

# Young Grant Makers

## Resident Panel



Reflection & Learning Report  
2022-2023

islington  
giving



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# Introduction

2022 marked the fifth iteration of our Young Grant Makers (YGM) programme, with another group of young Islington Residents aged 17-24.

This was the first time since the first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020 that we were able to offer all the sessions face-to-face. The desire to return to face-to-face sessions was high and, as the YGMs programme aims to help participants learn workplace skills, we felt it was important to the participants' personal and professional development.

The Covid-19 pandemic caused many youth services and projects to shut, and in the wake of lockdowns many were still struggling to receive funding and deliver their services. This year the focus on sharing power with young people felt even more needed as the transition from Covid to these new times felt very uncertain.

## Key Facts

- Costs for participation were supported by BBC Children in Need, The National Lottery Community Fund and City Bridge Trust
- We had a taster session in September and subsequently recruited 12 young people for the YGMs Panel. Our work with the young people started in October 2022 and finished in March 2023. Eleven YGMs completed the end of the process, with one resigning four sessions from the end.
- We held 22 weekly sessions on a Tuesday evening over a five-month period. All sessions were held face-to-face. For interviews prior to funding decisions, shortlisted groups were given the option to come in person or online, with the majority opting to come in person, many bringing young people with them.
- The YGMs had full decision-making power over an initial delegated budget of £85,000, which increased to £120,000.
- The YGMs were able to fully fund seven organisations within Islington and were then left with some additional funding which they awarded as a donation toward core costs of two the two additional shortlisted organisations.



## The Call



The YGMs invited applications from projects that enable young people to have access to support, information, and guidance around the changes they go through – and to further enable them to feel confident, help them to become aware of their options and to help them bounce back from challenges.

They specified that projects should achieve one of the following:

- Develop young people's life skills to help them at transition points. This could include moving out of challenging situations, helping them to stay safe and providing options.
- Develop skills around their interests, explore options and make contacts so they can take the next steps in their careers.
- Help young people to gain awareness of the importance of positive mental health and wellbeing, and, in doing so, provide opportunities to try something new and to grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- To support young people and/or their parents to navigate systems to access support and advice (such as around community safety, crime, immigration, housing), particularly for families where English may not be their first language.



*We are a group of 12 Young People who live in Islington, who have come together this year to make decisions about how Islington Giving's funding for young people is spent. We want to fund projects that benefit young people in the best way possible with the limited funding available. We want to see change – for young people, their communities and the organisations that support them.*



# Awarded Grants



The YGMs awarded the following grants:

- **Brandon Centre - £20,000 – A counselling service based at local youth centre, PLATFORM.**
- **Middle Eastern Women’s Organisation (MEWSO) - £16,806 Advice for young women from minoritised backgrounds including support around Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)**
- **Fully Focused- £20,000 – A project teaching young people various film and media skills and creating content which is then showcased in local cinemas.**
- **Yes Outdoors - £4,500 – A project teaching young people to repair bikes for life skills, mobility and employability - all participants receive a bike for free.**
- **Big Ideas: Islington Happiness Day- £ 20,000 – Project for students in Islington Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) to create content around positive mental health, to share with other young people.**
- **Single Homeless project: Arthouse- £14,412 – Project for young women experiencing homelessness, to learn health and beauty skills for increased self-esteem, creativity and employability.**
- **Let Me Know: LMK £17,920 – Providing Healthy relationships and abuse prevention workshops in Islington to both young people directly and to upskill the teachers and youth leaders who work with them.**

As there was £6,312 remaining after awarding these grants, the YGMs had the option of either giving this funding to just one organisation, or splitting the remaining funding between the remaining two organisations in the shortlist. There was a discussion around impact, longevity of projects and a feeling of sadness at not being able to fully fund the two projects, however they decided to split the funding equally between the two remaining projects and they were:

- Eat Club- £3,156 – an organisation aiming to improve young people’s relationship with food, through cooking and eating together
- Jubba Youth Community Association – £3,156 – who support young people in North Islington through sports, mentoring, advice, and guidance.

## Aims & Objectives of the YGM programme



The YGM 2022-23 programme was facilitated by a new Islington Giving Programme Manager and Programme Lead. As an organisation we were keen to take forward the aspects of previous programmes which had enabled the success of past iterations. For this reason, we chose to carry forward the aims and objectives of previous years, as they resonated with what we discussed with this year’s cohort.

The aim for the YGM programme is to give young people in Islington the means to shape their local area, their community and their opportunities, and achieve influence within local and wider society. There are three principal objectives for Islington Giving’s YGM:







## 1. Personal & Professional Development

### for the young people involved.

The programme will offer training, support and experiences that are directly relevant for personal and work-related development, developing life and professional skills. It will help a group of young people to enjoy real-life work experience and will be able to describe their grant-making experiences on CVs and in job applications.

