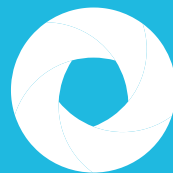


Youth Social Action



Creating positive change



UK YOUTH
SOCIAL
ACTION

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Introduction

Youth social action means practical action undertaken by young people in the service of others to create positive change. Youth social action takes place in a range of contexts and can mean formal or informal activities, in any setting; for example, online, extracurricular, in clubs and groups, informally, or as part of structured programmes. The framework is supported by six key principles that should underpin all high quality youth social action. These principles are described as;



Embedded

Ensuring that programmes including actions and activity are accessible to all young people and that social action is embedded into existing pathways and structures. Social action becomes a 'habit for life'.

Youth-led

Programmes are led, owned and shaped by young people's needs, ideas and decision making.

Reflective

Critical reflection and learning are fundamental parts of the programme. Contributions, achievements and inspiration are valued and celebrated.

Progressive

Programmes are sustainable and provide links to other opportunities and activities including education, careers and employment.

Challenging

Programmes are enjoyable and enabling whilst stretching young people from their comfort zone.

Socially impactful

Programmes have a clear intended benefit to a community, problem or cause. Beneficiaries and young people work together to generate social action.

The six quality principles are intended to help organisations focus on achieving better outcomes for both young people and communities, as well as being inclusive. All programmes should evidence 'double benefit' – a clear benefit to the community (where the social action is taking place) and to the young person participating.

Therefore, it is important that organisations use this framework and this guidance as a starting point for critically reflecting on these outcomes.

The framework is aimed at a wide range of organisations across all sectors.

For further reading and support

→ [Generation Change](#)

→ [#iwill](#)

→ [NCS](#)

→ [UK Youth](#)

1 Social action —

1.1 Recruitment

Your organisation is clear about the target group of young people it wishes to engage in social action programmes. You can clearly demonstrate:

- Accessibility – how you are ensuring that the target group can access the programme. This could include adaptations for a range of different backgrounds including individual support, financial support, language, culture, disabilities etc.
- Recruitment – how you reach beyond your existing community and target young people from varying backgrounds
- Your promotional tools – you will provide a range of ways to promote opportunities that take into account the needs of the target group e.g. language adaptations

Essential guidance

Programmes delivered through UK Youth and opportunities such as the National Citizens Service will be expected to reach a wide social mix of young people. The evidence you provide could be a leaflet, PDF flyer or screenshot of opportunities on your own website.

Helpful links and examples

→ [#iwill Fund Learning Hub](#)

Policy requirements

✓ You must include

- 1.1a** A Recruitment and Selection statement/policy that is compliant to current legislation and guidance and is relevant to the needs of the organisation. You must ensure that:
- It provides advice on best practice to ensure the organisation's recruitment process is consistent and effective.
 - Your Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy is applied to all stages of recruitment to the organisation and programmes that it delivers.
- 1.1b** A written Equality and Diversity Policy/Statement that is compliant to current legislation and guidance, is relevant to the needs of the organisation that includes:
- A process in which young people can access all activities additional support, resources to participate.
 - A section outlining how staff and volunteers are trained.

Practical implementation

✓ You must include

Evidence demonstrating that you reach a wide social mix of young people. Your organisation should promote respect, diversity, equality and understanding, positive problem solving and behaviour.

1.1c Two Witness Statements from young people outlining how they were recruited

1.1d Two Witness Statements from staff and volunteers outlining recruitment processes

1.1e Two Statements from staff to show how you may have adapted your recruitment methods to meet the needs of the target group or individual

1.1f One piece of evidence showing recruitment practice.

Examples of evidence:

- Alternative recruitment channels
- Promotional materials
- Referrals from other organisations working with the target group
- Partnerships with other organisations
- Refer a friend schemes.

1.2 Mainstreaming social action

Your organisation works towards embedding youth social action into existing programmes of work. You can evidence how social action is valued and prioritised. This could include:

- How it is embedded in organisational plans
- Financial planning and fundraising for social action
- How programmes link to existing, internal services or programmes
- Any links to external programmes
- How the organisation ensures youth social action is a sustainable part of its core work



Essential guidance

The evidence you provide could be a leaflet, PDF flyer or screenshot of opportunities on your website that clearly outlines youth social action activities.

Helpful links and examples

- [#iwill Fund Learning Hub](#)
- [gov.uk Publications](#)
- [#iwill Organisations](#)

Practical implementation

✓ You must include

Evidence that demonstrates you aim to embed social action into existing work.

1.2a Organisational / project plans programme outcomes showing clear links with social action that explicitly outline youth social action as a focus

1.2b Meeting minutes that demonstrate you have discussed social action

1.2c Funding bids and budgets that include social action

1.2d Case studies or testimony from management that describes how social action is embedded

1.2e Flip charts or notes from meetings where you can demonstrate how you are future planning for Youth Social Action



1.3 Youth led

Social action projects are youth led. Young people make decisions about what they do. The needs of young people are the primary starting point of programme design. This could be demonstrated in the following ways:

- How young people's needs are captured, assessed and fed in to programme design
- Evidence of young people planning programmes
- How young people are liaising with their peers, staff and the community
- How young people are role models and lead their peers
- How young people are outlining the social impact they want to make & defining the outcomes of the social action



Essential guidance

The organisation should clearly articulate that it is an organisation that is youth-led. It is now essential within the context of integrated services that the role of young people and youth work is fully appreciated and nurtured. It really can make such a difference.

