



CREATIVE
YOUTH
NETWORK.



COULD YOU BE OUR NEXT TREASURER ON THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES?

**Help lead our award-winning charity
and decide how it is run.**

“The main reason I became a Trustee was to learn more about Creative Youth Network, the decisions at the top of the organisation, but also to make a difference for young people.”

– Deepraj Singh , previous Trustee

Introduction

Welcome to Creative Youth Network and our trustee candidate pack!

We are an award-winning youth work charity with arts and creativity at our heart, and it's an exciting time to be a trustee. We're two years into an ambitious five-year strategy, and we've recently celebrated one year since the opening of our beautiful new creative enterprise hub, The Courts.

We have incredibly talented and dedicated staff, and the privilege of working with young people doing amazing things. Our new trustees will be instrumental in guiding the implementation and success of our organisation, helping to shape and create life-changing opportunities for our young people. I can't wait to welcome you to our board.



Noelle Rumball, Chair of Trustee Board



Almost daily as I go about my work at Creative Youth Network, I find myself genuinely amazed and humbled by the quality and quantity of support that this organisation offers to our region's young people, and by the brilliant staff team through whose efforts this all happens.

While, like many charities, we undoubtedly face significant challenges in the years ahead, this is a fundamentally well-set organisation with a strong track record. Very importantly, we don't rest on our laurels but have a progressive, agile, engaged culture that's about trying new things and constantly striving for better.

The Creative Youth Network board of trustees is one of the strongest I've had the pleasure to work with - they provide the robust scrutiny that any charity board should but have shown willingness to take calculated risks for young people's longer-term gain. I look forward to working with our new trustees, welcoming them to an existing high-performing team while looking forward to the fresh perspectives they will undoubtedly bring.

In this pack we've aimed to give you a good selection of information about Creative Youth Network, its history, its work, its opportunities for the future, and the challenges we face. For more information please see www.creativeyouthnetwork.org.uk and follow our social media accounts, and we will of course be delighted to discuss further with interested candidates as part of the process.

Thank you once again for your interest in Creative Youth Network and I look forward to hopefully discussing the opportunity further with you should you decide to apply.

Mark Coates, Chief Executive

About Us

Creative Youth Network is a leading youth services and arts charity, passionately empowering young people aged 8 to 25 across Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

We are a diverse team of dedicated youth workers, creative professionals, volunteers, and campaigners, **united by a singular mission: to help all young people reach their full potential and live fulfilling lives.**

We achieve this by building secure, positive relationships with each individual, tailoring our support to their unique needs. We work tirelessly to help young people remove or overcome the barriers they face by:

1. **Building trusting relationships** that enable us to address individual needs, whether social, emotional, or practical.
2. **Advocating for young people** to influence policy and ensure young voices are not just heard, but acted upon, fostering real social change. Our [We the 33 - Youth Voice events](#) are a prime example, bringing young people and decision-makers together.
3. **Providing a wide range of high-quality programmes and activities** - from engaging youth sessions and creative courses to vital support for education, training, and employment.

Our 9 youth centres, including Bristol's city centre youth hub [The Station](#) are safe, inclusive, and inspiring spaces. Here, young people can hang out, explore their interests, build positive relationships, and discover new skills. Activities, often organised by the young people themselves, range from cooking and DJing to arts and debates, all designed to encourage and empower them to find their voice and reach their potential.

"I started coming to the Stokes when I moved here and didn't have much to do. I wasn't feeling very well, and mum convinced me to give it a shot. It's a nice place and I like what we do here, it keeps me busy."

R, Young Person at The Stokes

In addition our new Creative Enterprise Hub, The Courts, is a new space for creativity in the beating heart of Bristol's vibrant city centre. It is a place for organisations and individuals to work, create, make and develop networks - and for young people to hone skills, grow their professional networks, and embark on successful creative sector careers.

Our commitment to excellence in youth work has been widely recognised. We are proud that our services for young people were rated "Outstanding" by the National Youth Agency (NYA) in 2023, and that our commitment to youth voice, and to genuinely involving young people in everything we do, was recognised in our being awarded the NYA's "Hear by Right" accreditation at "Flagship" level (the highest available category) in 2024.



We also have a commitment to all of our staff, volunteers and young people to create an environment where they feel safe, empowered and able to be themselves.