## 3. More informed grant-making that models

### giving young people power to make decisions

By bringing young people's insights and understanding of their local borough to Islington Giving's grant-making, and by giving young people the confidence, tools and power to allocate funding to local groups and activities, we aim for Islington Giving's work to be more alive to the community and the wider population of Islington's young people, leading to better projects for young people."

## 2. Skills development for the YGMs

These include specific skills around teamwork, people skills and emotional intelligence, communication in a group, confidence to make an argument, problems solving and analytical thinking. The programme also aims to encourage soft skills, including curiosity, motivation, time management and reliability.



# Young Grant Makers (step by step)

<p><b>July 2022</b></p>	<p><b>Recruiting the Young Grant Maker Leader</b></p> <p>Following an open recruitment round we were proud to recruit Alisha Pommels to the role of Young Grant Maker Leader, a young Londoner who was about to complete the London Funders 2030 programme. Two former young grant makers took part in the interviews.</p>
<p><b>August-September 2022</b></p>	<p><b>Recruiting Young Islington Residents</b></p> <p>Using a range of methods including presenting at the Council's Youth Locality meetings, joint working with local youth clubs, targeted ads on social media and joint working with other professionals in Islington, we advertised the opportunity. Applications were via a brief Google Form with a follow up phone call.</p>
<p><b>September 2022</b></p>	<p><b>Taster Session</b></p> <p>We held a taster session for the young people so they could come along and find out more. We discussed what the outline of the programme would be, expectations and asked the young people what they would change within Islington and what could be improved.</p>
<p><b>October 2021</b></p>	<p><b>Kick off</b></p> <p>Getting to know each other and our motivations for taking part in the programme. Creating the group agreement. Reflecting on the issues young people are facing within Islington. Reflecting on communication styles and what working as a participatory group will entail.</p>
<p><b>October-November 2022</b></p>	<p><b>Creating an open call for funding applications</b></p> <p>Designing an open call – setting our priorities and criteria for our funding</p>
<p><b>November 2022</b></p>	<p><b>Creating an open call for funding applications</b></p> <p>Meeting funders and having an open Q&amp;A session with them to discuss the sector</p>
<p><b>November-December 2022</b></p>	<p><b>Training</b></p> <p>Going through the application form and deciding whether they wanted to add or remove any questions. Learning how to read an application form and learning all about budgets. Thinking about our active listening skills and how to stick to the group agreement when preparing for the interviews with applicants and negotiating tricky decisions with each other. Considering our unconscious bias and reflecting on the process so far and our skills and strengths.</p>

