

THE CENTRE FOR YOUTH VOICE

Part of YMCA George Williams College

COMMUNITY FUND

Youth Voice Ambassador Application Pack

February 2024

ABOUT YMCA GEORGE WILLIAMS COLLEGE

YMCA George Williams College supports organisations that work with young people to deliver high quality services and evidence the impact of the work they do.

The College merged with the Centre for Youth Impact in Spring 2022, bringing together leading expertise in evidence, insight, and data with training and learning for practitioners working with young people.

The merger established two centres of expertise within the College: the Centre for Youth Impact and the Centre for Quality Practice. With the support from The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF), the College began developing a new centre in April 2023: the Centre for Youth Voice.



WHAT IS THE CENTRE FOR YOUTH VOICE?

The Centre for Youth Voice aims to support organisations to embed and promote youth voice and participation and empower young people to access and utilise these opportunities.

In partnership with young people and practitioners from across the voluntary youth sector, we aim to develop a comprehensive suite of youth voice research, evidence and resources, supporting the delivery of quality youth voice activities across the UK.

Whilst we endeavour to influence and drive culture change in wider society, our core focus is advocating for the participation of young people in the design, delivery and review of policies and provision in youth sector organisations.

The Centre will build an evidence base to support quality youth voice and participation practice across the sector, by bringing together research and evidence which demonstrates the impact of these practices. This evidence will housed on our data platform, the ‘Youth Voice Observatory’, which will be free to access via our website and through which youth voice evidence can be viewed and submitted.

HOW HAVE YOUNG PEOPLE BEEN INVOLVED SO FAR?

Between April and November 2023, we worked primarily with young people engaged in existing youth voice and participation activities at the College. This included our:

• Young Evaluators Panel, who worked with the College between 2021-2023 to evaluate the impact of youth voice within the #iwill Fund and;

• Young Evaluators Network, who are currently working with the College on an impact evaluation of the #iwill Fund.

We have also worked with a range of young people through virtual focus groups as part of the initial consultation process for the Centre, where we aimed to establish a clear action plan for our activities. You can read more about the young people's involvement in the early stages of the research in our Project Discovery Consultation Summary.

I love the feeling of the group - it's the only group I'm doing at the moment where I really feel connected to those I'm working with.



The discussions that we have are amazing! Our ideas often bounce off one another and then seeing those ideas brought together shows how we are valued within the project.



WHAT IS THE YOUTH VOICE AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME?

We are now assembling a team of Youth Voice Ambassadors to work with us to support the development and activities of the Centre for Youth Voice between March 2024 – March 2026.

As a Youth Voice Ambassador, you'll be central to the future of the Centre for Youth Voice, ensuring that all of our work is co-produced and youth-centred.

Throughout the two-year programme, you and your team of Youth Voice Ambassadors will also work alongside an Advisory Group of Youth Voice Practitioners. Together, you'll help to ensure that the Centre's outputs meet the needs of both young people and adults working and volunteering across the youth sector.

Through training, we will also support you to develop your knowledge and skills in research and evaluation, enabling you to better advocate for the role of youth voice and participation in evaluation and continuous quality improvement.

With additional support and training, we will empower you to share and amplify these learnings through youth-led storytelling, inspiring voluntary youth organisations to commit to embedding the voices of children and young people within their continuous quality improvement processes, and paving the way for the next generation of changemakers.



WHO DO WE WANT TO WORK WITH?

We'd like to work with you if you are:

- Aged between 16-25;
- Actively using your voice to influence positive change locally, regionally, or nationally;
- Committed to developing your skills around research, evaluation, communication, teamwork and leadership;
- Interested in developing your knowledge and understanding of youth voice, participation, and engagement in voluntary sector youth organisations;
- Confident to speak about issues that affect young people;
- Willing to get involved in creating and curating youth-led content; and
- Able to commit to attending all of the core activities in the programme, including two residentials in both 2024 and 2025 (see proposed timetable on next slide).

To ensure that we have representation from young people across the whole of the UK, we are hoping to recruit one young person from each nation and region listed below.



- England:
  - North East
  - North West
  - Yorkshire and Humber
  - East and East Midlands
  - West Midlands
  - London
  - South East
  - South West
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Wales

We are particularly interested in working with young people who have current or previous experience of engaging, volunteering or working with voluntary sector youth organisations. And, young people who have never accessed a national youth voice or participation opportunity before, but who are influencing change at a local or regional level.

WHAT WE'RE ASKING FROM YOU

We are asking for your voluntary commitment for two years, including commitment to attending all of the core activities highlighted below between April 2024 – March 2026.

2024	Activity	Location	Duration	Date and time
April	Introduction Session	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 hours	Thursday 25 April, 5:30pm-7pm
May	Monthly check-in	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 hours	Thursday 23 May, 5.30pm-7pm
August	Residential one	Face-to-face (Central England)	3 days	TBC
September	Monthly check-in	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 hours	Thursday 12 September, 5.30pm-7pm
October	Residential two	Face-to-face (Central England)	3 days	3 days
November	Monthly check-in	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 hours	Thursday 28 November, 5.30pm-7pm

See next page for 2025 and 2026 core activities.

