



YEAR IN REVIEW  
**2019/20**

[speakersforschools.org](https://speakersforschools.org)    



**SPEAKERS**  
for schools

Our mission is to level the playing field for young people making sure they have **access to inspiring speakers and employers**, helping to provide the **inspiration** and **experience** to fuel their ambition.

We are on a mission to support **1 million young people** annually across all of our programmes by 2022/23.



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## OUR CHAIR

**At a critical moment in their development, many young people have lost control of their own destinies and seen their life chances buffeted by a pandemic and associated educational chaos. Which is why this year, more than ever, I am so proud of the accelerating success of Sfs in giving young people the tools to take control of their own lives and build successful futures.**

We are making a rapid and successful transition to a virtual world; Sfs has already supported our extraordinary speakers and dedicated teacher partners in delivering 121 online inspirational talks to over 83,000 students. But Covid-19 has also seen a renewed focus on social purpose in the corporate world, leading to rapid growth in our experience service.

From 50 companies last year offering work experience through our platform, we now have 195 signed up and active in the virtual world this year.

Across all our work, we are approaching the moment when we will have supported our one millionth young person. This will be an amazing testament to all of those who have helped Sfs over the decade since it was founded.

But we haven't yet done nearly enough; the detrimental impact that Covid-19 has had on the life chances of the most disadvantaged in our society has persuaded us to multiply our efforts to level the playing field for all young people. The board recently adopted a transformational growth plan, focused on our experience strand, to deliver impact for a million students per year by 2023. There will be particular emphasis on nationwide hiring of staff to further broaden our reach and aid levelling-up.

Over our first 10 years, which we will be belatedly celebrating next July, I thank you all for your incredible support as eminent speakers inspiring students, as teachers facilitating our work, and in your corporate roles offering experience to build on that inspiration. As we move forwards with rapid growth we are open to significant financial support for the first time in our history. I'd like to thank the trusts, foundations, companies and individuals who have already generously supported our work with donations and grants this year.

We've made a great start, but the best, for Sfs and the young people we work with, is yet to come.

**Andrew Law**

Chair of the Board of Trustees,  
Speakers for Schools

## OUR FOUNDER

**We've all been living through the Age of Uncertainty since the 2008 banking crash, and for young people those uncertainties have presented the greatest challenge. A combination of technological revolution, climate change and populist politics make it harder than it has been at any point in our lifetimes for them to be confident about what knowledge and which skills will allow them to have fulfilling, happy and productive lives. The Covid-19 pandemic has taken us into the most acute phase of this uncertainty and instability.**

That is why, as Speakers for Schools looks forward to celebrating its 10 year birthday, its services – providing state school students with experience of the world of work and giving them access to the country's most inspirational and knowledgeable speakers – are needed more than ever.

As we have all had to do in our personal and professional lives, Speakers for Schools has been forced to adapt to a world of greater social distancing, by supplying our brilliant free talks and work experience through digital channels. We see this as a classic virtue engendered by necessity, in that we are reinforcing the important idea that life for all of us henceforth will be a real and virtual hybrid.

We can't eliminate uncertainties about the future, but we can help to provide school students with the data,

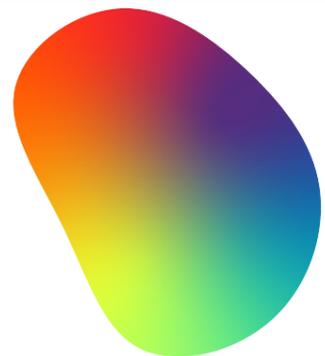
knowhow and adaptability to give them a greater chance of thriving. We are therefore embarking on our most ambitious programme of expansion since our very early years.

Yes this is an era of uncertainty, but it is also an era of opportunity and of obligation on all of us – to soften the harsh consequences for the coming generation of the foolish mistakes made by our generation. In that sense, Speakers for Schools should be seen as honouring a collective debt. If you agree, we would love your support.

**Robert Peston**

Founder, Speakers For Schools





## OUR CEO

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**Celebrating the significant successes of our charity during times of such difficulty and hardship is somewhat of a bittersweet experience, but nonetheless I would like to share my pride in the efforts of our team, stakeholders and trustees in responding to the Covid-19 crisis in such a truly selfless manner, putting the helplessness of the situation of young people first and foremost.**

In response to the crisis we have innovated new programmes at a pace and scale never before achieved at Speakers for Schools, to deliver 283% growth in the number of young people experiencing the world of work, and 13% growth in the number of young

people supported by our eminent speakers through the delivery of both Virtual Work Experience and Virtual Talks.