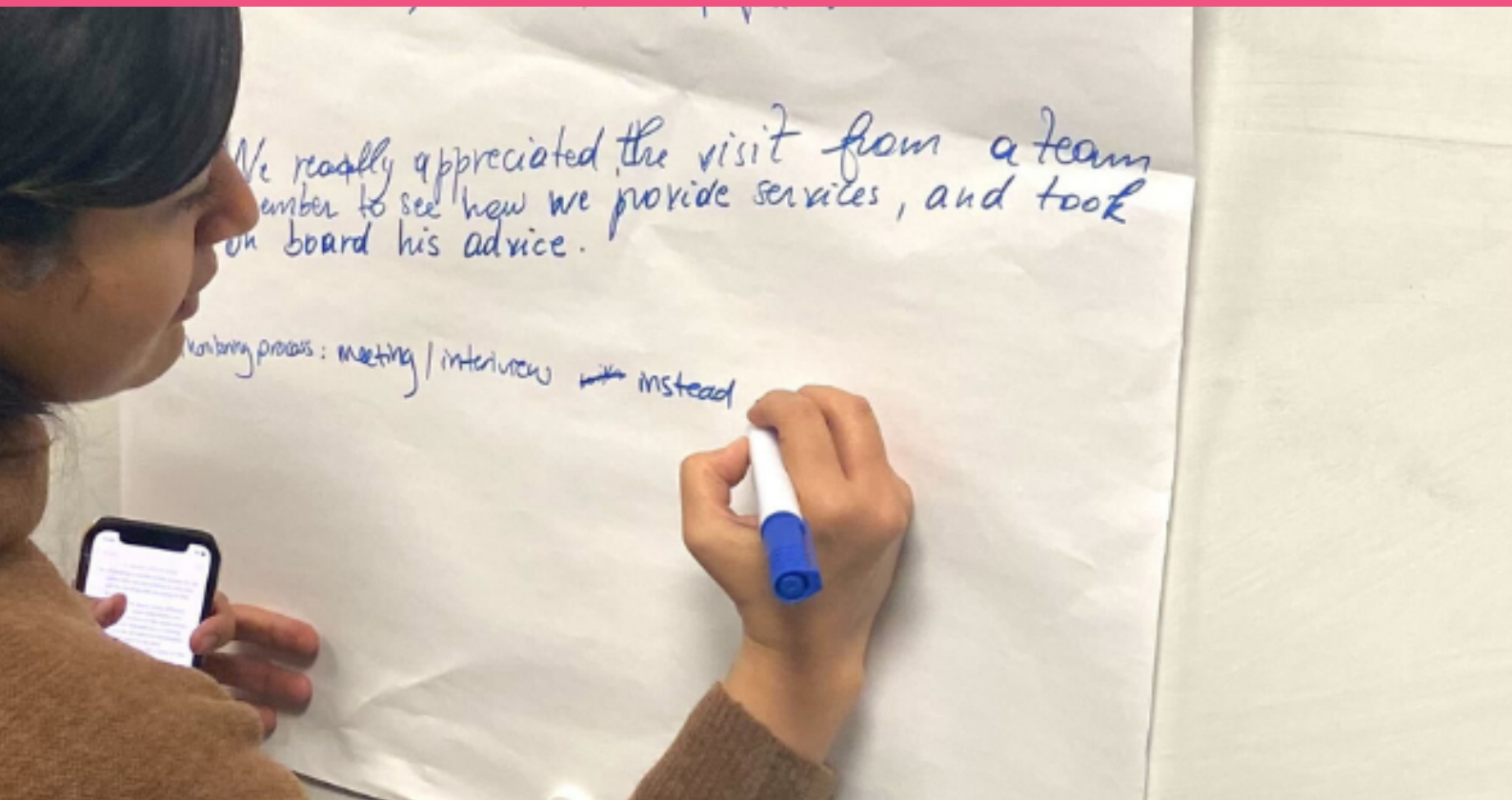


<p><b>January 2023</b></p>	<p><b>Shortlisting Applications</b>                  Together in groups of four the young people decided on which of the 37 applications they wanted to shortlist, which would then be shared with the whole group and discussed. This would then be whittled down to a further nine organisations who would then be invited to an interview.</p>
<p><b>February 2023</b></p>	<p><b>Meeting the shortlisted applicants</b>                  We met with the shortlisted applicants over Zoom and in person. Some of them brought along young people who had directly benefitted from their service to speak to the young people. These groups were then interviewed by the young people about their application and the project they are going to deliver.</p>
<p><b>February 2023</b></p>	<p><b>Final decisions</b>                  The young people individually ranked the organisations . These scores were then collated and tallied up with the rest of the groups' scores and the top 7 were then fully funded. As there was some left-over funding, it was agreed between the young people that this was split in half and offered to the remaining organisation in the form of unrestricted funding</p>
<p><b>March 2023</b></p>	<p><b>Wrap up, reflection and celebration</b>                  What have we achieved and what have we learnt?</p>



**I believe small changes can have a big impact for someone else.**





## The background

Islington Giving started the Young Grant Makers programme in 2018 because young people told us they wanted to be more involved with decision-making in their local area. By delegating a budget to the YGMs and supporting them with training and guidance as they reach their decisions, we hope for Islington Giving's work to be more alive to the community and the wider population of Islington's young people.

## Who were the 2022 YGMs?



The 2022 YGMs were between the ages of 17-24. We recruited a total of 12 young people: three young men and nine young women. 5 YGMs were under 18. Most of the participants were from Black and minoritised communities.

When the YGMs were recruited, they were all at various transition points in their lives, which was something they were all passionate about funding when it came to putting out the call. Some of them were transitioning from high school into college or sixth form, others from sixth form or college into university; others were working part-time, some were volunteering, and some were unemployed seeking options.



*“My name is Rebecca and I live around Archway – I’m 17 years old. I like crime shows, making art, writing, and learning new things. I joined Young Grant Makers to make a change to the way people can know where to find places to go to feel safe. This call is important to me as I want the people who truly need the projects we fund to be able to use them – I hope the funding will make a difference in somebody’s life.”*

*“I’m Izzy, I’m 18 years old and I’m from South Islington. I am interested in pyrotechnics, politics, and history. I joined YGMs to make a difference and play my part in the community – I want to increase opportunities for young people and make a difference to their lives and wellbeing”*

*“I’m Owen, I’m 17 years old from Canonbury. I am interested in Music, Gaming, Politics and Climate Change. I joined YGMs as I wanted to help my community and leave a mark on the place where I am from. The call represents a lot of things I wanted to have available to me a few years ago, and I hope it can really make an impact – it’s a step in the right direction for a fairer, happier Islington. I want the funding to help people through tough times”*

*“My name is Jarah, I’m 17 and I live in Holloway. I’m interested in creating social change and I love reading. I joined YGMs because I wanted to get Young People’s voices heard about issues they are passionate about. The call is important as it addresses issues that we as Young People feel are not adequately spoken about or helped with. I hope the funding helps make Islington more inclusive and recognises the positive impact Young People can have”*

*“I’m Mariama, I’m 17 and am from Holloway. I’m interested in social media. I joined YGMs because I wanted to do something new and make a change in my local area. I hope this funding helps create a visible change in Islington as the projects we are asking for tackle problems I care about.”*