Helpful links and examples

- [#iwill Character and youth social action](#)
- [Youth Participation](#)

Practical implementation

You must include

Evidence demonstrating how young people plan the programme of social action

1.3a Minutes of youth meetings (peer meetings, youth advisory boards, attendance by young people at trustee meetings)

1.3b Young people's surveys that show you have embed co-design principals to programme design/ review/evaluation

1.3c Previous programme evaluations that have involved young people or short videos of social action in progress

1.3d Evidence of correspondence between young people and social action beneficiaries /partners

Keeping up to date

You must include

Evidence demonstrating that staff and volunteers are experienced in youth engagement practices.

1.3e Certificates from training programmes for staff linked to social action

1.3f Two examples of staff / volunteer bio outlining experience of social action and key achievements

1.4 Programme progression

Social action opportunities are both challenging and progressive. Your organisation can demonstrate how programmes:

- Have clear outcomes that link to skills progression. This could include;
 - Soft skills such as confidence
 - Definable skills such as communication, organisation or project management
- Are ambitious
- Goals and targets are set
- Have an element of reflection – allowing young people to think about what they will do next
- Challenge young people in a range of ways that could include new experiences, competition, skills development and social mixing
- Where appropriate are linked to training, employability, careers or further social action opportunities



Essential guidance

Your evidence should show programme outcomes and evidence of how these outcomes have been achieved.

Helpful links and examples

- [#iwill Fund Learning Hub](#)
- [gov.uk Publications](#)
- [UK Youth Empower](#)

Practical implementation

✓ You must include

Evidence demonstrating that social action programmes are challenging and progressive.

1.4a Records of Accreditation/ recognition opportunities for young people. E.g UK Youth's Youth Achievement Awards, Arts Awards, Music and Sports awards.

1.4b Examples of goals and target setting – and why these are challenging

1.4c Case studies that describe how young people have been challenged and how they have progressed (written or video)

1.4d What young people have learned (this could be from a survey, flip chart notes from a group session, staff testimony or feedback sheets)

1.4e How the programme is linked to other opportunities – e.g. employment or training

1.4f Evidence of young people's reflections – through notes, testimony or video/audio recordings



1.5 Training

Staff and volunteers are equipped with the appropriate skills to ensure young people gain the best possible experience from social action projects. This can be demonstrated through:

- Evidence of training and support networks – staff and volunteer training around how to facilitate youth led programmes that have a social impact
- Collaborations with other organisations
- How staff challenge young people to change behaviour and attitudes
- How staff and volunteers work together to plan, evaluate and develop programmes
- Evidence of staff volunteering to show role model behaviours

Practical implementation

✓ You must include

Evidence demonstrating that appropriate training is in place to support staff and volunteers.

- 1.5a** Provide two pieces of evidence that support on-going training of staff and volunteers; evidence such as:
- Reflective diaries
 - Blogs
 - Planning notes
 - Correspondence with other organisations
 - Reports
 - Attendance at conferences/ workshops/training that focusses on youth social action
 - Certificates or training notes

- 1.5b** A testimony from a staff member or adult volunteer that describes:
- How they have used their skills to build the social action activities
 - How they have supported young people through new challenges and experiences



1.6 Social benefit

Projects can clearly demonstrate they are socially impactful. They can demonstrate they have a 'double benefit'.

There is research to show what the problem is and why the approach of the social action will help solve the problem. The social action has a clear intended benefit to the community, cause or problem.

Your organisation can demonstrate:

- Clear research from young people and staff that informs the social action activity
- There is clear engagement and consultation from the young people with the beneficiaries
- There is evidence of setting and measuring outcomes for the social action by the young people
- Benefit to the young person and the community (double benefit)

Helpful links and examples

- [Information on demonstrating 'double benefit'](#)
- [Youth Impact – developing social action](#)

Practical implementation

✓ You must include

Evidence demonstrating that social action activities are socially impactful.

1.6a The research that took place to inform the social action

1.6b How beneficiaries are involved in the project

1.6c What outcomes are set and evidence that they have been achieved.

1.6d Two additional pieces of evidence. Suggestions for evidence:

- Evidence of partnerships
- Correspondence
- Reports (internal, media etc.)
- Thankyou letters
- Photographs and video
- Funding reports
- Positive feedback/testimony from young people about the service
- Screenshots from a website that outlines the project and its achievement
- Wider evidence showing that the programme type works (e.g. research from another organisation)



1.7 Reflection and learning

Social action recognises contributions as well as valuing critical reflection and learning. Programmes should demonstrate how they:

- Provide time for young people to reflect on their journey
- Support young people to record their progress
- Provide recognition for achievement.
 - It could also include;
 - Awards or graduation ceremonies
 - Other awards and certificates
 - Communication of achievements through the media, annual reports and social media

Helpful links and examples

→ [Youth Foundation](#)

Practical implementation

✓ You must include

Evidence demonstrating that reflection and learning is embedded into programmes.

1.7a Example Awards accredited or certificated. (photos of young people with awards, PDF certificates, registration with Awards body)

1.7b How achievements are celebrated. This could be invitations to awards ceremonies, photographs, press cuttings, screenshots of social media etc.

1.7c Two additional pieces of evidence such as:

- Reflective diaries
- Session plans for guided reflection
- Photographs or videos of guided reflection
- How inspiring examples are showcased
- How social impact has been communicated to stakeholders (e.g. parents, funders)
- Other ways in which young people are recognised e.g. thank you letters, other certificates or awards etc.





Head Office

Avon Tyrrell Outdoor Centre
Braggers Lane
Bransgore
Hampshire BH23 8EE

Westminster Office

8th Floor, Kings Buildings
16 Smith Square
London SW1P 3HQ

0203 137 3810
info@ukyouth.org