Following my arrival at Speakers for Schools in September last year, I soon came to understand that not only was it admired for delivering programmes of outstanding quality to young people, but that it also benefits from a wealth of goodwill, both from its network of eminent speakers and the aspirational organisations who open both their real and virtual doors to support young people across the UK with experiences of the world of work.

I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to our speakers and Employer Network for their continued and extended support throughout 2019/20 and beyond. We hope that our investment of your goodwill and financial support continue to pay dividends not only

to our future generations, but also to yourselves. I truly believe that few organisations can offer such a return on the investment of your time than one which can help your words ripple through generations to come.

The year ahead will undoubtedly present challenges as we aspire to launch two further programmes to more than double the number of young people supported, however the strong foundations which we have built during this year will serve us well in the face of what will undoubtedly be a turbulent period for all of us.

**Jason Elsom**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Speakers for Schools

## OUR WORK AND IMPACT

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# OUR IMPACT AS A CHARITY

167,880

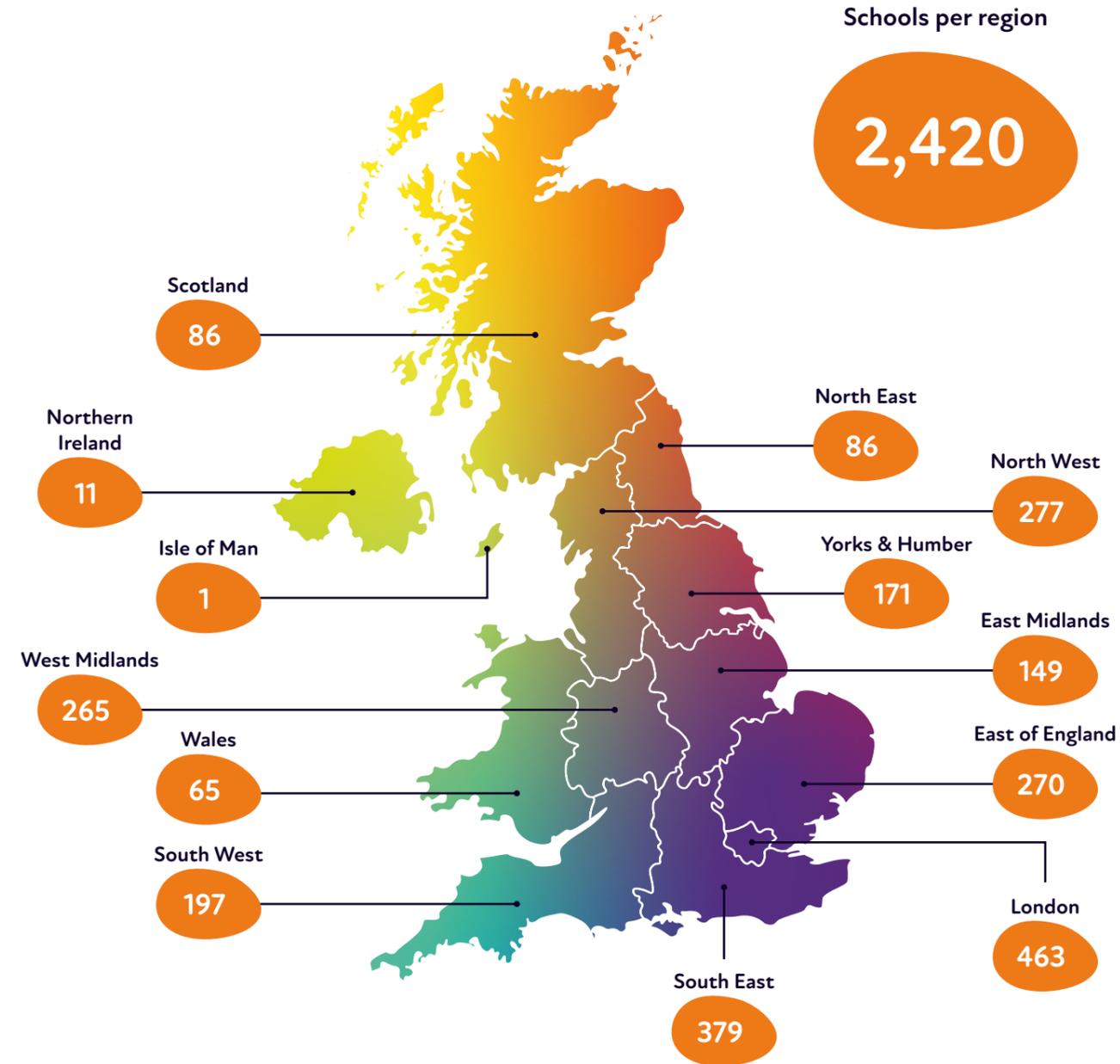
Number of students reached by our programmes this year