WHAT WE'RE ASKING FROM YOU (CONT.)

2025	Activity	Location	Duration
February	Monthly check-in	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 hours
March	Monthly check-in	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 hours
April	Residential three	Face-to-face (venue TBC)	3 days
May	Monthly check-in	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 hours
August	Residential four	Face-to-face (venue TBC)	3 days
September	Monthly check-in	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 hours
October	Monthly check-in	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 hours
November	Monthly check-in	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 Horus

2026	Activity	Location	Duration
February	Reflection and feedback session	Virtual (MS Teams)	1.5 hours
March	Celebration event	Face-to face-venue (TBC)	1 day

Dates and times for sessions in 2025 and 2026 will be provided nearer to the time.

Wherever possible, residentials will run Friday to Sunday, or, Saturday to Monday during academic breaks to mitigate potential barriers for young people who are engaged in full-time work and/or education.

We will not deliver any sessions in January, June, July, and December as we know that young people are most likely to be sitting exams during these periods.

We endeavour to offer additional enrichment opportunities throughout the programme to reward young people for their participation. This may include opportunities to engage in further learning and training with the College, 1:1 coaching and mentoring with our Youth Engagement Lead, invitations to attend and/or speak at conferences, as well as opportunities for paid work.

You will also have all of your reasonable expenses covered throughout your involvement with the programme, including travel and accommodation. This means it won't cost you anything to get involved.

WHAT WILL YOU GET OUT OF BEING INVOLVED?

By taking part in the Youth Voice Ambassador Programme, you will get the opportunity to:



Have fun and make new friends
You will have the opportunity to take part in a range of fun, interesting and engaging activities, including four residentials and attendance at our national conference. Through these activities, you will be able to meet new people, make friends, and build a wider community with changemakers from across the UK.



Develop your knowledge and skills
You will widen your knowledge and gain a range of valuable skills and experience by working with our team of multi-disciplinary professionals. Through the core activities of the programme and additional training, we will support you to develop transferrable skills in research and evaluation, leadership, teamwork, youth-led storytelling and communication.



Put your nation or region on the map
You will be supported to showcase quality and innovative youth voice practice taking place locally to you and be given opportunities to amplify this work nationally. By working with our Impact Networks throughout the programme, you will be able to support wider capacity building in youth voice practice across the sector.



Collaborate with youth voice professionals from across the UK
You will working closely with our Youth Voice Practitioner Advisory Group through intergenerational co-production sessions. The College will also provide the space and opportunities for you to network with these professionals, including those located within your region or nation, supporting you to amplify your wider youth voice activities.



Make a difference
You will play a key role in co-producing and youth-proofing the work of the Centre for Youth Voice. In doing so, you will be instrumental in driving culture change by demonstrating the impact of youth voice practice on voluntary sector organisations, as well as wider society.



Be paid a Living Wage
If whilst taking part in the programme we ask you to complete any work that we would otherwise pay an adult to do, we commit to paying you for your time in line with the London Living Wage (currently £13.15 per hour).

HOW CAN YOU APPLY?

You can submit your application using our online application form: Centre for Youth Voice - Youth Voice Ambassador application form

Within the form, you will be asked to provide your consent before sharing some personal and contact information. You will then be asked to submit your answers to the questions listed on the right using your preferred format (we can accept text, audio or video submissions).

We recommend that you prepare and save your responses separately to the questions in your desired format in advance before submitting the form. This will help to avoid any potential submission errors and should help to make the application process feel more manageable.

All applications must be submitted by midnight on Sunday 17 March 2024.

We will let applicants know whether they have been successful by Friday 25 March.

Get in touch

If you have got any further questions about the role, the application process, or have identified any barriers to participation whilst reading the information pack, please get in touch with our Youth Engagement Lead: Eli Adie (elinor.adie@ymcageorgewilliams.uk / 07940 497927)

Within the application, you must answer the following questions:

- ✓ **Can you tell us about yourself?**

  We'd like to know your name, your age, where you're based in the UK, and what you're interested in.

- ✓ **Can you tell us about where you live?**

  What's great or unique about where you live? What would you like other people to know about your nation or region? What would you like to see change in your locality, region or nation?

- ✓ **Can you tell us about your involvement with youth voice to date?**

  How and why did you get involved with youth voice activities? What youth voice activities and youth organisations have you been involved with? How are you using your voice to influence positive change for young people?

- ✓ **Can you tell us why you want to be a Youth Voice Ambassador?**

  Finally, we'd like you to tell us why you want to be a Youth Voice Ambassador. What interests you about the opportunity? What impact do you think you can have? How will being involved in the programme support your personal development?

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