

TOP TIPS FOR
SIGNING THE

POWER OF
YOUTH CHARTER

PART OF THE **#iwill** MOVEMENT



WHAT IS THE POWER OF YOUTH CHARTER?



The Power of Youth Charter provides organisations with a framework of commitments to support and enable young people to shape and lead social action. When organisations sign the Charter, they publicly commit to prioritising youth voice, opening up decision-making, collaborating across sectors, evidencing impact and celebrating young people's contributions.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR ANY ORGANISATION
CONSIDERING SIGNING THE CHARTER!



1. UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SIGNING UP TO

Before signing, take time to review the Charter's core commitments and consider how they align with your organisation's values and strategy. The Charter is designed to be flexible and adaptable. It should complement your existing work and help strengthen youth engagement, rather than create unnecessary extra requirements.

'THE POWER OF YOUTH CHARTER HAS GIVEN US CONFIDENCE TO INCREASE THE LEVEL OF WORK WE DO WITH YOUNG PEOPLE. THE POINTS OF THE CHARTER ARE QUITE SUCCINCT, THEY MAKE TOTAL SENSE, AND THEY'RE VERY EASY TO UNDERSTAND. IT WAS A NO BRAINER TO SIGN UP. AND IT'S A NO-BRAINER TO RECOMMEND OTHER ORGANISATIONS TO SIGN UP AS WELL.'

PROJECT DIRECTOR, THOMAS WOLSEY 550

**POWER OF
YOUTH CHARTER**

ASK YOURSELF:

- HOW ARE YOUNG PEOPLE ALREADY INVOLVED IN OUR ORGANISATION?
- WHERE COULD THEIR INPUT MAKE THE GREATEST DIFFERENCE?
- WHAT WOULD REAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP LOOK LIKE FOR US?

2. ENSURE SENIOR LEADERSHIP BUY-IN

Embedding youth voice starts at the top. Leadership support signals organisational intent and increases the likelihood of sustained change.

Make sure your board or leadership team understands why the Charter matters and what it will mean in practice - not just as a badge of support, but as a lever for meaningful organisational change.

A public signing can be a powerful moment for leadership to demonstrate commitment to young people and to internal stakeholders.



3. CREATE CLEAR, TAILORED PLANS FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



There's no single blueprint for youth social action - it must be shaped to fit your organisation's purpose and context. Research shows that tailoring youth engagement to organisational strengths and local needs is a key step in embedding the Charter's commitments.

PRACTICAL TIPS:

- MAP THE AREAS OF YOUR WORK WHERE YOUTH VOICE COULD INFLUENCE OUTCOMES.
- START SMALL: PILOT PROJECTS HELP BUILD CONFIDENCE AND DEMONSTRATE VALUE.
- IDENTIFY STAFF CHAMPIONS WHO WILL DRIVE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT INTERNALLY.



4. OPEN UP DECISION- MAKING SPACES

Signing the Charter is only the first step - young people must be given real influence. This means intentionally creating roles and forums where their voice shapes organisational decisions.

WAYS TO DO THIS:

- INVITE YOUNG PEOPLE ONTO ADVISORY GROUPS, STEERING COMMITTEES OR BOARDS.
- INCLUDE YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES IN PLANNING OR STRATEGY MEETINGS.
- LOWER BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION BY OFFERING FLEXIBLE INVOLVEMENT FORMATS (E.G., VIDEO SUBMISSIONS OR PEER-LED SESSIONS).

5. WORK IN PARTNERSHIP LOCALLY

Youth social action works best when organisations collaborate rather than work in isolation. Connecting with local partners, other Charter signatories, schools, community groups and youth organisations can help build a supportive ecosystem around young people's ideas

"THE POWER OF YOUTH CHARTER HAS CONNECTED US TO A COMMUNITY OF ORGANISATIONS THAT FACE SIMILAR STRUGGLES AND UNDERSTAND OUR CHALLENGES."

CHARTER SIGNATORY

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BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION:

- SHARED RESOURCES AND NETWORKS
- A COORDINATED APPROACH TO YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ACROSS SECTORS
- OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLACE-BASED IMPACT AND COLLECTIVE VISIBILITY

6. CELEBRATE AND COMMUNICATE IMPACT

Recognition matters - both for the young people involved and for strengthening organisational culture around youth engagement. Make the positive contributions of young people visible through your communications, case studies, events, awards and public platforms.

