

# Growing Youth Social Action in the UK

## #iwill Campaign Strategy

Young people aren't just the leaders of tomorrow. They have the energy, skills and ideas to change society and the environment for the better today. Yet society often fails to listen to young people's views or recognise their ability to make a positive difference. This is particularly the case for young people from low-income communities.

All young people should be supported and empowered to be active citizens. That's why the #iwill campaign, led by over 1,000 organisations from across the UK, aims to make participation in social action – such as volunteering, fundraising, mentoring and campaigning – the norm for young people aged 10 to 20.

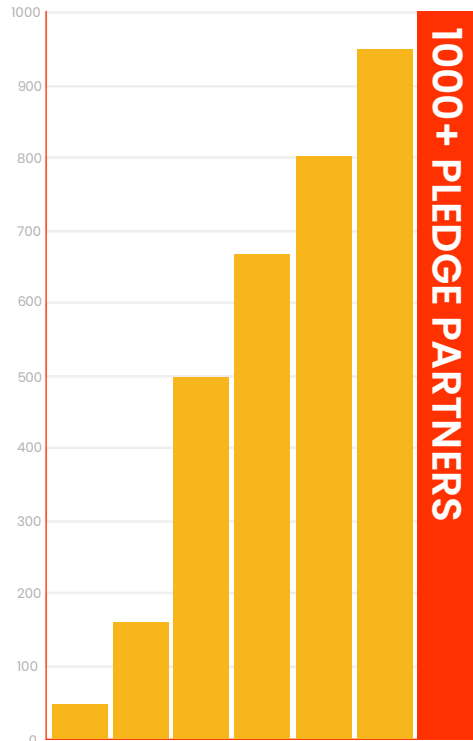
The campaign was launched in November 2013 by HRH The Prince of Wales and the leaders of the three main political parties. Its launch followed an independent review into what action different sectors could take to support more young people to participate in high quality social action. The time-limited charity Step Up To Serve coordinates the #iwill campaign. It does so by connecting campaign partners, communicating data and evidence about youth social action and challenging organisations to do more.



# The Growth of a Movement

When the campaign launched in late 2013, with 50 partners and 50 young people, we never imagined #iwill would bring together the depth, diversity and scale of partnerships. From primary schools and a Clinical Commissioning Group in Barrow-in-Furness to FTSE companies and Government departments, the #iwill movement has gone from strength to strength over the last few years.

- 250 Ambassadors across the UK
- £69.4m invested into youth social action through the #iwill Fund
- Partnerships built in the education, health, environment and youth sectors
- More primary and secondary schools say youth social action is part of their culture and practice
- Youth social action embedded into long-term plans of Ofsted, NHS England and Defra
- Significant growth in body of evidence on the double benefit of youth social action
- Over 10k young people have shared their perspectives on youth social action through the national youth social action survey

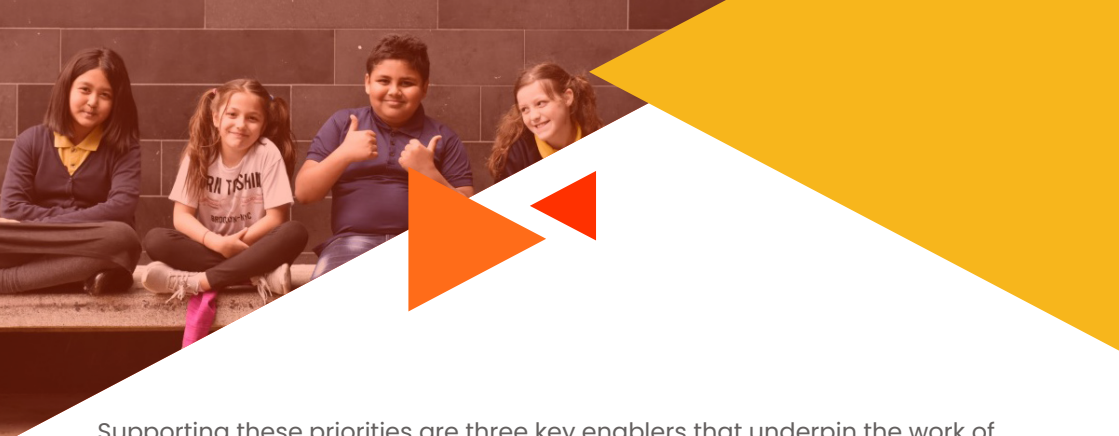


More information on the progress made since the launch of the campaign can be found in our 2019 campaign impact report '[The Power of Youth Social Action](#)'.