Partnership is fundamental to who we are and what we do as an organisation. We work with a wide range of partners including:

- Bristol Play & Youth Alliance (and each of the local area partnerships across Bristol)
- South Gloucestershire Youth Work Partnership
- West of England 'Place Partnership'
- The 'HYPE' partnership of Bristol organisations working with young people not in education employment or training (NEET)
- The 'Engaging Potential' partnership for NEET young people in South Gloucestershire
- Nimbus Sounds, a partnership with Aspiration Creation Elevation (ACE), Basement Studio and the Trinity Centre, bringing music making opportunities to young people who would not ordinarily get them
- Our tenant communities - over 50 mostly social purpose organisations co-located across our Kingswood, Hanham and Bridewell/city centre sites, many of whom have overlapping missions to support young people.



Real stories

See the impact of our youth work with real life relationships with young people in the below video:



Our Strategy: 2023–28

Our ambitious **5-year strategy (2023–2028)** is directly shaped by feedback from young people themselves and our valued partners. This strategy reinforces our core mission and sets out a clear roadmap for deepening our impact and adapting to the evolving needs of the young people we serve.

Our strategic priorities are built around four interconnected pillars:

1. Investing in Our People

We are committed to nurturing a thriving environment, both for the young people we support and for our dedicated team. This involves:

- Developing a robust People Strategy: We aim to become an employer of choice within the sector, ensuring our staff feel valued, supported, and have access to enhanced training.
- Continuing to embed our equity, diversity, and inclusion action plan to ensure our workforce reflects the diverse communities we serve.

2. Investing in Places

Prioritising our youth clubs and creative spaces: We are dedicated to keeping our existing centres open, accessible, welcoming, and vibrant. This also includes:

- Delivering the vision for The Courts as an innovative Creative Enterprise Hub, connecting young creatives with industry opportunities.
- Exploring new opportunities to develop viable additional places and spaces for young people across the region.
- Investing in environmental improvements across our estates, moving tangibly towards our carbon net-zero target by 2027.



3. Securing the Funding Young People Deserve

The youth sector has faced significant funding cuts nationally. We address this challenge by:

- Diversifying and increasing income streams: We are proactively working to secure funding from previously untapped sources, including health & social care, criminal justice, and education sectors. Our focus is on growing the entire youth sector rather than competing for limited funds, and on working collaboratively with partners to achieve this.
- Increasing income from our estates: Reinvesting revenue generated from our properties directly back into services for young people.
- Retaining vital 1:1 support: Despite local funding pressures, we are committed to maintaining core one-to-one support for the most vulnerable young people who desperately need it.

4. Amplifying Youth Voice and Social Action

At Creative Youth Network, young people are not just beneficiaries, but active agents of change.

Our strategy amplifies their influence by:

- Significantly increasing our ability to empower youth voice: This means ensuring young people's perspectives are heard and acted upon at both local and national levels, leading to practical and social change.
- Implementing a new Participation Strategy: This includes developing flagship young leaders' programmes and refreshing opportunities for young people to be employed within CYN, including apprenticeships and creative commissions.
- Achieving NYA's "Hear by Right" accreditation: This will ensure we consistently uphold best practices in youth participation and co-creation.

By focusing on these strategic areas, Creative Youth Network aims to build on its "Outstanding" National Youth Agency status and continue to provide crucial, life-changing support, empowering young people to shape a brighter future for themselves and their communities. We invite trustees who are passionate about these goals to help us drive this exciting next chapter.



Our Impact

At Creative Youth Network, we believe every young person holds immense potential. However, many of the young people we work with, despite their resilience and aspirations, navigate significant barriers and challenges. They may have experienced trauma, exploitation, abuse, or neglect. Beyond physical harm, a growing number contend with mental health challenges, poverty, and systemic inequities stemming from their ethnicity, sexuality, disability, or gender identity. Our collective role is to stand with them, supporting and enabling them to define and shape their own fulfilling futures.

Our youth workers are a crucial key to unlocking this potential by:

- **Building Trusting Relationships:** We forge strong, secure relationships that enable us to understand and address each young person's highly individualised needs, fostering the safe and stable environments they need to thrive.
- **Amplifying Young Voices:** We ensure young people's voices are heard and listened to, empowering them to influence policies and decisions that affect their lives, within our organisation and across wider society.
- **Providing Diverse Pathways:** We offer a wide range of programmes and activities – from creative expression and skill development to education, training, and employment support – all designed to help young people realise their potential.

One size does not fit all. Our work is as complex and varied as the young people we serve, yet it consistently changes lives, making a real and tangible difference now and into their future.

During 2024, Creative Youth Network –

Worked with **2,436 young people, who collectively attended our programmes 16,884 times.** We work with some of our region's most disadvantaged, marginalised and excluded young people, including young people from racialised communities, those entitled to free school meals, who are disabled, have poor mental health, are in care, are LGBT+, and other protected characteristics.