# Recruitment Process

We decided this year that we didn't want to make a complex application form or CV process for the young people as we wanted, like the previous year, to reduce barriers to entry. We also wanted to remove any unconscious bias when it came to gender and race, and only asked for their name, age, and contact details in addition to these questions:

**What do you love about living in Islington?**

**Example responses:**

*"I really like the diversity throughout the borough and that there are different communities of people... it's just a very vibrant place!"*

*"There are so many different communities that come together as one"*

**What issues are young people facing in Islington?**

*"...from my own experience, young people with disabilities are having a hard time being able to fit in, or feel like the adult world doesn't care about their issues, making them feel lost on how to continue their life"*

*"Islington is the 8th most deprived area in the country... 40% of children in Islington live in poverty"*

**Why do you want to be part of a programme that gives young people the power to shape their local area?**

*"This programme gives us a form of responsibility that shows society why young people should have some power over decision making as, sooner or later, this will be our world for us to run"*

*"I believe small changes can have a big impact for someone else"*



**Being part of the seat of change**

**was truly empowering.**

Melissa, Young Grant Maker 2022-23



We hosted two outreach sessions at Mary's Youth Centre where we spoke to young people about the programme and we also offered a drop-in session if anyone needed help with the application or wanted further information. We had 18 applications for 12 spaces on the programme. Those who applied had heard about the opportunity from a range of sources including: Mental Health Team (Therapist), No Recourse to Public Funds Team, Mary's Youth Club, Depaul, Schools, Arsenal, LIFT, Social Media Ads. It was useful to have a range of young people who have contact with different organisations in Islington, some of whom had little knowledge of youth services in Islington and some of whom were already involved in a wide range of provision. Some young people who had prior involvement in influencing or activism and others who had not. Eleven of the 12 young people who were on the programme had lived in Islington since birth.

We ended up extending the date for applications, to allow for more applications to come through as we were short by one space by the end of the deadline. With the increased deadline we then received an extra six applications. We decided collectively to offer a provisional place to the 11 young people who had submitted applications prior to the extension and then interviewed the remaining 6 for the extra space. Many of the applications that came in after the original deadline were from young refugees as unfortunately their referring agency had not known about the opportunity during the initial recruitment phase.

These applicants were strongly encouraged to apply for the next round as we would like to ensure that these voices are also heard when considering priorities for young people in Islington.

We conducted a short telephone conversation with each applicant and the young people were then invited to come along to a 'taster session' where they learnt about what to expect during the programme, had an opportunity to meet the other potential young grant makers, and were also offered the opportunity to ask us any questions. As all 12 young people turned up, we offered the role to them – all 12 accepted.





# Remuneration

Being a YGM is a paid opportunity – the young people are given the option to be salaried employees of Islington Giving paid at London Living Wage. We also offer an alternative to receive remuneration via a Catalyst grant – two young people chose the latter option, receiving music lessons and driving lessons at £450 for the 22-week programme.

<b>Staff costs (Programme Manager and Leader salaries)</b>	<b>£25,000</b>
<b>YGM remuneration (Salary/Catalyst)</b>	<b>£6,815</b>
<b>Session Costs including Admin, Materials and Refreshments</b>	<b>£550</b>
<b>Travel Expenses</b>	<b>£386</b>
<b>Celebration Event</b>	<b>£350</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£33,101</b>



# Evaluation – how we met the objectives of the programme

In order to evaluate our success against the objectives of the programme, we have used:

- Qualitative data from a one-to-one form, completed by 10 of 12 YGMs after the end of the programme.
- Qualitative data and transcripts from our evaluation and reflection session in March 2023.

## Objective 1: Personal & Professional Development

In the YGM programme:

- A panel of young Islington residents have access to real decision-making power, over a delegated budget, initially of £85,000 which was increased to £120,000.
- With the support and facilitation of Islington Giving staff, the panel led a grant making cycle – from creating a call for project proposals, to shortlisting applications, interviewing groups and finally making funding decisions.
- The YGMs attended weekly sessions in-person, and at times carried out work between sessions, including reading application forms and ranking shortlisted groups.
- As well as creating a group agreement, the panel considered how they wanted to work together. We conducted a check-in and check-out each week and young people were expected to attend as many in-person sessions as possible.
- The group met with external professionals outside the Islington Giving team, including representatives from other funders and from local groups working with young people. The panel conducted interviews with shortlisted applicants, to ask questions about project proposals. By taking responsibility for introducing themselves and facilitating discussions with these external professionals, the YGMs built their confidence in themselves and increased learning and knowledge about projects within Islington.
- In addition to the experiential learning from undertaking the full grant-making process, we delivered specific training on creating digital communications content, personal communication styles, interviewing skills, teamwork, assessing application forms, and reading budgets.
- Each YGM can use Islington Giving as a reference for future job applications.