988,767

Number of students reached by our programmes since launch

4,793

Total speaker and employer engagements



# EXPERIENCE IN ACTION

## Meeting the needs of young people at a time of crisis

In an unprecedented year for schools, employers and most importantly young people, the aims of levelling the playing field and widening access and participation could be considered harder to reach than ever. As the nation entered lockdown in March, we took what we knew to be best practice in person and translated it into an interactive, high impact virtual programme.

## Leading the way with our pioneering virtual programme

Through our Virtual Work Experience (VWEX) programme, we have reached thousands of young people from 132 different local authorities across the UK. Working with our Employer Network, we've given them vital early experiences of industries and companies that might have been inaccessible otherwise because of location or expense. Our virtual placements meet Gatsby Benchmarks 5 and 6 and have enabled young people to focus on their futures and connect with top employers during a difficult year.

## Building our team and community to support more young people

Over the last academic year our team has grown significantly, and will continue to do so throughout 2020 and 2021. We've also expanded and strengthened our links with other charities and communities, building successful partnerships that will allow us to reach more and more students going forward.



## STATS AND FIGURES

**3,483**

Number of student placements completed through Experience this year

**2,655**

Weeks of work experience/virtual work experience delivered this year

**200**

Employers participating in the programme

**79,650**

Hours of work experience/virtual work experience delivered this year

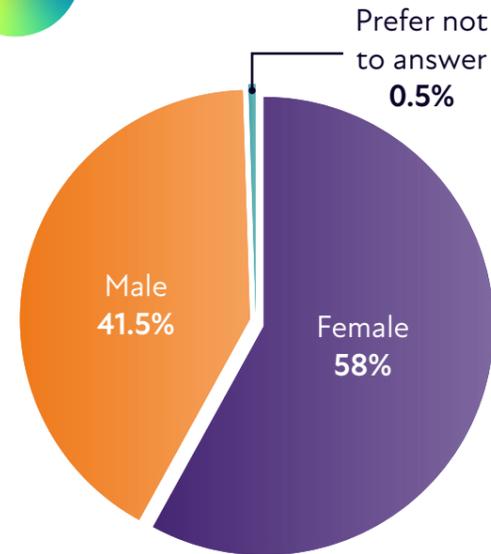
**97**

Employers hosted this year\*  
\* heavily impacted by Covid-19

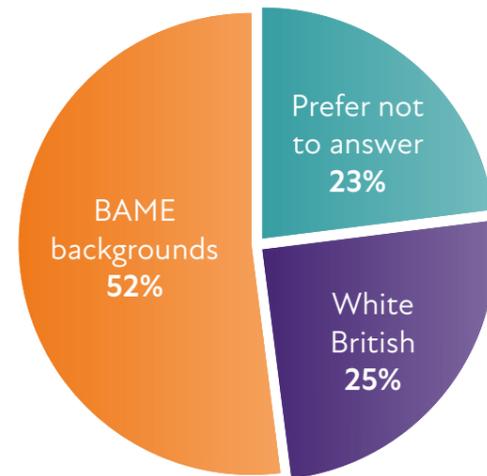
**132**

Different local authorities around the UK were represented by young people who took part in work experience this year

Demographic breakdown



Ethnicity breakdown



## STUDENT FEEDBACK SURVEY

**100%**

of young people said their VWEX or virtual insight day was valuable, with **83%** saying it was very valuable.

**91%**

of young people want to pursue a career in that industry following their placement, compared to **60%** before their placement.