# Campaign Priorities and Enablers

#iwill partners are working together to deliver a cross-sector campaign strategy that will transform the role and perception of young people in society. Although Step Up To Serve will close its doors at the end of 2020, #iwill pledge partners will be working together to ensure that the legacy of campaign is sustained and grown over the next decade and beyond. In order to fully embed youth social action into UK society, the campaign will focus on five key priorities:

| PRIORITY  | RATIONALE   |
|---|---|
| Ensuring the <b>long-term sustainability</b> for youth social action initiative | Too often, opportunities for young people to take part in social action are not sustained. The campaign is supporting organisations to ensure that these activities are fully embedded into their culture and practice using our <b>POWER</b> framework (see Appendix 1).   |
| Increasing the <b>quality</b> of youth social action opportunities              | In order for the benefits of youth social action to be maximised, we want to see more organisations ensure that the social action opportunities they provide hit <b>six quality principles</b> : it should be youth-led; challenging; support progression into other opportunities; embedded in that young person's life; enable reflection; and deliver social impact.   |
| <b>Narrowing the socio-economic gap</b> in participation                        | Results from the 2018 National Youth Social Action Survey show a stark participation gap is evident. <b>Young people from lower-income backgrounds are significantly less likely to have taken part</b> in meaningful social action than their wealthier peers: 27% of young people from social class group DE compared to 52% in group AB.   |
| Growing <b>participation of under-14s</b>                                       | Starting a journey of social action at a young age is critical. The Habits of Service research by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues demonstrated the value of starting early. When they do, young people are <b>2.5 times more likely to create a habit of service than if they start getting involved at sixteen</b> .  |
| Growth in <b>youth voice and leadership</b>                                     | Too often, organisations shy away from offering meaningful leadership opportunities to young people. Even in the voluntary sector, young people are not being included in the decision-making process: 18-24 year olds account for less than 0.5% of all charity trustees, despite making up 12% of Britain's population. <b>We're working with campaign partners to change this and give young people a seat at the decision-making table.</b> |



Supporting these priorities are three key enablers that underpin the work of Step Up To Serve, the charity that coordinates the #iwill campaign:

| ENABLERS                                  | ACTIVITY  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Growth through partnerships</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and challenge organisations to use our POWER framework to embed youth social action</li> <li>• Support continued collaboration within and across sectors to grow youth social action</li> <li>• Exploration of creating a new cross-sector body and secretariat to replace Step Up To Serve and its Advisory Council after 2020</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Investment in social action</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure commitments from key funders for continued collaboration and investment into youth social action beyond the end date of the #iwill Fund in 2022</li> <li>• Maximise current investment into youth social action, including supporting the effective operation of the #iwill Fund</li> <li>• In collaboration with other organisations within the youth sector, secure commitments from the Government to fund youth social action (e.g. in the next Comprehensive Spending Review, through influencing spending of other Government Funds, etc.)</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Investment in social action</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2019, work with Ambassadors and partners to ensure #iwill4nature inspires young people to take part in green youth social action</li> <li>• In 2020, run a compelling communications campaign, led by young people and partners, that:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tells a compelling story of what has been achieved by the #iwill campaign since November 2013</li> <li>• challenges #iwill partners at a national and local level to sustain the legacy of the campaign after the shutdown of Step Up To Serve in December 2020</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Explore whether there is a role for the #iwill brand and Ambassadors to sustain growth in youth social action post-2020</li> </ul> |

## Appendix 1: Campaign Strategy Visual

### Vision



Youth social action  
in the norm for 10 to 20  
year-olds across the UK

### Priorities



Long-term  
sustainability

Increase  
quality

Narrow the  
socio-economic  
gap

Increase  
quality

Grow youth  
voice

### Key Enablers



#### Growth through partnership

Collaboration  
embeds youth  
social action within  
and across key  
sectors

#### Investment

Independent  
funders and  
government invest  
intelligently to  
sustain and grow  
youth social action

#### Communications

Campaign partners  
share why we need  
youth social action,  
what great social  
action looks like and  
how to support it

## Appendix 2: The *Five Ways* to Embed Youth Social Action

P

### **Prioritise Youth Social Action**

This can include incorporating youth social action into your organisational strategy and developing plans to support the quality, scale and reach of the opportunities provided.

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O

### **Offer Leadership Opportunities**

Supporting young people into leadership roles within your organisation can enrich and enhance decision making.

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W

### **Work in Partnership**

Working collaboratively with #iwill campaign partners, funders and schools will enable your organisation to pool knowledge, expertise and resources to enhance the quality, scale and reach of opportunities .

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E

### **Evaluate Impact**

This can include assessing the benefits for young people, the impact they are having on their communities, and the extent to which the opportunities provided are of a high quality, scale and reach.

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R

### **Recognise Young People**

Celebrating the impact of young people can help recruit and retain young volunteers and assist organisational buy-in to maintain or grow its focus on youth social action.

