

YOUTH POWER FUND

Application Guidelines



Introduction

The Blgrave Trust has partnered with the Foyer Federation to offer local Foyers the opportunity to access pots of funding to support innovation and creativity around youth leadership and empowerment. We want to champion new thinking, long-term change and youth-led approaches that challenge existing power structures and provide a catalyst for young people to lead in their local community and beyond.

We are inviting services within our network to apply for up to £15,000 of funding per year for up to three years to invest, explore and deliver youth leadership and power-sharing initiatives.

In the first year, we expect to fund four projects for the full amount (this is called the Accelerator stream) and three projects for £5,000 for 12 months (called the Spark stream).* In year two, we expect to select one of these Spark projects to fund for a further two years at £15,000 per year.

For both Spark and Accelerator projects, at least 30% of your budget must be directly invested in young people (ie not in staffing, resources or other costs).

* The Foyer Federation reserves the right to change this general structure based on the quality of the applications and the needs and aspirations presented through the process.

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1. What inspired us



Youth-led movements have a unique energy and power that can create lasting positive change.

However, young people living in supported accommodation face a number of additional, unique barriers that can hinder their involvement in leading change and being heard, including:

- The transitory nature of young people's lives during their time in the Foyer
- The hierarchies and power frameworks that exist in supported housing, which are often not conducive to youth leadership and sharing power with young people
- A lack of confidence and self belief that can come from having experienced disempowerment through statutory provision, deficit-based systems and traumatic home lives.

As a result of these barriers, and despite best intentions, youth leadership and involvement in supported housing projects can often fall into becoming tokenistic, inconsistent and short term resulting in resident rep-style groups that can limit involvement to consultation rather than genuine power sharing and leadership.

Less than 5%

of young people in Foyers are involved in including change at a national or community level

