



**Senior Programme
Support Officer**

Recruitment Pack

Date: October 2024

Welcome letter

Too many of our young people are prevented from finding a job they love by a lack of access to appropriate information, advice and connections; inadequate support to overcome multiple layers of disadvantage; or as a result of discrimination. It is unacceptable that one in 10 young people in the UK are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Young people from marginalised backgrounds are disproportionately likely to be neither earning nor learning, or underemployed, and their outcomes vary significantly more by region. This has been compounded by the pandemic that caused significant economic and educational disruption. As the economy recovers, the benefits are not being felt equally as long-term youth unemployment remains higher than pre-pandemic. This is the core mission of Youth Futures – to support young people facing disadvantage into the record number of job opportunities that are now available.

Long-term youth unemployment causes long-term scarring effects on the individual and their ability to fulfil their potential in society. This is worsened by the current cost of living crisis that is hitting young people hard - they pay double on essentials like rent and bills, compared to the over-50s. Yet the personal and economic prize for addressing this issue is significant. Supporting young people to secure good quality jobs is a sustainable way to tackle the cost of living crisis. UK GDP could benefit by £38billion by lowering levels of young workers classed as NEETs to German levels, according to our recent research.

We have the opportunity to create a profound change in the way this country supports young people from marginalised backgrounds into employment. Improving employment prospects for

all young people is a crucial factor in achieving national productivity gains, reducing the benefits bill, and enhancing health and wellbeing in society. As the What Works centre for youth employment we take an evidence-led, structural and systems-based approach that recognises the importance of national learnings and local context. In 2021 we launched our Youth Employment Evidence and Gap Map – the world's largest, quality-checked evidence base on youth employment – that shows the global evidence base on what works to improve youth skills, employment and job quality.

We promote strong coordination and partnership working across government, funders, delivery organisations and employers. Our flagship £16 million Connected Futures Fund aims to address the fragmentation of youth employment and skills delivery in the places that need it most, so that young people furthest from the job market receive consistent high-quality support to address complex needs.

We continue to strengthen our organisation and team as we grow and evolve and this role will play a crucial part in supporting the organisation in achieving its vision, mission and business goals. If you are passionate about creating a better future for young people, we look forward to hearing from you.

Barry Fletcher, CEO



About us

Youth Futures Foundation is the What Works Centre for youth employment. We exist to address the significant disparities in youth employment for marginalised groups. We want to ensure that all young people can access and keep good quality jobs.

Youth Futures was founded in 2019 as an independent, not-for-profit organisation with funding from dormant assets to drive systemic change by:

- ❖ Giving grants to organisations that provide employment support to young people so that we can generate compelling evidence with high quality impact evaluation methodologies
- ❖ Driving evidence-based change in policy and working with employers and practitioners to improve practice. We help to connect and empower those who are commissioning and delivering youth employment services.

Our approach involves both the creation and curation of evidence. We create evidence by funding high-quality evaluations and programmes to understand whether interventions are effective. We curate evidence by gathering and presenting information from global studies into interventions that help young people into work.



Our vision

To create a society where all young people have equitable access to good quality jobs.

This includes:

- equal employment outcomes for young people who face discrimination or disadvantage
- a reduced number of young people outside the labour market or in insecure work
- improved progression pathways for young people

Our mission

To narrow the employment gap by identifying what works and why, investing in evidence generation and innovation, and igniting new ideas that change behaviour and practice.

Our primary beneficiaries are young people aged 14-24 who face at least one personal or systemic barrier to progressing into meaningful work, including:

- ethnic minorities, particularly those most at risk of facing disparities in the labour market (e.g. Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Black; Mixed; Gypsy, Roma and Traveller) And/or: young people legally defined as children in need
- young parents, or those who have a caring responsibility
- economic disadvantage (e.g. eligible for free school meals or living in an area of high deprivation)
- special educational needs or disabilities
- experience of offending
- school exclusion or alternative provision
- experience of homelessness
- a mental health or long-term health condition
- experience of problem substance use

Our values

We are bold

We want to disrupt the status quo and transform the youth-employment system

We are always learning

We are evidence-driven, we innovate and we aren't afraid to fail

We are inclusive

We embrace, celebrate and

champion diversity in all its forms – it's core to who we are

We are collaborative

We build partnerships and share power to increase the collective impact

We are determined

We are relentless in our pursuit of a better future for all young people

Our strategic approach

We are an ambitious organisation that takes a systemic approach to supporting young people from marginalised backgrounds to move into good quality jobs.