## Objective 2: Skills Development for the Young Grant Makers

The bullet points below are statements made by the 2022/23 YGMs.

### About Grantmaking:

- *I learnt about practical aspects of how the borough is governed, for example about wards.*
- *We learnt about disparity geographically in the borough such as less services in the North of the borough.*
- *I have an awareness of the complexity of grantmaking and the processes involved.*
- *We learnt about the emotional investment of the decision-making process.*
- *We learnt about defining criteria and priorities.*
- *We learnt to read applications and budgets*
- *We've been learning about unconscious bias and how to make decisions.*
- *I learnt about finances, different organisations, geographic disparity, professionalism, boundaries, connecting with people different from me, how to disagree during intense discussion.*

### About teamwork, people skills, group working:

- *Experience of a professional setting.*
- *Help with social anxiety and confidence.*
- *Work experience and getting paid.*
- *Working in a group – being respectful in how I express my opinion.*

### What have been the highlights of the programme for you?

- *Making friends*
- *Funding groups*
- *Having an impact*
- *Seeing the interviews – I learnt a lot by being on the other side.*
- *Believing in myself more*
- *Broadened my views*
- *Led by young people – the amount of control we have.*
- *I learnt personal skills– believing in myself – my opinion matters*
- *Doing something different*

### What do you hope to do next in your journey? Do you think this experience has helped you towards this ambition?

- *To work in the arts – this has helped me learn about applying for arts funding to run shows.*
- *Becoming a children and young person therapist – I learnt how to build relationships and connections*
- *I realised I'd like to work in grantmaking – I'm looking for other opportunities.*
- *Community based youth worker – this opportunity strengthened connections.*
- *I want to work in government/town planning – I learnt perspective, listening, negotiations.*
- *I'm trying to figure it out, but I want to help people.*



## Objective 3: More informed grant-making that models giving young people power to make decisions.

The nature of the programme is that young people are given power to make decisions which have a tangible impact in their area. On a longer-term basis, we hope the skills they mention above will put them in good stead in their future careers or education to have more opportunities to be in positions of leadership and responsibility, if they choose. The 2022/23 YGMs said the programme provided them with:

- An opportunity to help the community
- The chance to be in charge of something
- Representing those who are under-represented
- Seeing how non-profit organisations work



## The groups who applied

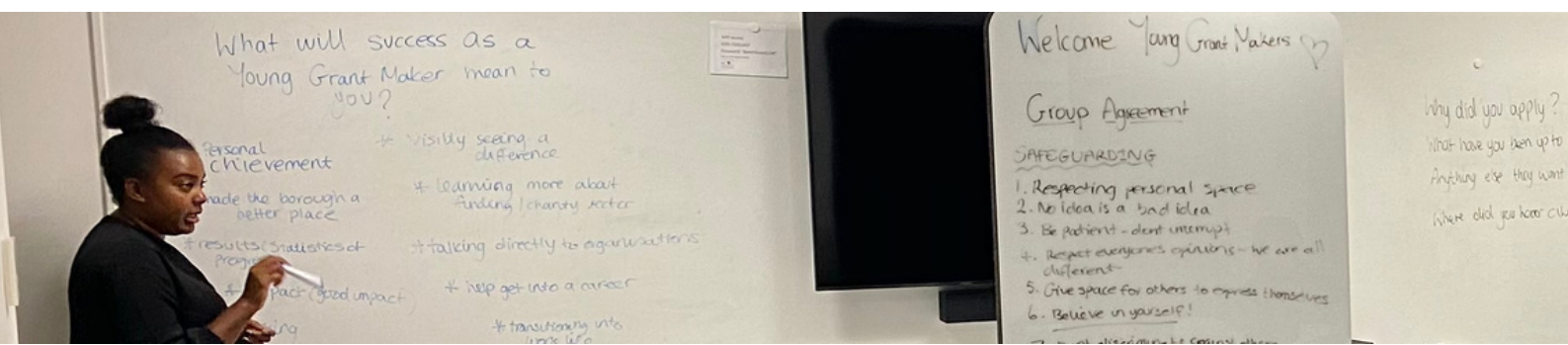
The Young Grant Makers received 37 funding applications, asking for a total of £632,543.00 compared to the previous year's request of £330,341.13.

Of the 9 shortlisted groups, 7 had previously applied for Islington Giving funding before.

The experience of groups seemed positive on the whole; especially the interview phase where youth programmes seemed very enthusiastic about the power being shared with young people. The energy during interviews was generally very high and we received some excellent feedback about the professionalism of the YGMs.

"Please thank your young grant makers for putting their trust in us and for such a great pitch experience. We look forward to hearing from you again this week." – Successful Applicant

"What an incredible opportunity for our young people in Islington – thank you for sharing the good news with us and please do pass on our sincere thanks to all the Young Grant Makers who we met too." – Successful Applicant





**My best moment was the first time  
I got confidence to stand up for what  
I believe in and speak out without  
feeling overpowered.**



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– Successful Applicant

# Key learnings and takeaways

## from the YGMs assessment process

There were several elements of the YGMs call and criteria that they kept returning to during the assessment and interview of funding applications.