Created effective and trusted relationships with young people – **94% of young people said they have a trusted adult at Creative Youth Network, and 98% said that the staff at Creative Youth Network listen to them.** For some young people our staff are the only trusted adults in their lives.

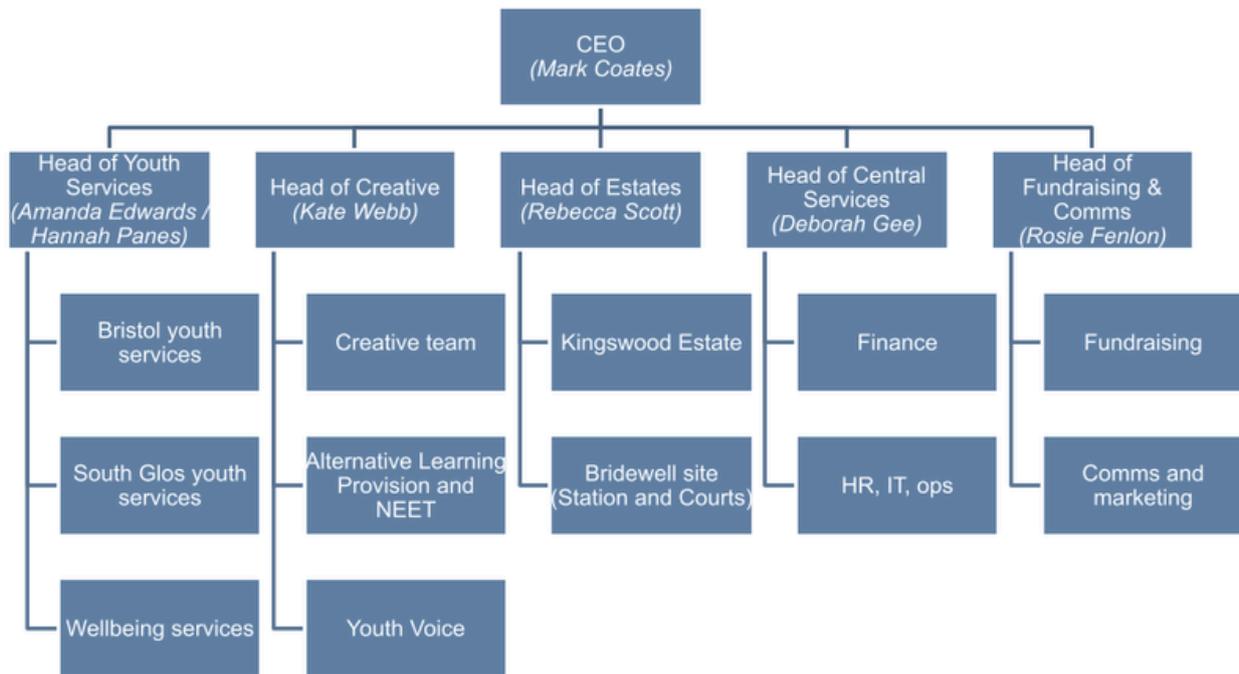
Recorded 3,779 outcomes by young people – although we know that this significantly under-represents the impact of our work as not all outcomes are recorded.

Amplified the voices of young people – with **a reach of 162,846 through our website, social media and other channels.**

Our impact is not just measured in numbers, but in the individual stories of transformation and the strengthened communities we help to build. See individual stories of our young people here.

Organisational Structure

Youth work is a people business and our staff and volunteers are our no.1 asset. In addition to dedicated teams delivering our frontline work with and for young people (Youth Services and Creative) we have an Estates team who manage the charity's portfolio of community buildings, plus Central Services and Fundraising & Communications teams to ensure that the charity's core functions are managed safely, effectively and efficiently -



Our Trustees

Our Board represents a range of business and community leaders. We value diversity of thought and our Trustees come from many different backgrounds. You can find out more about our Board of Trustees [here](#).

"I think it's really important that youth work is recognised and is supported, continued and therefore supports young people. It's really interesting working with the other trustees because fundamentally you're a team and you all come from different backgrounds."

Jo Grant, Trustee

Trustee Role Description

As a Trustee of Creative Youth Network, you will be a vital part of our governing body, responsible for ensuring the charity fulfills its mission and operates effectively and ethically. This is a **voluntary role**, though reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out your duties will be reimbursed. You will also receive a **full induction and ongoing training** to support your role as well as ongoing support from the Board.