From 2023–25 we will be focusing on four strategic priorities:

- 1 Building capacity** – Influence the commissioning and delivery of youth employment and training services to be routinely based on evidence of what works.
- 2 Systems change** – Use evidence, learning and practice, driven by young people, to mend a fragmented system and influence place-based policy.
- 3 Creating opportunities** – Develop evidence-based and practical business cases for employer behaviour change, based on best practice in recruiting and retaining young people from marginalised backgrounds, scaling up that learning to target places, expanded networks and key partnerships.
- 4 Organisational health** – Deliver a strong foundation for Youth Futures, based on a well-resourced, positive and financially stable environment in which our people thrive, risk is effectively managed and we deliver our mission.



Equity, diversity and inclusion statement

The young people we aim to serve - and the challenges they face - are all unique. We need to build a team that reflects this diversity, is highly skilled and committed. Our commitment to inclusion across all protected characteristics, experiences and socioeconomic background forms the cornerstone of our work.

We work hard to ensure we have a diverse and inclusive workforce. We use identity-blind software for all our permanent recruitment campaigns to reduce unconscious bias during recruitment. We have flexible working policies which are kept under review and many of the more flexible working practices we adopted during lockdown have been retained. The recruitment of our team around our three hubs of Birmingham, Leeds and London has enabled us to attract a greater diversity of talent than simply focusing recruitment in one city.

In building the Board, the Future Voices Group, and making external appointments to the Grants Committee, we have also ensured our governance and advisory structures contain a broad diversity of background and experience.

We are committed to encouraging an open, collaborative, safe and inclusive working environment. We have an EDI committee, formed of a group of employees, with a senior leadership team lead, who have a keen interest or experience of EDI and work together on issues or concerns related to equity, diversity and inclusion at work. The committee address and implement proactive strategies relating to EDI, support policy reviews and revisions, be the employees voice to Senior Leadership Team members and share feedback for continual improvement on our organisational wide values and commitment to EDI.

We are Disability Confident and have committed to ensuring that we attract, recruit, retain, support and develop disabled people in the workplace. We aim to continually improve and develop our talent attraction and inclusive recruitment practices to be reflective of our organisational behaviours and culture.

We are committed to the charter as an employer positive about mental health in the workplace and are a Mindful Employer.

We are a Living Wage Employer, as we believe a hard day's work deserves a fair day's pay. Our base rate of hourly pay is in line with the London Living Wage.



2022 in numbers:

£20m

Additional Dormant Assets funding awarded

250,000

HR professionals reached with our evidence review aimed at employers, published in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

1

Youth Employment Evidence and Gap Map updated

12

Pieces of content developed by our Future Voices Group

2

Large policy and engagement events, including our first parliamentary event

38%

Of organisations on our Infrastructure grant programme are led by an ethnic minority CEO or MD

3

Parliamentary mentions in the House of Lords related to the Dormant Assets Bill recognising the impact of our work

19,710

Cumulative total of young people reached

£25m

Cumulative grant funding awarded to 162 grantees

£4.9m

Cumulative total committed to the largest ever range of youth employment evaluations in England through our What Works programme

2,200

Black, Asian and minority ethnic young people were surveyed on their experiences of learning and employment



£7.5m

Cumulative total of match funding secured

14

Organisations recruited to our Employer Advisory Board

4

Policy papers produced

18

New grantees supported



3

Government submissions by Youth Futures

16

Research and evaluation papers produced

2

New grant schemes launched (Connected Futures and place-based programmes)



Role description

SENIOR PROGRAMME SUPPORT OFFICER PROGRAMMES & GRANTS DIRECTORATE

Term: Fixed term to January 2026. Full Time – 37.5 hours per week

We offer a range of flexible working options and consider alternative patterns of work

Salary: £28,450 - £32,375

Reporting to: Head of Programmes – Connected Futures

Direct reports: None

Location: This role can be based at any of our hubs located in London, Birmingham or Leeds. We currently operate a hybrid model of two-days per week in the office and three-days from home. You must also be prepared to travel to the other hubs and other locations as required for the purpose of this role, which may occasionally require overnight stays.