**99%**

of young people felt better informed about the world of work and their future options after their placement.

**88%**

of young people said they gained new skills that they wouldn't have got at school or through other activities

**91%**

of young people said they felt more confident about their future after their placement.



I would like to do more stuff like this! It was brilliant. Maybe something on podcasts or video journalism.

– Noiser Podcasts VWEX student

Amazing opportunities which have given me an incredible insight into the industry. The opportunity to have a masterclass from industry professionals was amazing and I wouldn't have been able to do this otherwise.

– Young Academies Group VWEX student

It was so informative and helpful. I had a lot of anxiety about the future and job prospects and this has eased my stress a huge amount!

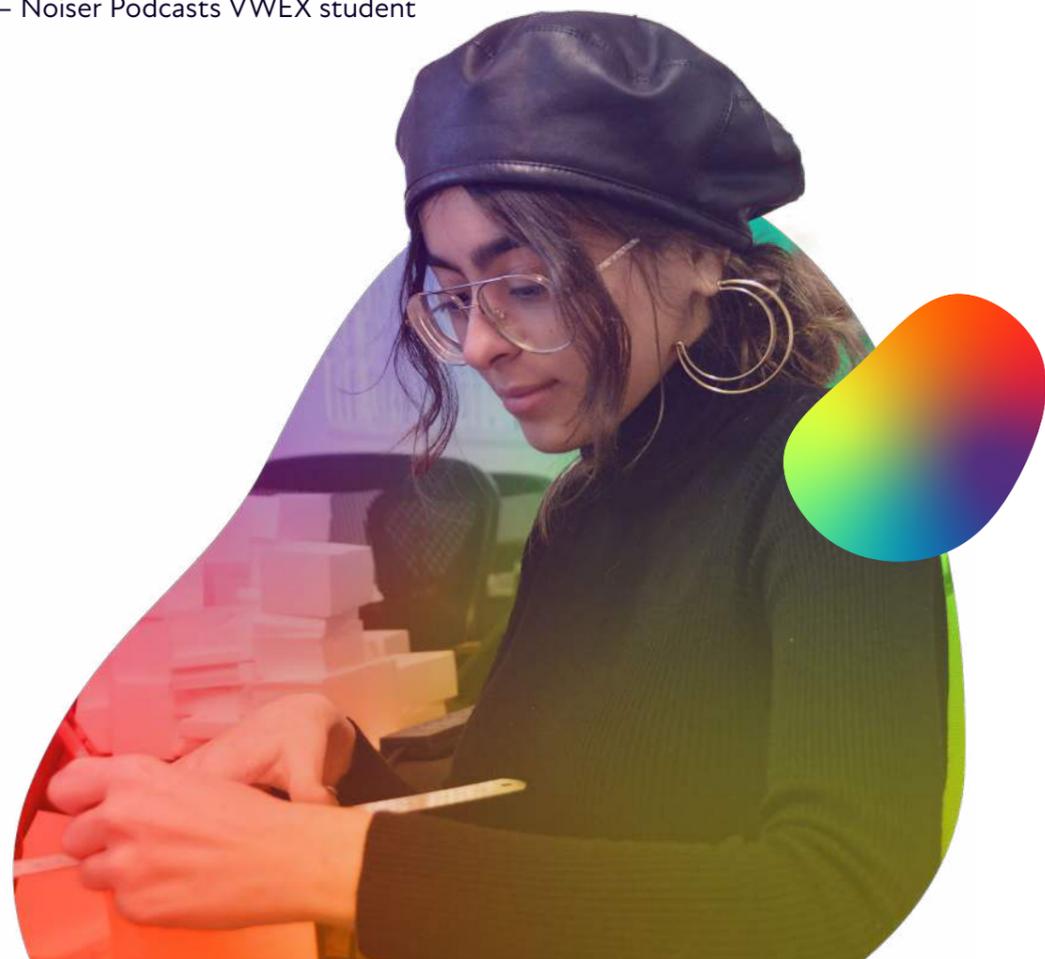
– Cicero VWEX student

It was an amazing experience. I would wish for it to be longer as it was one of the best educational things I've ever done!

– Morgan Sindall VWEX student

I really loved my time here and would do it all over again any day. The most fun I have had in something I love and as I learn more and more, I see myself hopefully having a career in this job.

