

About Changemakers

Who we are

Changemakers was founded in 1994 by a coalition of educationalists and NGOs and was an early champion of young people leading their own social action and change. We have influenced many of the key developments in education and youth policy over the past decade including the introduction of citizenship and enterprise education, the creation of youth volunteering body 'V' and 'Aiming High', the government's ten year youth strategy. Since 1994 more than 100,000 young people have participated in Changemakers programmes and hundreds of organisations have adopted our youth led philosophy and approach.

Our **Vision** is of a society of passionate and engaged citizens, motivated and empowered to lead positive change in their communities.

What we do

Our **Mission** is to work with young people aged 4-25 to stimulate enterprising minds, create active citizens, and inspire future leaders.

We do this in three ways:

1. **Programmes:** We build the capacity of young people and the professionals and organisations who support them by providing training, networking, coaching and funding.
2. **Policy:** We use what emerges from our work on the ground to influence policy and practice across the UK and around the world.
3. **Connecting:** We connect decision makers, young people and the professionals who support them in challenging and unusual partnerships to create a movement for long lasting and large scale social change.

How we work

Facilitate: Our philosophy is based on facilitation, not direction. We believe in empowering people to take control of their own situation, providing appropriate challenge and support. We follow this approach with the young people and organisations with whom we work, as well as within our own team.

Take risks: In our pursuit of imaginative and groundbreaking ideas and approaches we are willing to take risks, think the unthinkable and act on our instincts. We recognise that a truly pioneering approach can never succeed 100% of the time - sometimes we will make mistakes and the things we try will fail. However, we learn from this process of experimentation in the full knowledge that great things will emerge.

Keep things simple: We want everything we do to be authentic and credible. In order to make that happen we try to avoid the things that complicate and obscure our work – unnecessary bureaucracy, meaningless jargon and pretentious airs and graces. We try to be natural, put people first and let our true personality shine through.

Be honest: We think it's important to tell the truth, even if that sometimes makes us unpopular. This means that we don't patronise the young people with whom we work, we respectfully challenge our partners and stakeholders and, whilst we take money from government and policymakers, we are

independent enough to tell them what we really think. We also expect to have open and courageous conversations with our colleagues inside the organisation.

Think long term: We try to avoid short term thinking and hasty decision making. This means investing our time and energy in things that are going to be sustainable in the long term – programmes, partnerships, policies and people – even if this approach can sometimes be frustrating and difficult in the short term. It also involves finding the time to take a step back from the day to day hustle and bustle and reflect on the direction and effectiveness of our work.

Who we work with

Young people: Our key audience and the main focus of our work. Historically our work has been focused on young adults aged 14-25. Our ambition is to work lower down the age range with 4-13 year olds, where we believe we can have an even greater long term impact.

Professionals and organisations supporting young people: Whilst young people are our key audience, working with practitioners and organisations offers the potential for greater sustainability and wider impact.

Employers: Historically our work has focused on public and voluntary sector agencies but our ambition is to work with a wider range of employer organisations, particularly in the private sector.

Parents, carers and families: Parents, carers and families are an important influence on young people's lives and it is therefore critical that we engage them in our work.

Policy and decision makers: The government and other key holders of power and the purse strings, whether at local, regional, national or international level.

Our vital statistics

Changemakers has offices in London (our head office), Newcastle, Somerset and Birmingham.

We work with young people in every part of England, although we have yet to expand our remit to the other nations of the UK. However, we work in many other parts of the world including, over the past couple of years, Australia, Bangladesh, Columbia, Lithuania and Romania.

We have 30 employed staff. We also work with a number of freelance consultants and sub contractors who provide specialist input and additional capacity across the whole spectrum of our activity.

We are governed by a Board of Trustees, currently numbering 10. Our trustees are a mixture of functional experts (for example in HR, finance and law) and practitioners with experience of the work we do. Two of our current trustees are graduates of Changemakers programmes.