Transforming youth employment

Youth Futures Foundation is the What Works Centre for youth employment. We exist to address the significant disparities in youth employment for marginalised groups. We want to ensure that all young people can access and keep good quality jobs.

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CONNECTED FUTURES

[Connected Futures](#) is Youth Futures' systems change programme. It aims to foster joined-up solutions to the complex issues and barriers facing disadvantaged young people.

When we [mapped existing systems](#), young people made it clear that the services that are meant to help are failing them. The onus is on them to navigate support and push for what they need. Too many services fit the young person to their predetermined offers, rather than the other way round. Young people find themselves pulled in contradictory directions, driven by the targets and incentives of different services, not their needs or aspirations.

Young people at most risk of becoming NEET face multiple barriers, whether due to characteristics such as disability or ethnicity, or adverse experiences such as being in the care system. Through Connected Futures, we are seeking to reorient the system around young people, so that they get the right support from the right place at the right time to help them into the right jobs for them.

Connected Futures is taking a new approach to funding. We've funded:

- Partnerships across sectors not individual organisations
- Process not outcomes – partnerships received initial funding for 18 months to explore the problem, develop youth voice and involvement, and mobilise stakeholders around a shared ambition for change
- Relationships – each partnership has a dedicated Relationship Manager, as well as support from a Learning Partner, and we facilitate regular exchange between partnerships

We are now coming to the end of this exploratory phase, making larger grants to allow partnerships to develop and test potential solutions. Ultimately, we are looking to create new models that can tackle key barriers facing

young people and be adopted into policy and practice more widely – the equivalent of a “No Wrong Door” for youth employment.

Even at this relatively early stage, we are seeing increased visibility and attention to young people by local decision-makers. Our work in places is also creating platforms for wider stakeholder and policy engagement, on issues such as risk of becoming NEET, SEND and ethnic disparities.

Recognising that this is a critical gap in terms of youth employment, we are bringing on new partnerships with a specific focus on young people with Bangladeshi or Pakistani heritage.

JOB DESCRIPTION

We are looking for a capable, proactive person to support the overall programme management approach for Connected Futures. The Senior Programme Support Officer will support the Head of Programmes to develop and deliver an approach to programme and project management across Connected Futures. The postholder will take the lead on specific tasks, and coordinate the work of the wider cross-organisational Connected Futures team.

You will liaise with external partners and stakeholders, as well as supporting multiple internal customers and workstreams, often to tight deadlines. You will support key external and internal engagement processes, working with colleagues to ensure the smooth running of meetings and capture key decisions and inputs to feed back into programme delivery.

This is primarily a project management role, enabling a cross-functional team to work effectively and efficiently together on a complex, fast-moving and high profile programme. As well as dealing with tasks as they emerge, you will work across the team to keep track of progress, identifying any issues and risks, and enabling the Head of Programmes and other internal stakeholders to gain an overview of the programme as a whole.

Key responsibilities

- ❖ Project management to ensure effective delivery of Connected Futures against key milestones and deadlines, flag and address key risks and dependencies, and facilitate coordination across the project team.
- ❖ Support grant management processes, working closely with colleagues from the Programme and Grants Directorate and other team members – lead on specific tasks, coordinate assessment processes, and provide support as required.
- ❖ Work with colleagues to coordinate grant agreements, reporting, payment administration and ongoing monitoring / due diligence of appointed funded partners.
- ❖ Support programme announcements, media engagements and other external communications
- ❖ Coordinate regular project team meetings and record key actions / decisions
- ❖ Project manage other tasks, deliverables and deadlines as required, and support colleagues across the organisation to maintain and track progress
- ❖ Support the Head of Programmes and programme team as required

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge, experience and abilities		
Experience of complex project management / coordination – enabling cross-organisational collaboration and oversight of multiple workstreams	X	
Experience of working with grantees, contractors or other third-party delivery organisations		X
Familiarity with project management processes and tools – e.g. gant charts, resource planners, project software etc	X	
Experience of supporting meetings – note-taking, logistics, planning etc	X	
Familiarity with voluntary / non-profit, public sector or research organisations		X
Skills & competencies		
Proactive and able to work at pace and on own initiative	X	
Responsive / customer-oriented, and willing to take on a variety of tasks as required	X	
Ability to manage multiple tasks / workstreams to deadline	X	
Strong project management skills and task orientation / focus	X	