– LM JV VWEX student



# INSPIRATION IN ACTION

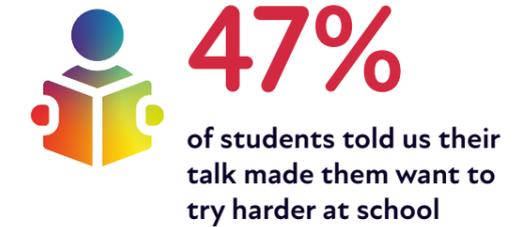
As part of our 1,300 plus talks we work with partners such as Penguin Talks, Into Film and bp to provide unique opportunities to young people on topics such as entering the film industry, challenging inequality and engineering as a career.

Our Virtual Talks (VTALKS) programme launched in March 2020 as a response to Covid-19 and enabled the charity to support young people at home and in school with access to leading and inspirational speakers. This series of virtual talks saw 80,000+ young people across all key stages and senior years engaging from across the UK.

Exploring the impact of guest speakers in schools, a 2019 report found that young people were particularly positive about talks having helped them understand that everyone had to overcome setbacks.



# STATS AND FIGURES



The Virtual Talks programme has been outstanding. We have been publicising it with our students in all key stages every week and the students have really benefitted from it.

– Teacher feedback from Virtual Talks

During the talk, I learned so many things from the world of work, to starting a business, organisation and teamwork, and to make plans for the future so that you are ready for your next goal.

– Student feedback from Virtual Talks

# OUR SPEAKERS



I have been excited to work with Speakers for Schools for some years now because our belief is that we should understand the whole community of young students and not just those that come through traditional university routes.

Since talking in schools I have been impressed by the bright and enthusiastic students I have met and spoken with, SFS has been a wonderful way for me to meet these students.

**Marco Bertozzi**

VP EMEA Sales, Spotify Europe



Sharing of our experiences directly with young people is crucial in helping them prepare for their future in the world of work.

I was honoured to join the Sfs speaker network this year and speak to 11-12 year olds about my life experiences and finding the 'magic' that inspires you to work hard and achieve your dreams.

**Yonca Dervisoglu**

CMO EMEA, Google



More than ever the Covid-19 crisis has demonstrated the need to ensure that school students have access to people to whom they can ask important and difficult questions and thereby enhance their learning.

At the Bank of England we are strong supporters of the work done by Speakers for Schools to further this vital task.

**Andrew Bailey**

Governor of the Bank of England



Speakers for Schools is a terrific organisation and I have loved being a part of it – both as a sometimes speaker and as a patron.

I have gained at least as much as I have given in my conversations with children from a range of schools and backgrounds. I would really encourage everyone to get involved – as a speaker or to offer work placements. These opportunities could be absolutely transformational in the life of a child.

**Sharon White**

Chairman, John Lewis Partnership and Patron, Speakers for Schools

# OUR YEAR IN ACTION: 2019/20 HIGHLIGHTS

## September 2019

- Sfs welcomes new CEO Jason Elsom.
- Adwoa Aboah (Supermodel, Activist and Founder, Gurls Talk) schools tour from London to Perth and Kinross.

## October 2019

- Release of report Insights and Inspiration: Evaluating the impact of guest speakers in schools in partnership with Educators and Employers.
- Speakers for Schools team grows by 50% in Oct/Nov and relocates to New Bridge Street office.

## November 2019

- Speakers for Schools Virtual Work Experience strategy is created and launches March 2020.
- Experience programme meets its annual target for 2019/20 after just two months.
- Speakers for School receives commitments from employers to deliver more work experience placements than prior year.
- Speakers for Schools commits to delivering Experience Portal 2.0 and Rebranding exercise.

## December 2019

- Speakers for Schools supports its 900,000th young person.

## January 2020

- Speakers for Schools commits to delivering Virtual Talks to support young people in communities normally underserved by speakers.

## February 2020

- Speakers for Schools commits to four campaigns a year focused around diversity, future of work, health and wellbeing and the environment.
- Students attend placements at British Airways, the National Trust, the English National Opera and many others during our busiest ever February half-term week.
- Speakers for Schools welcomes its 100th Employer to Experience Employer Network as RAPP joins the network.