Key Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees (Collective)

The Board is collectively responsible for:

1. **Ensuring Organisational Purpose and Public Benefit:** Ensuring Creative Youth Network consistently carries out its purposes for the public benefit, as defined in its governing document.
2. **Compliance:** Ensuring CYN complies with its governing document, charity law (including the Charities Act 2022 where provisions are in force), company law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations (e.g., safeguarding, data protection (GDPR), health & safety).
3. **Strategic Direction:** Contributing actively to the development and delivery of the charity's firm strategic direction, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed objectives.
4. **Resource Management:** Ensuring CYN's resources and funds are used exclusively for its charitable purposes, managed responsibly, and protected from undue risk (financial, reputational, or otherwise).
5. **Financial Oversight:** Ensuring financial stability, maintaining robust financial controls, and scrutinising financial information.
6. **Safeguarding:** Upholding the highest standards of safeguarding for all young people and vulnerable adults, ensuring comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and adhered to. All Trustees will undergo an Enhanced DBS check.
7. **Risk Management:** Identifying, assessing, and mitigating significant risks to the charity, its beneficiaries, and its assets.
8. **Leadership and Culture:** Safeguarding the good name and values of Creative Youth Network, fostering a positive, inclusive, and values-driven culture throughout the organisation.
9. **CEO Oversight:** Monitoring the performance of the Chief Executive Officer and providing appropriate support and challenge.
10. **Accountability:** Ensuring the charity is open and accountable to its beneficiaries, funders, and the wider public, including robust reporting and communication.

In addition, the Treasurer is a trustee with financial expertise (either through qualification or professional experience), who holds lead responsibility for maintaining an overview of the charity's financial affairs. Creative Youth Network employs a central services team who undertake all day-to-day financial management and administration, so the Board and Treasurer role is one of strategic oversight. While the Treasurer is expected to bring specific expertise and interest in the charity's financial affairs, it is important to note that all trustees retain collective responsibility for the charity's financial position (i.e. this does not solely rest with the Treasurer).

Who We Are Looking For

We are seeking new trustees with financial expertise, including candidates potentially able to become our next Treasurer. Candidates should be passionate about youth empowerment and eager to contribute to the strategic leadership of our thriving organisation.

We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive board that reflects the communities we serve - we therefore welcome applications from candidates of all backgrounds and demographics

Individual Trustee Duties

In addition to the collective responsibilities, each Trustee is expected to:

- **Commitment:** Demonstrate a strong commitment to Creative Youth Network's mission, vision, and values, and a passion for empowering young people.
- **Time Commitment:** Be willing to meet the time requirements, which include attending approximately four formal board meetings per year (2-3 hours each), typically held quarterly with option for remote or in person, along with an annual half-day strategic planning session. There may also be other optional meetings, committee work, or ad-hoc support as required.
- **Active Contribution:** Contribute actively to board discussions, bringing independent judgment, constructive challenge, and new ideas.
- **Utilise Skills:** Apply their specific skills, knowledge, and experience to help the board make informed decisions, which may involve leading discussions, identifying key issues, or providing guidance in their area of expertise.
- **Integrity:** Act with integrity, always in the best interests of the charity, and declare any conflicts of interest.
- **Learning and Development:** Be willing to undertake a full induction and ongoing training to understand their legal duties and responsibilities, as well as wider sector developments. Trustees will need to complete a Fit and Proper Persons HMRC declaration
- **Advocacy:** Act as an advocate and champion for Creative Youth Network's work and mission

No prior trustee experience is required. We provide a comprehensive induction, ongoing training, and dedicated support to all new Trustees.

Recruitment Process

If you are excited by the opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of young people and contribute to a leading youth charity, we encourage you to apply.

1. Please send your **CV and either a written statement of interest or a video** explaining why you'd like to join our Board of Trustees by to admin@creativyouthnetwork.org.uk.
2. Shortlisted candidates will then be invited for interview with members of the current Trustee Board and young people. This maybe in person or online depending on availability of the Trustees and candidates.
3. There will also be an opportunity for candidates to meet with the CEO as part of this process.
4. All candidates are required to observe one full Trustee meeting and undertake the NSPCC Safeguarding Training for trustees before full appointment to the Board.





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INSTAGRAM: @CreativeYouthNetwork
INSTAGRAM: @TheCourtsBristol
FACEBOOK: /CreativeYouthNet
LINKEDIN: /Creative-Youth-Network

Registered Charity Number: 266318

"The youth workers are really helpful. They understand my feelings and my problems and they help me."
Young Afghan Refugee



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