	Essential	Desirable
Good communication / listening skills and ability to work well with internal and external stakeholders	X	
Clear written English, attention to detail and ability to handle a high volume of information	X	
Good IT skills and familiarity with Microsoft Office suite	X	

MINDSET

- ❖ a genuine personal commitment to Youth Futures mission, vision and values
- ❖ a willingness to collaborate internally and externally to achieve our mission and apply commitment to Youth Futures Foundation values to everyday working
- ❖ to thrive when operating in a growing and evolving organisation
- ❖ a proactive and flexible approach
- ❖ a positive and can-do attitude, willing to roll sleeves up to get into details where necessary
- ❖ demonstrate inclusiveness, collaboration and respect
- ❖ a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion
- ❖ to contribute to and help build a strong team culture
- ❖ follow internal policies, processes and practices

THINGS TO KNOW

As part of Youth Futures Foundation's safeguarding policy, all employees are subject to a basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check

The young people we aim to serve – and the challenges they face - are all unique. We are looking to build a team that reflects this diversity. Our commitment to inclusion across race, gender, age, class, religion, identity, and experience forms the cornerstone of our work. We are an equal opportunities employer, welcoming applications from all sections of the community.

We are particularly keen to encourage people with lived experience of the challenges facing young people in the labour market, and committed to supporting you in your application. Please contact us if you require any additional support.

Internally, we encourage an open, collaborative and inclusive working environment.

Summary of benefits and general T&C's

Probationary Period - all offers of employment are subject to a six month probationary period. Regular reviews will be undertaken during this period.

Holiday Year – 1st January to 31st December.

Holiday entitlement – holiday is issued in hours 210 per year equivalent to 28 days holiday, plus 8 statutory bank holidays. Entitlement is pro-rata for part-time employees. Holiday can be requested via the HRIS BreatheHR system. We are also flexible for employees to work on occasional public holidays (except Christmas, Boxing or New Year's Day) in lieu of taking a day off to celebrate an alternative significant religious day. Please discuss this further with line manager or Head of People.

Hours of work – are as specified within individual contracts of employment. Our standard working hours are 37.5 per week, standard working hours are 9:00am – 5:30pm including one hour lunch.

Lunch break – lunch breaks are a minimum of 30-minutes. Refreshment facilities are provided in each of our hub locations.

Flexible working – we offer a range of different working patterns such as variable start / finish times, part-time or compressed hours. Please speak with your line manager or Head of People to discuss any variation to working pattern or hours. Requests for flexible working can be made informally or formally.

Location – each employee will be given a hub location as their place of work, however there is a requirement to visit or work from other hub locations as necessary, including to attend the periodic face to face, all staff away days (which involve an overnight stay). The hub locations are London, Birmingham and Leeds.

Hybrid working – we currently offer an arrangement that allows you to work three days per week from home. However, if your home working situation or general working preference means that you prefer to work in an office, there is no upper limit to the number of days working in the office. We provide all relevant home office equipment to ensure you are properly equipped to work effectively from home. A catalogue of equipment is offered for you to select the required equipment.

Volunteering days – we offer three paid volunteering days per year, pro-rata for part time employees, unless otherwise agreed at our discretion each year (January to December) to allow employees to undertake voluntary/charitable work. This time can be split into half days. Volunteering time is recorded on the HRIS BreatheHR system.

Personal/professional training allowance – a personal training allowance of £750 is allocated to each employee per year to use in a variety of methods such as conferences, events, books, journals, professional

subscriptions/memberships, contribution to qualifications, coaching, to support with CPD, and £250 per head for functional teams to pool and engage in collective training.

Salaries – salaries are paid via BACS direct into bank accounts on the 25th of each month, where the 25th falls on a weekend, payment will be made the Friday before. Payslips are issued electronically via Xero.

Pay structure – we have a nine point incremental pay structure, which enables an employee to move annually up the scale each service anniversary.

Enhanced Maternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave Pay - weeks 1 to 26 on full pay, weeks 27 to 39 on Standard Maternity Pay (SMP), weeks 40 to 52 unpaid (eligible at 6 months service).

Enhanced Paternity/Partner leave - three weeks at full pay.