### 1. An emphasis on long-term impact

When assessing applications and interviewing groups, the young people were passionate about whether the projects would have longer-term impact, how the organisations would know that the project was successful, and how organisations would ensure this outcome is met.

### 2. An emphasis on youth voice

The YGMs programme models youth-led decision making, and this year's group felt strongly that young people's voices and choices should shape the projects that they funded. They set a criterion that 'projects ensure that young people have a voice in the service: to us this means saying how and what kind of activities are run, feedback being sought and take forward, young people lifting-up their peers, participation at every level. In interviews, when the project was particularly set and structured, they asked organisations to tell them how they will promote the voice of young people they work with in the development and delivery of the project.





### 3. An emphasis on equality, accessibility and inclusivity

From the first session, the YGMs were concerned that not everyone within the borough has the same opportunities and means to access services. They wanted to make sure that projects were as accessible, equal, and inclusive as possible for all young people within Islington. There were discussions around what areas in Islington have gaps in services, and the call criteria highlighted that projects should be 'inclusive; meaning they should be open and welcoming to everyone regardless of their background, special educational needs, neurodiversity, ability, ethnicity, nationality, LGBTQIA+, level of English etc.' One of the questions at the interview stage was based on accessing equality of access and YGMs asked the organisations to 'tell them about a time when you showed flexibility in your delivery to enable a young person/group to access your service where they otherwise would not have been able to.'



**I learn about connecting with people  
different from me, how to disagree  
during intense discussion.**

Young Grant Maker 2022-23



## 4. An emphasis on transition points, mental health and wellbeing

The YGMs wanted to fund opportunities for young people outside of the ordinary. This included projects that did not just focus on the traditional methods of education after college or sixth form, but offered young people other options that would enable them to feel 'confident to know our options and make these transitions.

The YGMs highlighted in the introduction to their call that in addition to funding organisations supporting young people to develop life skills during these transition points, they also wanted to fund projects that put an emphasis on positive mental health and wellbeing and improving confidence and self-esteem. Since the Covid-19 pandemic the young people felt that this strand was more important than ever.

## 5. What would you tell a friend about being a Young Grant Maker?

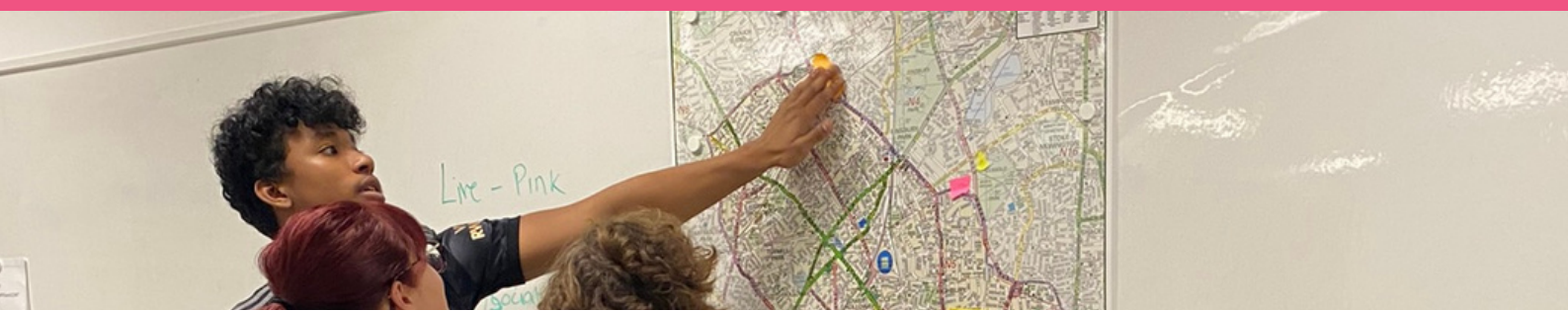
Part of our evaluation process this year included having one-to-ones with each Young Grant Maker. All ten of the YGMs who filled out the evaluation form would recommend the programme to a friend.

The YGMs were asked in the one-to-one feedback what they most enjoyed about the programme, these were the most common:

- Meeting new people
- Finding out about opportunities for young people within Islington
- Learning about grant making
- Discussing the applications from groups
- Interviewing organisations

The YGMs were also asked what they were most proud of about what they achieved, both as a team and individually, and some of the answers were as follows:

- As a team we were able to make an impact helping organisations
- Individually, I didn't give up
- Coming to a collective decision as a group even when opinions differed
- Being able to fund 9 organisations within Islington
- I gained more confidence in myself





All YGMs who had their one-to-one evaluations felt they had learnt more than they expected. They placed a particular emphasis on the opportunity to learn more about grant making in general, including finances, budgets and learning about other people's lived experience within the borough. They also noted that it provided an opportunity to understand what is currently being offered to the young people of Islington.

