

OUR STRATEGY 2023-28



PEOPLE .
PLACES .
FUNDING .
YOUTH VOICE .

CREATIVE
YOUTH
NETWORK.

WHO ARE WE



BELIEFS

Our work is based on three core beliefs, each based on years of experience and what young people, staff and partners have consistently told us. Each belief is reflected in one of the words of our name:

CREATIVE

We believe in the power of creativity, and the unique way in which this can allow self-expression and unlock young people's potential



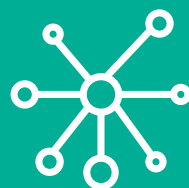
YOUTH

We believe in the power of youth work - for young people and society. And we believe that young people belong at the centre of everything we do



NETWORK

We believe in the power of partnership - of working collaboratively with others, and helping young people play an active role in their communities



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Young people are at the heart of everything we do, so our strategy is based on what young people have told us they want and need from us.



We want to have our say to make things fairer and better.

We want more places like the youth clubs you run – places and spaces that feel like ours, somewhere we can belong.

We need you to prioritise equity, diversity and inclusion and environmental sustainability

Creativity is really important. We don't get these chances anywhere else.

We want properly funded services, and more of what you do, not less"

We really value our youth workers – they are people we can trust, have fun and learn with. Please invest in them and employ more of them!



CREATIVE YOUTH NETWORK OUR STRATEGY

**OUR STRATEGY THEREFORE
FOCUSSES ON FOUR KEY AREAS:**

PEOPLE

PLACES

FUNDING

YOUTH VOICE

TRUSTED PEOPLE



Youth work is all about people and relationships, so investing in our team (staff and volunteers) is the single most important thing we can do to ensure a high quality youth work and creative offer.

Young people from across all the different projects and services we run, in multiple different communities, have consistently told us how important their youth worker is to them. A trusted adult with whom they can learn and grow, and turn to for support as and when needed. For some young people, their youth worker may be the only trusted adult on whom they can depend.

Investing in our people is therefore one of our key strategic priorities.

Over the next 5 years, we will.....

- ▶ Develop and embed an enhanced training and support offer for our staff team, ensuring that young people have the best possible youth workers and that staff feel that they belong and are invested in at Creative Youth Network.
- ▶ Develop and deliver on a clear People Strategy, with the aim of making Creative Youth Network an employer of choice within the sector and the region.
- ▶ Continue to deliver on our equity, diversity & inclusion action plan – ensuring that our workforce is representative of the young people and communities we work with.
- ▶ Continue to embed the Mental Health at Work Commitment into Creative Youth Network's culture and employment practices.
- ▶ Enhance our commitment to recruiting young people into our workforce and young trustees onto our board.
- ▶ Enhance our offer and support for volunteers – making it easier and even more rewarding to volunteer with Creative Youth Network, and improving the level of training and support we can offer to those who volunteer.



PLACES AND SPACES

Young people have also told us how much they value the places and spaces where we offer our youth work and creative activities. A sense of belonging is crucial for everyone's sense of self and community, and young people tell us that the youth clubs and community venues from which we deliver our programmes are important as "their" spaces, where they can feel safe.

We will therefore invest in our places and spaces.

Over the next 5 years, we will.....

- ▶ Prioritise keeping our youth clubs and creative spaces open, accessible, welcoming and vibrant, and actively work to expand and improve them where possible.
- ▶ Be alert to new opportunities to develop viable new places & spaces for young people.
- ▶ Deliver on our renewed vision for the Station as a destination for young people and creativity.
- ▶ Deliver the vision of the Courts as a Creative Enterprise Hub.
- ▶ Develop and deliver on a renewed vision for the Kingswood Estate.
- ▶ Invest in environmental improvements across the places & spaces under our ownership or management – taking tangible steps towards our carbon net zero target.



SECURE THE FUNDING YOUNG PEOPLE DESERVE

The UK's youth sector operates at a fraction of the scale and budget that it used to. Across England, local authority investment in youth services is less than a quarter of what it was in 2010.

In Bristol, there is a particular gap left by the decommissioning of local authority youth services: the budget for 1:1 support for vulnerable young people is being cut from over £1m annually to zero, but this is work that we passionately believe in and know that young people desperately need.

At the same time, levels of need amongst young people and their families is increasing, and casework has become substantially more complex.

So we have ever-shrinking budgets (plus of course the cost of living crisis pushing costs up) – but we aren't prepared to keep cutting back on services for vulnerable young people.

We therefore need to make a step change in our ability to generate income from other sources, to meet the growing needs of young people.

Over the next 5 years, we will.....

- ▶ Work collaboratively across the youth and creative sectors to secure funding from previously untapped sources such as health & social care, criminal justice and education – with an emphasis on growing the sector as a whole, rather than competing for funds within it.
- ▶ Begin funding interventions through the Alternative Learning Provision (ALP) framework and spot purchase arrangements, including retaining a core 1:1 offer for those young people who most need it.
- ▶ Increase income from our estates, to be reinvested into services for young people.
- ▶ Continue efforts to diversify our fundraising and plot at least one new income generating area of activity.
- ▶ Increase our brand profile and audience reach, recognising that effective communications will be an essential enabler of many of the actions above.



YOUTH VOICE AND SOCIAL ACTION

Young people want to make things fairer and better. But they get way less than their fair share of decision making authority.

Creative Youth Network has a proud record of giving young people a voice. Of getting their stories heard, and taking their views to decision makers to effect change. We have good links and strong channels for amplifying young voices, including through our creative programmes (after all, creativity is inherently about self-expression) – but there is a whole lot more we can and should be doing.

We will play our fullest part in giving young people a voice – both within our organisation and outside it. This will help deliver the social change that young people want to see.

Over the next 5 years, we will.....

- ▶ Significantly increase our ability to amplify youth voice – getting young people's voices heard and achieving practical and social change as a result. This will include getting voices heard nationally as well as locally, over the 5 year strategy span.
- ▶ Deliver on our new Participation Strategy, including developing our flagship young leaders' programme and a refreshed programme for employing young people within Creative Youth Network (including apprenticeships and creative commissioning).
- ▶ Secure the NYA's "Hear by Right" accreditation, to ensure we achieve best practice in youth participation.
- ▶ Prioritise equity, diversity & inclusion – we will become a more diverse and inclusive workplace.
- ▶ Prioritise sustainability – by 2027 we will have made significant progress on its journey to carbon net zero and have a clear plan for its remaining journey.



CONTACT US

Please see the details below or get in touch to find out more about Creative Youth Network or our strategy



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**CREATIVE
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