“LET THE YOUNG PEOPLE BE YOUR EVIDENCE – PERSONAL STORIES ARE FAR MORE INTERESTING AND ENGAGING THAN FACTS AND FIGURES”

YOUNG PERSON

**POWER OF
YOUTH CHARTER**

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE:

- FEATURE YOUNG PEOPLE'S STORIES IN NEWSLETTERS AND SOCIAL MEDIA.
- HOLD YOUTH-LED PRESENTATIONS FOR STAFF AND PARTNERS.
- CELEBRATE MILESTONES AND SUCCESSES PUBLICLY.

THESE MOMENTS BUILD MOMENTUM AND DEMONSTRATE THAT YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IS VALUED.

7. MEASURE, REFLECT AND ADAPT

Embed feedback loops that help you understand what's working and where you can improve. Capturing insights on how young people's involvement influences outcomes is essential - not only for internal learning but also to demonstrate impact to partners and funders.

'ALL THE COMMITMENTS AND PRINCIPLES ARE TRANSFERABLE – THEY ARE NOT JUST ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE SO TAKE TIME TO REFLECT AND LEARN FROM WORK YOU MIGHT BE DOING WITH OTHER GROUPS.'

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REFLECTION TIPS:

- USE SURVEYS OR REGULAR CHECK-INS WITH YOUNG PARTICIPANTS.
- TRACK EXAMPLES OF YOUTH-LED DECISIONS INFLUENCING OUTCOMES.
- ADJUST YOUR APPROACH BASED ON WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE AND STAFF SAY.

8. BE PATIENT, PERSISTENT AND FLEXIBLE



Meaningful youth engagement takes time, trust and adaptation. Organisations in the research found that while some Charter commitments (like celebration and opportunities for action) progress quickly, embedding youth voice in decision-making and governance structures can be more challenging.

HELPFUL MINDSET REMINDERS:

- DON'T WAIT FOR PERFECTION - PROGRESS IS MADE THROUGH ITERATION.
- BE TRANSPARENT ABOUT CHALLENGES AND LEARNING.
- RESPECT THAT YOUNG PEOPLE MAY NEED SUPPORT AND STRUCTURE TO LEAD CONFIDENTLY.



9. USE THE CHARTER AS A TOOL FOR GROWTH

Signing the Power of Youth Charter isn't just symbolic - it can enhance funding bids, strengthen community partnerships and signal to stakeholders that your organisation is serious about youth leadership. Many signatories use the Charter as a quality marker and narrative frame in external communications.

"IT PROVIDES A FRAMEWORK FOR PUTTING FUNDING BIDS TOGETHER OR TO HELP US FRAME REPORTS BACK TO FUNDERS - THE COMMITMENTS ARE A GOOD STARTING PLACE TO THINK THROUGH WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH A PROJECT AND HELP US REFLECT ON WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED."

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10. KEEP YOUTH CULTURE AT THE HEART OF YOUR WORK



Youth engagement should feel authentic, not tokenistic. Embed youth voice into your organisational culture so that young people are seen as collaborators, innovators and key contributors, not just occasional consultants. Create spaces where young people feel welcomed, respected and empowered to speak up - and ensure that their contributions genuinely influence outcomes.

"YOUR ORGANISATIONAL FOCUS MIGHT BE FAR FROM YOUTH SOCIAL ACTION BUT BY SIGNING UP TO THE POWER OF YOUTH CHARTER, YOU CAN GET THAT PERSPECTIVE AND TOOL THAT WILL SHOW YOU HOW TO START AND CONTINUE IMPROVING YOUR IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUTH SOCIAL ACTION PRACTICES INTO YOUR WORK, PURPOSE AND GOALS. THIS IS NOT A CHALLENGE BUT RATHER AN OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE YOUR ORGANISATION A NEW INSPIRATIONAL ENERGY AND CHARGE"

MILANA BOUT, #WILL AMBASSADOR





SIGNING THE POWER OF YOUTH CHARTER IS A COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINED ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE - ONE THAT STRENGTHENS YOUTH VOICE, ENHANCES IMPACT AND DEEPENS CONNECTIONS WITH COMMUNITIES.

BY APPROACHING IT WITH CLARITY, HUMILITY AND OPENNESS TO LEARNING, ORGANISATIONS CAN MAKE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT A MEANINGFUL, EMBEDDED PART OF HOW THEY WORK.

This guidance is informed by learning from the Independent Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) report on the Power of Youth Charter. The research draws on insights from organisations across sectors, alongside the experiences and perspectives of young people themselves, exploring what it really takes to embed youth voice meaningfully in organisational culture, decision-making and practice. Their lived experience and leadership shaped the findings - reinforcing that effective youth engagement must be intentional, shared, and rooted in trust.