The young people were also asked whether they felt the programme was presented effectively and was space inclusive and welcoming and all 10 who had the one-to-one said yes.

- *"[the programme leader]'s amazing"*
- *"Can I work here please"*
- *"It was a really great time"*
- *"Thank you to the staff, I liked the way we were left to do what we want"*

## Successes and challenges from our experience of Participatory

### Grant Making with young people - reflections

#### Successes:

Sharing power with the young people. Giving them ownership of the process. Giving them the training and tools to be able to make difficult decisions. Giving our advice and guidance when it was requested. Meeting a varied audience of young people from across the borough. Learning about the issues they thought were important to them and those around them instead of us assuming we know what is best for young people based on our limited knowledge. Working for them. Working with them. Watching the process and seeing their personal development.

#### Challenges:

You can't make everyone happy. Everyone has different needs and expectations of the programme. Different communication styles and learning styles can make the decision-making process difficult. Ownership of the programme doesn't mean that we won't step in and give guidance when it feels needed. More time was needed to be able to give context around the funding environment, the grant making process and EDI and marginalised communities.



# Learnings & Takeaways for Islington Giving



Some of the key reflections and learnings to take away from this iteration of the YGM programme are as follows:

## 1. Age range

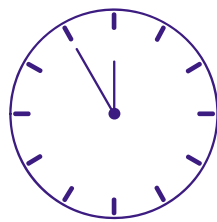
We as the facilitators sometimes felt that there was some tension between some of the younger members and some of the older members. Sometimes facilitating this power and knowledge struggle proved to be difficult. At times, some younger members deferred to older members where their opinions were judged to have more influence, perhaps due to having more experience and confidence in a professional/work setting or higher academic attainment.

On the other hand, in the 2022 YGM programme and previous iterations, older members of the group have reflected that at times the space felt frustrating to inhabit as it could feel like a youth club/school environment. We have had conversations about whether it is beneficial to have potentially 6 years between some of the YGMs and whether keeping the age gap smaller might be beneficial, whilst acknowledging the positives of a wide age group working together, representing a wider range of needs and perspectives.



## 2. Outreach to new services

When the call was first made public, there were 12 applications received, which was a decrease from the previous year. This led us to extending the time for applications to be sent back to us. We also spent time emailing organisations individually to try to encourage organisations to apply. Going forward, we have learnt that around the festive period, organisations will need more time due to holidays and time off; and having more time to spend on reaching out to organisations individually is also beneficial.



## 4. Time

We felt that as we went along this time around that we could have achieved more development for the YGMs with more time. As a result, we discussed the potential of a year-long programme with a session every week or every two weeks. This discussion was based on wanting to spend more time on sector knowledge, best practice, and grant-making itself, which would give the chance to gain additional skills and knowledge.

## 3. Continuity of Funding

There was a real emphasis on long term funding not just in this year's programme but also last year's programme. The difficulty we found was how do we encourage long term funding without enforcing our views and recommendations about the projects funded in the previous year alongside wanting the young people to completely decide for themselves? We had a lot of conversations with the young grant makers about this and purposely didn't tell them what organisations were funded last year as we wanted them to make these decisions with little outside influence and this meant that some organisations from last year were re-funded, some were not, and some new ones unknown to Islington Giving were funded for the first time.

However, from previous programmes, we also know that running the programme over two school years can be challenging, as the situation for many young people changes over summer – from school to 6th form, or to university, for example – which can make continued participation difficult. We are also keen to end the programme prior to the Summer Term at school, where many of the YGMs are focusing on exams.



**I realised I'd like to work in grantmaking –  
I'm looking for other opportunities.**



## 5. More community visits, co-production with the young people and homework for the young people

With more time, we would have spent more sessions visiting organisations within Islington – both those that previously received funding from Islington Giving, as well as visiting new organisations who have not applied for funding from us. We would have liked to have spent more time co-producing the session plans with the young people, going through budgets, and re-designing the application form, as the amount of time spent on these items in the programme currently is limited. It would have also been beneficial to have spent some time on developing the young people's research skills.

## 6. Offering anonymous feedback and regular questionnaires throughout the programme

While we offered regular session check-ins, and individual check-ins every Monday to the YGMs, we never had a formal feedback session during the process or gave the young people questionnaires to understand how they were finding the programme while it was running. Going forward we know that this is incredibly important. We were also given feedback that the chance to offer anonymous feedback would have been beneficial, which we will take on board for future iterations of the programme.

“

**As a team we were able to make an impact helping organisations.**





## 7. Managing expectations or limiting

### administrative burden on applications

It was positive that the call received such a wide reach and was of interest to such a large number of groups. However, we are aware of the pressure that VCS (Voluntary & Community Sector) groups are under and are keen to not add to that burden. In future rounds it would be of value to put out a more specific call to limit the number of groups who apply and do not get funding. In addition, and following feedback from groups about the application process in general (not just for Young Grant Makers' Funds) it may be worth exploring using a shorter process, such as expression of interest or video applications.