## March 2020

- Launch of Speakers for Schools rebrand including website and all social channels.
- Speakers for Schools awarded the EYCA license for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- Speakers for Schools announces virtual programmes and mobilises employers and speakers to support young people in lockdown.
- Speakers for Schools network of eminent leaders reaches 1,500, as Tracey Barber, Global CMO from Havas Creative Group, joins the network.

## April 2020

- First Virtual Work Experience placement runs with Boundless Theatre. Students create an original podcast series which is now available on Spotify.
- First Virtual Webinar takes place with Tom Toumazis.
- Partnership launched with Penguin Talks.

## May 2020

- Experience Portal 2.0 launched, with new look and functionality.

## June 2020

- The Experience programme achieves its biggest week on record as it delivers more work experience in one week than in the entire of the 18/19 academic year, including major placements with Spotify and PwC.

## July 2020

- The Board of Trustees sets a target to reach one million young people by 2023.
- Virtual Webinar from Andrew Bailey, Governor of the Bank of England goes viral after announcement the BoE is considering launching own cryptocurrency.
- Experience Portal gains significant enhancement to allow integration with school management information systems, reducing educator workload and by making it a self-service work experience platform to manage all school work experience.
- Speakers for Schools chosen as a platform provider for Careers and Enterprise Company My Choices Broadcasts, working with Local Enterprise Partnerships to deliver virtual events to support pupil pathways and choices after school.

## August 2020

- Three year business plan approved by the Board of Trustees.
- The Experience Programme marks its most successful year to date, having grown its impact by 283% over the previous academic year.
- Welcomes 200th employer to Experience Employer Network as Tate St Ives joins the network.
- The Inspiration Programme marks its most impactful year to date, delivering 12% more talks to 164,457 young people.



# YOUTH CARD

**Speakers for Schools has had an exceptional year in 2020 marked by a 900% increase in online engagement from our communities eager to access our virtual talks and virtual work experience programmes, however, there is still much to be done...**

With a generation of young people sliding backwards due to disrupted education and economic recession amplified by Covid-19, there is an urgent need to fast-track young people past their economic, social and cultural barriers so they can live their best lives.

Speakers for Schools recently won the licence to represent the European Youth Card Association (EYCA) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The EYCA programme aims to remove these barriers that young people face through a curated discount

programme. Leveraging the EYCA programme's success, which is already in 40 countries and with 7.2 million cardholders, we intend on launching our own branded version we are calling the Youth Card in **February 2021** as a free mobile app packed with meaningful discounts and unique experiences for 11-25-year-olds to access.

The Youth Card will be powered by innovative technology to connect our communities of employers, ambassadors, schools and students to ensure immediate adoption and engagement tracking to ensure the right young people get the right opportunities.

Youth Card welcomes UK Youth and Young Enterprise as our strategic partners as we lead the programme together.



# WHAT IT DOES

**The Youth Card will feature both discounts and access (Experience) perks covering economic, social and cultural opportunities towards levelling the playing field for all young people.**

Part of the innovative leap we are making to ensure the scalability and reach of the Youth Card is to offer a partner portal for businesses, organisations, authorities and communities to self manage the perks they deploy into the app. Our approved partners will embrace the spirit and policies of the Youth Card to manage diverse and impactful perks to unlock the potential of youth.

To build our perk strategy, we surveyed more than 1,000 students across the UK to understand what discounts and experiences they not only wanted but needed as well.

With the likely consumer wants including Amazon Prime and Netflix, it was surprising that learning opportunities ranked a strong second in the what young people both want access too. This includes access to discounted books, tutors, studying apps, as well as work and volunteer experiences in high demand.

We have partnered with the Young Scot, which is Scotland's licence holder of the European Youth Card and official government youth card, currently supporting more than 700,000 young Scottish people, to ensure we deliver a seamless experience wherever they are in the UK.

We are aiming to add 300,000 young people across England, Wales and Northern Ireland to the Youth Card in the first 18 months post-launch and one million young people by 2024.

If you represent a business or organisation that could offer exciting discounts and experience-based opportunities for 11-25 year olds to improve their social mobility please contact us at [info@youthcard.org](mailto:info@youthcard.org)



# OUR SUPPORTERS



# OUR PARTNERS

We would like to thank our supporters and partners for making the work that we do possible.



