24/7 GP service, second medical opinion service, mental health support, a health check, nutrition consultations and an online fitness programme. This is available to all employees and immediate family, including children up to the age of 21

**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.

**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.

**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.

**Cycle to Work Scheme –** Provided through the Bike2Work Scheme. https://www.bike2workscheme.co.uk/ Allows you to buy commuter bikes and cycling accessories through us, so you spread the cost and making savings through a tax break. For more information on the scheme and to obtain our company pin to register please speak to our Head of People.

**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** – dress for the day. We expect that you will dress appropriately for the work in which you are carrying out.

# How to apply

To apply for the role please visit BeApplied

## Recruitment timetable

**Deadline for applications: Sunday 11th June 2023 11:59pm**

**Interviews: W/C 19th June 2023**

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact Lisa Metcalf, Head of People

**Lisa.metcalf@youthfuturesfoundation.org**

## Queries

If you have any questions regarding this vacancy or would like to find out more, please contact Lisa Metcalf, Head of People

**Lisa.metcalf@youthfuturesfoundation.org**