## 8. Recruitment

We found we needed to extend the recruitment deadline this time around. This was in part due to seeking to recruit during the summer holidays, when young people have less access to professionals who may be able to promote the opportunity as well as being more likely to be away or taking a break from work after exams. In future it would be more advisable to start recruitment in early September to coincide with the start of term for those in education.



## 9. More support for onward

### progression of YGMs

Many of the YGMs this year had a clear plan for their continued development after YGMs (such as continued studies into university or onto masters' courses) but there were a number for whom this progression was not as clear. We briefly spent some time reflecting on the skills gained and articulating these in preparation for CVs and interviews, but we felt more could be done. In future rounds it would be good to research onward opportunities for those keen to continue in philanthropy, in addition to creating other work opportunities within Islington Giving (see below for future YGM leaders). (Islington Giving will be launching a project to support all our resident grant makers towards the end of 2023, with the aim of helping those interested in to other, similar roles.)

## 10. Facilitation challenges

The nature of facilitating the space can be difficult at times. There is potential for challenging topics arising through conflict between group members' lived experience alongside others' biases. This in addition, for some people this was their first experience of working in an office space. There were a range of characters with some who were more confident to share, and others who were quieter and required more encouragement to do so. This was perceived on occasion to be unfair attention focused on the quieter members. As programme leaders we acknowledge that there is certainly room for improvement in how we facilitated the space at times. Suggestions for improvement might include smaller group work, offering alternative options for sharing ideas and opinions such as writing things down, polls and training all members of the group to gain confidence in speaking publicly.

## What the YGMs say:

### What do you think Islington Giving could do better?



- *Find more money to give out*
- *Meet with previous young grant makers*
- *Help with future career plans, making connections with employers.*
- *Networking opportunities*
- *Improve de-escalating situations when people speak over each other*
- *Check in every 2 weeks for feedback*
- *Decision shouldn't be based on the loudest voice*
- *How to get more involved in Islington Giving or other grantmaking orgs*
- *Chance to fund more under-represented groups in Islington*
- *Follow up process, monitoring, impact of funding*

### Future plans for Programme Leader role:

After the end of this round of YGMs in May 2023 we had a follow up session with 4 past YGMs (3 from 2022 and 1 from 2021) about the possibility of creating further work experience opportunities within Islington Giving in addition to enhancing the opportunities for young residents to progress within the grantmaking world. During this consultation, the YGMs agreed they would prefer for the Programme Leader role to be separated into 2 posts ringfenced for any previous YGMs to provide multiple alternative opportunities each year to provide each other with peer support in the roles.

These roles will be advertised in June 2023, with a start date for initial training in August 2023.

Subject to committee approval, the plan will be to recruit new YGMs in September 2023 for the new programme to run from October 2023 – March 2024.



We are committed to delegating decision-making power to young people in Islington. To be kept updated on future opportunities please follow @isgiv on Instagram and Twitter and sign up to our newsletter.

Thanks to:

- BBC Children in Need, City Bridge Trust, Islington Giving and National Lottery Community Fund for making this programme possible.
- Children In Need, London Funders, Barking and Dagenham Giving, National Lottery Community Fund and Blgrave Trust who came along and shared their experiences of the grantmaking world with the Young Grant Makers.
- Global Generation and Prospex for hosting us for two of our sessions and for speaking to the Young Grant Makers about their experience as groups, the impact of grants and what they wished funders know
- Kezia and Freya, our amazing previous YGMs who supported us with recruitment and induction of this year's programme leader and YGMs.
- Alisha Pomells for her dedication, commitment, sunshine and nurturing nature (not to mention expert parking skills). It has been a joy having you leading the programme this year!
- Victor Momodu, for talking about budgets and accounts. Someone has to.
- Laura Guy, who as a new Islington Giving Programme Manager, took on the management of the YGM programme. Her care for every participant and her enthusiasm for their work was outstanding.
- And, of course, to our wonderful Young Grant Makers. Your involvement in the programme has made a difference to us and you have made a difference to Islington. You are amazing.

Please feel free to contact [laura.guy@cripplegate.org.uk](mailto:laura.guy@cripplegate.org.uk) for any further information

\*Please note: the quotes in this evaluation have been taken from evaluation interviews, in-session reflections from the Young Grant Makers and transcripts of reflection sessions.





**This programme gives us a form of responsibility that shows society why young people should have some impact in decision making, as sooner or later, this will be our world for us to run.**

For further information please visit:  
[www.islingtongiving.org.uk](http://www.islingtongiving.org.uk)

13 Elliot's Place  
Islington  
London  
N1 8HX

  @isgiv

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Islington Giving is a restricted fund of Cripplegate Foundation, registered charity number 207499

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