# OUR THANKS



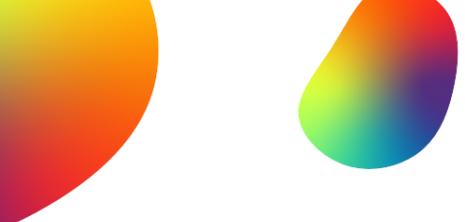
We are incredibly grateful to the following organisations that have kindly made donations and awarded grants, helping us to support young people. Some of our donors wish to remain anonymous, and while we are unable to publicly thank them, we are very thankful.

- The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
- The Ian Askew Charitable Trust
- Bank of England
- The Paul Bassham Charitable Trust
- The Beacon Lodge Charitable Trust
- William A. Cadbury Trust
- R. E. Chadwick Charitable Trust
- Chapman Charitable Trust
- The Chetwode Foundation
- Creative Industries Federation
- Didymus CIO
- The Englefield Charitable Trust
- Fowler Smith and Jones Trust
- Don Hanson Charitable Foundation
- The Henhurst Charitable Trust
- The Hochhauser Foundation
- Irving Memorial Trust
- The Joicey Trust
- The Linmardon Trust
- Henry Oldfield Trust
- The Eleanor Rathbone Trust
- The Sir James Roll Trust
- The Shanly Foundation
- The SMB Charitable Trust
- The Annie Tranmer Charitable Trust
- **The Law Family Charitable Foundation**

# LIST OF TRUSTEES



- Andrew Law**  
Chair Of The Board Of Trustees
- Robert Peston**  
Founder of Speakers for Schools,  
ITV Political Editor
- David Giampaolo**  
Chief Executive of Pi Capital
- Sakhila Mona Mirza**  
General Counsel at London Bullion Market Association
- Diana Osagie**  
Director of Courageous Leadership Consultancy
- Roland Rudd**  
Founding Partner at Finsbury

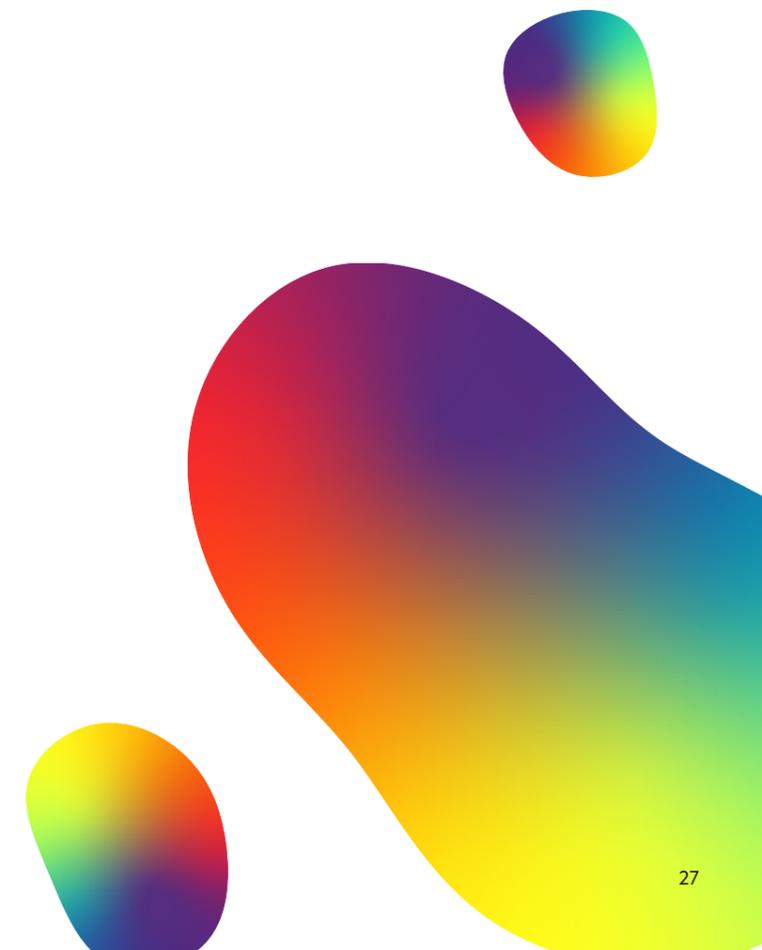


# NOTES



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**SPEAKERS**  
for schools