



POWER OF YOUTH CHARTER



It's what we do

The Co-op believes that all children and young people should be empowered to make a positive difference on the issues that affect their lives, their communities and broader society. We therefore adopt this Charter, committing to growing the power of youth in the following areas:

WE WILL...

EXAMPLES:

WHAT WILL YOUR ORGANISATION DO?



PRIORITISE SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE SOCIAL ACTION

We will create opportunities that empower more young people, particularly from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds, to be positive changemakers

- Incorporate youth social action into your organisational strategy
- Focus on creating more youth social action opportunities through your funding programmes
- Incorporate youth social action into our training or curriculum programmes

- Youth social action is at the core of our Co-op Community strategy, with young people taking action in their communities to provide fair access to food, mental wellbeing support and opportunities.
- We commit to funding young people from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds
- We will continue to invest in youth social action partnerships for example the **PAC – Peer Action Collective** and the growth of the **#iwill Movement** in Scotland and Northern Ireland



OPEN UP OUR DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES

We will offer opportunities for young people, particularly from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds, to participate in decision-making, leading and shaping both the activities they are involved in and wider organisational decisions

- Recruit young trustees under 25
- Set-up a youth advisory group or shadow youth board
- Involve young people in grant-making or recruitment panels

- Our **Co-op Young Members' Group** (CYMG) are a decision-making power within our Co-op. They represent young voices on our National Member Council, Community Partnerships Fund Panel and through Co-op Foundation, and have links with key decision makers within our Exec.
- Our **Community Partnerships Fund** panel includes 2 members of our CYMG
- Our young colleagues run the **Strive Network** which aims to ensure young colleague voices are represented in decision making and young colleagues have fair access to opportunities.

ORK COLLABORATIVELY WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

We will work collaboratively with other organisations to create more high-quality opportunities, reach young people from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds to take part, share learning and achieve shared goals

- Work with schools, colleges and youth groups to reach more young people
- Work with funding organisations to create more opportunities
- Create resources that support others to empower young people

- Our **Co-op Academy Trust Schools** enable us to reach c17,000 young people through 30 schools. We partner closely with them to deliver 'Co-op Young Leaders' which gives students the opportunity to make a difference for the school and their community
- We work collaboratively with other funders to amplify our impact
- We employ c1,000 **Member Pioneers** – community connectors who encourage collaboration across local community causes, Co-op business and other community groups. 25% of Member Pioneers are under 25.

VIDENCE THE BENEFITS OF YOUTH SOCIAL ACTION

We will capture and share insights, stories and data on how we are working with young people, and the positive impact this has on them, their communities and our organisation

- Report your progress annually through the Power of Youth Index
- Incorporate evidence into your annual reviews and evaluation reports
- Focus gathering evidence on community impact

- A high level of insight and evidence is built into our funding agreements with partners delivering youth social action
- Our **Community Wellbeing Index** gives us an insight into the issues impacting our communities and is used to focus the locations of our work. It is refreshed annually

ECOGNISE AND CELEBRATE YOUNG PEOPLE'S IMPACT

We will use our communication channels to advocate for and celebrate young people as positive and powerful changemakers.

- Create opportunities for young people to takeover your communication channels
- Give young people a platform at your meetings and events
- Give young people awards, eg. 'Young Volunteer of the Year'

- We work with young people to co-design our communications. For example the **PAC – Peer Action Collective** brand was co-designed by Co-op designers and young people.
- We will continue to hold the annual **Co-op Gamechangers awards** to celebrate young people's impact
- We will continue to use our reach as a business to amplify young voices