Q&A

Q. What is the Youth Sector Development Partnership?

- The Youth Sector Development Partnership is a £17.8 million investment, with £9.8 million from The National Lottery Community Fund and £8 million from DCMS to strengthen the foundations that great youth work depends on.
- It will support youth workers, strengthen youth organisations, build regional partnerships, improve workforce training and develop better evidence about what works.
- Ultimately, this is about helping deliver the ambitions of *Youth Matters* by ensuring more young people have somewhere to go, someone to turn to and opportunities to develop skills, confidence and connections in their communities.

Q. What exactly will the money be spent on?

- The funding will be invested in four main areas:
    - Building stronger regional networks across all nine regions of England.
    - Recruiting, training and retaining more youth workers.
    - Providing support to strengthen youth organisations and their leadership.
    - Improving data, evaluation and evidence so we better understand what works for young people.
- The programme is designed to ensure local youth organisations have the support, skills and connections they need to deliver high-quality opportunities for young people.

Q. Who is delivering the Youth Sector Development Partnership?

- The programme will be coordinated nationally - led by UK Youth, with the National Youth Agency, Young People's Foundations Trust and TRIUMPH. They will work alongside regional partners across England.
- Together, these organisations bring expertise in youth work, workforce development, regional networks, equity and youth participation.
- The partnership model means we can build on existing knowledge, relationships and infrastructure across the sector, rather than creating new structures from scratch.
- By bringing together government, The National Lottery Community Fund and sector partners, we can maximise the impact of our investment and ensure support reaches youth workers and organisations in every region.

Q. What do you mean by "youth sector infrastructure"?

- Infrastructure can sound technical, but it means something very practical.
- It's the support that sits behind every good youth worker and every successful youth organisation.
- For example:
    - helping a youth worker access professional training;
    - supporting a youth club with safeguarding and quality standards;
    - providing leadership support for local charities;
    - connecting organisations so they can share expertise rather than reinvent the wheel;
    - developing better information about where youth provision exists and where gaps remain.

- Young people don't see "infrastructure".
- They see a youth club staying open, a trusted youth worker who is there when they need them, and better opportunities in their community.

Q. Can you give a real-life example of what this means?

- Imagine a youth worker helping young people facing challenges at home, school or in their community.
- They know how to support them, but their organisation struggles to access training, funding and specialist advice.
- YSDP helps provide that support. It can fund professional development, peer networks, leadership support and stronger local partnerships.
- The result is not simply a better-supported youth worker. It's hundreds of young people benefiting from more consistent support and opportunities.

Q. How will the regional consortia be selected?

- There will be one regional partnership in each of England's nine regions.
- Partnerships will be selected through an open process, we will share more information soon.
- We want strong regional partnerships that can bring together organisations, share expertise and reach grassroots groups that might otherwise miss out on support.

Q. Who will be involved in the regional partnerships?

- We expect partnerships to bring together organisations with complementary strengths.
- That could include Regional Youth Work Units, County Youth Work Associations, Young People's Foundations, and specialist organisations supporting workforce development, quality improvement or equity.
- The aim is collaboration rather than competition.

Q. How will you make sure smaller grassroots organisations benefit?

- This is a core principle of the programme.
- Many of the organisations closest to young people are also those with the least capacity to access support.
- We expect regional partnerships to demonstrate how they will engage and support grassroots organisations, including small voluntary groups, faith organisations, minority-led organisations and rural providers.

Q. What are you doing for youth workers?

- Youth workers are at the heart of everything we are trying to achieve.
- Through YSDP we will support more training opportunities, qualifications, leadership development, professional networks and specialist skills development.
- We also want to make youth work a more attractive long-term career, so talented people join the profession and stay in it.

Q. Why is recruiting youth workers so important?

- For many young people, a youth worker is the person who notices when something isn't right, provides guidance through difficult times, and helps them build confidence, skills and resilience.

- The National Youth Strategy includes an ambition for 500,000 more young people to have access to a trusted adult by 2035. Achieving that ambition requires a stronger youth workforce.

Q. How will the youth sector benefit from this investment?

- The Youth Sector Development Partnership is designed to strengthen the foundations of the youth sector, benefiting thousands of youth workers.
- It will help youth organisations access the support, training, networks and expertise they need to thrive. That includes developing the workforce, strengthening leadership, improving safeguarding and quality, supporting collaboration across regions, and building a stronger evidence base about what works.
- For youth organisations, this means greater resilience, stronger partnerships and better access to the support needed to plan for the future, rather than constantly operating in survival mode.
- Ultimately, we want a sector that is stronger, more connected and better equipped to support young people for the long term.

Q. How will young people benefit from this investment?

- Young people may never see the infrastructure behind youth work, but they will feel the difference it makes.
- They will benefit from stronger youth organisations, better-supported youth workers and more consistent access to high-quality opportunities in their communities.
- In practice, that could mean a youth club staying open rather than closing, a youth worker with the skills to support them through challenges, a wider range of activities and opportunities, or stronger local services working together around their needs.
- This investment is ultimately about helping more young people, wherever they live and whatever their background, to build skills, confidence, connections and a sense of belonging.
- It will help ensure more young people have somewhere to go, opportunities to take part in their communities, and support when they need it.
- Or put simply: when youth workers and youth organisations are better supported, young people are too.