Our turnover for 2007-08 was approximately £1.2m and is forecast at £1.6m for 2008-09, rising to £2m in 2009-10 and 2010-11. Our work reaches around 20,000 young people and 200 organisations each year.

Changemakers is a registered charity (1086178) and a company limited by guarantee (4143956). We operate as a social enterprise, incorporating the best of the voluntary and private sectors.

Our work from 2008-11

Programmes

We will build the capacity of young people and the professionals and organisations who support them by providing training, networking, coaching and funding.

Our programmes are delivered under three themes:

1. Enterprising minds
2. Active citizens
3. Future leaders

1. We will stimulate **enterprising minds** by providing young people with funding and resources to create and implement innovative solutions for social change. Our enterprising minds strand will create a new generation of social entrepreneurs to develop and inspire youth leadership through community activism.

Key activities:

a) **The Big Boost:** Providing grants to young social entrepreneurs, delivered in partnership with UnLtd and the Prince's Trust.

b) **Social Enterprise in Schools:** A programme of training and support for schools, teachers and young people to enable them to create sustainable social enterprises.

2. We will engage **active citizens** by offering young people civic engagement opportunities through volunteering. Our active citizens strand will enable a large number and diverse range of young people to experience some form of active participation in their community and provide an access point for our enterprise and leadership themes of work.

Key activities:

a) **involved teams:** A national programme of infrastructure development and support for youth volunteering with local teams in East London, Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset, Birmingham, Newcastle and Northumberland. In the next three years Changemakers will create 25,000 meaningful youth led opportunities in the public, private and third sector based on young people's passions, values and aspirations.

b) **Community Space Challenge:** A targeted social intervention programme to engage young people who are at risk of offending or of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour. This programme raises aspirations and provides a sense of achievement for its participants who transform community spaces. It is delivered in partnership with Crime Concern, the Prince's Trust and Encams. In 2008-09 we will promote the importance of genuine intergenerational work as a tool to nurture community cohesion and bring about sustainable and positive change to the lives of 200 young people in ten communities nationally via this work.

3. We will inspire **future leaders** by identifying and nurturing young people with the potential to lead locally, nationally and internationally. Our future leaders strand will give society credible hope in the next generation to effectively lead us through the national and global challenges of the mid-21st century.

Key activities:

- a) **Y ACT:** Our flagship youth leadership programme enabling young people to lead community projects and take on strategic roles within service delivery organisations.
- b) **Y FUND:** Supporting the delivery of the Youth Opportunity and Capital Funds through which young people are given responsibility for decision making on key aspects of local authority youth service budgets.
- c) **Building Capacity for Change:** Equipping local organisations to deliver the vision outlined in the government's Aiming High strategy.
- d) **Big Challenge:** A new programme delivered in partnership with UnLtd that will give young people funding and resources to create innovative solutions to some of the big challenges facing society.

Policy

We will use what emerges from our work on the ground to influence policy and practice across the UK and around the world.

Key activities:

1. **Social Enterprise Policy Group:** A policy and lobbying group for social entrepreneurship including Ashoka, CAN, Training for Life, UnLtd and the School for Social Entrepreneurs.
2. **Choose Action Alliance:** A policy and delivery partnership for youth volunteering and community action including YouthNet, Youth Action Network, Worldwide Volunteering and the Student Volunteering Team at Volunteering England. By 2009 we will secure funding for a Secretariat to develop this successful alliance ensuring that Choose Action can play a prominent role in the world of youth involvement and volunteering.
3. **Active Citizens in Schools:** Building on our long running ACiS programme, we will develop a new initiative focusing on volunteering and community action in schools.
4. **National Institute for Youth Leadership:** A new government initiative which seeks to improve the quality and quantity of leadership development for young people in all sectors of society.
5. **18 in '18,** a ten year campaign focused on the 'Millennium Generation' born in the year 2000. The 18 in '18 Inquiry will enable young people to lead a major public debate on the nature of society in 2018, developed and delivered in partnership with YouthNet and the British Youth Council.