Absence reporting – employees are expected to contact their line manager and/or Head of People to notify of any absence at your earliest possible opportunity and by no later than 10:00am. Absence is recorded on the HRIS BreatheHR system.

Sickness absence payments – for the first 6 months of service you will receive a maximum of four weeks full pay, after 6 months you may receive up to 12 weeks full pay. After this period the below income protection policy will then apply.

Emergency leave – up to 5 days of paid leave each year is available to enable an employee to deal with an emergency. These are not to be taken as consecutive days of absence, but to give the time to deal with a personal emergency and make any relevant alternative arrangements.

Medical/Dental appointments – reasonable paid time off is granted where such appointments are not able to be made outside of working hours.

Income protection – provides replacement income if an employee is absent from work through long-term illness or injury. After 13 weeks of absence, the income protection plan provides 75% of basic salary for a two-year period. Provided by AIG.

WeCare – through Canada Life you have access to similar health and wellbeing support through their WeCare programme which offers 24/7 online GP, mental health support and virtual wellbeing. <https://www.canadalife.co.uk/workplace-protection/support-services/wecare/>

Employee Assistance Programme – A 24-hour helpline with access to a range of legal, consultancy, 24/7 crisis assistance support and signposting. Provided by Assured Health.

Health Cash Benefit – a cash plan insurance policy that helps cover the cost of everyday health care, such as

dental, optical and therapies. The plan reimburses some or all of the cost of routine and/or unforeseen healthcare costs and appointments. Full details of entitlements and support available will be issued to you direct from the provider Medicash. Totalling £995/year.

Group Life Assurance – a policy which enables employees to provide a tax-free lump sum benefit payment, and/or a longer-term income to their family and dependants in the event of death whilst in Service. Cover provided by Canada Life. Payment is based on 4 x basic salary.

Season Ticket Loan – An interest free loan for a 6 month or 12-month season ticket with monthly deductions from salary.

Travel card loan – the company can provide financial support to purchase travel cards. This is then deducted on a monthly basis from salary for an agreed time period.

Pension – There is an auto-enrolment pension scheme provided by People's Pension. If you meet the auto-enrolment criteria, you will automatically become a

member of the scheme. Youth Futures Foundation pay an employer contribution of 6%, with an employee contribution of 5% of salary. An opt in to an additional 2% matched contribution can be made with a contribution totalling 15%. Membership details will be issued to you upon commencement. You can choose to opt out the scheme should you wish.

Dress Code – dress for the day. We expect that you will dress appropriately for the work in which you are carrying out.

Cycle to Work Scheme – Provided through the Bike2Work Scheme.

<https://www.bike2workscheme.co.uk/> Allows you to buy commuter bikes and cycling accessories through us, so you spread the cost and making savings through a tax break. For more information on the scheme and to obtain our company pin to register please speak to our Head of People.

Expenses - Reasonable expenses incurred in line with the Travel & Expense Policy will be reimbursed against receipts. Expenses can be claimed back via the Zoho app.

How to apply

To apply for the role please visit [BeApplied](#)

Applied is our online recruitment platform.

Applied offers a more effective approach to hiring – removing any bias. Applications are anonymised for the shortlisting process and candidates are assessed on their answers to set questions that are skill-based relevant to the role.

Applied enables you to complete your application in stages before final submission.

Our application process requires you to answer a set number of questions approx. 5 per application. With a limit of 250 words per question. You will then be asked to submit your CV to accompany your application. One of the questions will ask you to summarise your suitability for the role.

Please note: you will be asked to confirm that you are answering the questions yourself and that answers are not plagiarised or automatically generated by any AI software before you start your application. **Use of ChatGPT or other similar software will be identified and scoring penalised.**

Your personal information, supplied for the purposes of recruitment will be held and processed by Youth Futures Foundation for this purpose only. For further details please view our privacy policy [Privacy Policy - Youth Futures Foundation.](#)

Recruitment timetable

Deadline for applications: 27/10/24 at 23:59
Interviews: 31/10/24 & 1/11/24

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact Lisa Metcalf, Head of People

Lisa.metcalf@youthfuturesfoundation.org

Queries

If you have any questions regarding this vacancy or would like to find out more, please contact Lisa Metcalf, Head of People

Lisa.metcalf@youthfuturesfoundation.org