Less than 25%

of young people in Foyers are confident and ready to engage in creating change

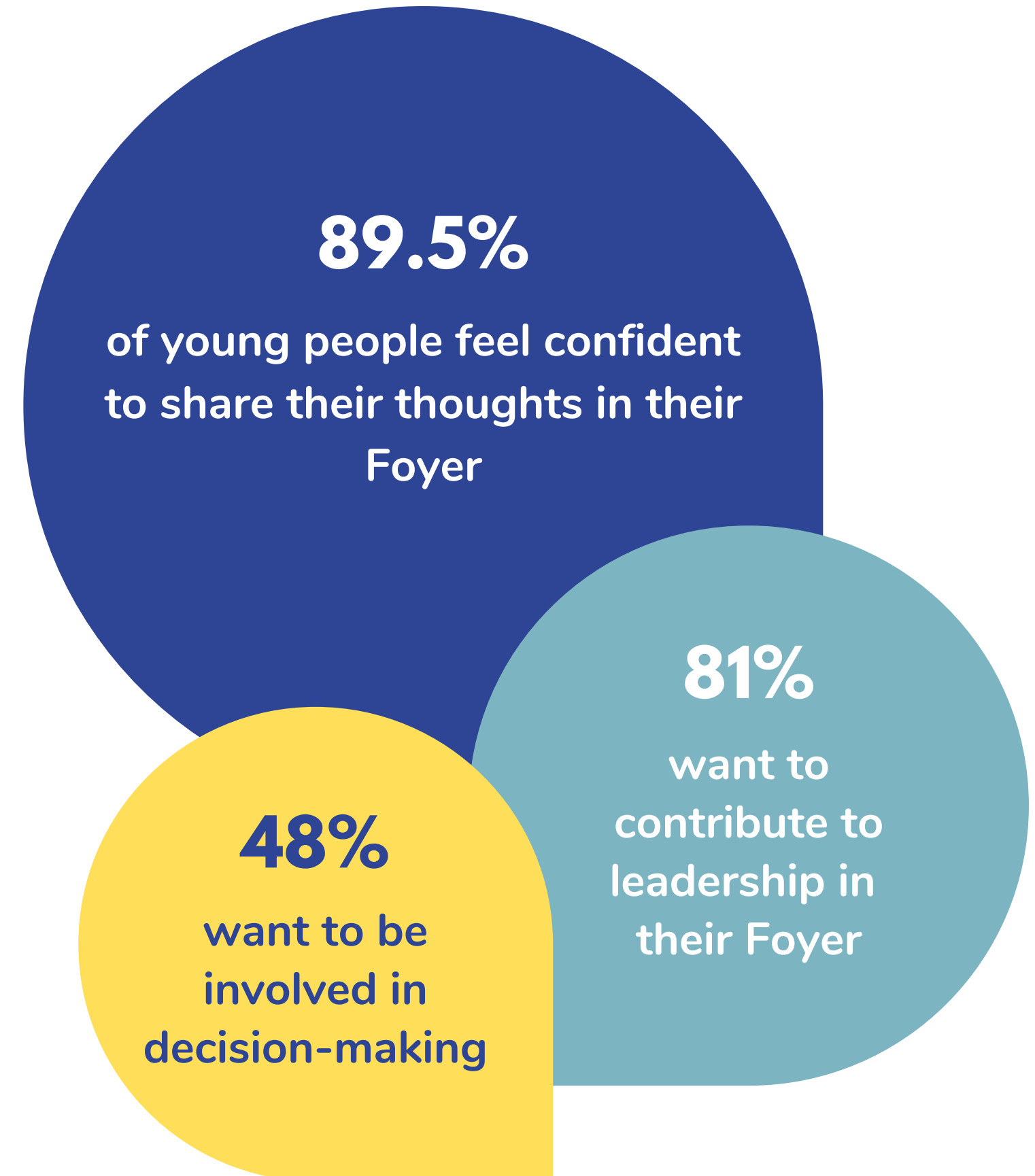
Statistics and information

Staff identified the following barriers to youth leadership:

- “young people are unaware just how powerful their voice is”
- “lack of opportunity to initiate organisational change”
- “opportunities are not tailored to their age”,
- “lack of trust in adults and their decision-making systems”
- “Institutional barriers exist that pay lip service to resident engagement and inclusion but don't adapt their own ways of working”

Although young people are confident to have their voice heard and want to contribute to leadership and decision-making in their local services, the systems are not always in place to facilitate taking action on those ideas. Foyers are actively trying to listen to young people, but the follow-up actions, decision-making and timelines are then set by staff without young people's involvement.

By providing this funding, we aim to create space and time for services to innovate, try new approaches, and implement sustainable youth leadership systems, programmes and initiatives – both within the Foyer and reaching out into the wider community.



2. What we're looking for



Aims of the fund

We want to fund new thinking and innovation that embeds sustainable youth leadership and shifts the balance of power in favour of young people. We are looking to fund proposals for youth-led approaches that challenge existing power structures, lead to long-term, sustainable, systemic change, and act as a catalyst for young people to lead in the local community and beyond.

A. Projects that challenge the status quo and embrace innovation

We will fund projects that represent new thinking and demonstrate creativity in approach. We are looking for unconventional angles, brave challenges and experimental ideas that are so crazy they just might work.

We will not fund existing programmes or projects, or fund the fees for a third party to deliver an existing model. However, we will consider proposals that significantly expand existing work that has been proven to meet the aims of the fund.

B. Projects that meaningfully share power with young people

We worked with a group of young people who have lived in Foyers to define the following core elements of experiencing meaningful power and leadership:

- Young people have real responsibility and a sense of ownership for the project, or a fundamental element of the project.
- Young people are passionately listened to by their peers, Foyer staff and other collaborators, and are communicated with in a clear, timely manner.
- Young people are demonstrably trusted by their peers, Foyer staff and other collaborators.
- Young people are able to make changes or take important decisions affecting the project.
- Young people feel confident to share their ideas and comfortable taking positive risks.
- Young people are contributing to something that has a positive impact on other people.

We will fund projects that clearly demonstrate how they meet this definition and show a commitment to this throughout the funding period.

C. Projects that grow young people's power and leadership within and beyond the Foyer

We define four key areas of power, each of which builds on the previous area:

- **Personal power** – having confidence, believing you are a person who can affect change, experiencing having power in your own life, reflecting on and growing leadership skills.
- **Power within the Foyer** – influencing decisions about the service, representing the service or young people within it, taking a leadership role in relation to the Foyer.
- **Power within the community** – being an active and valued member of a community, influencing decisions made within a community, speaking on behalf of a community.
- **Power on a national scale** – representing your own views on a national scale, representing a community on a national scale, influencing national decisions.

By the end of the three-year funded period, we expect Accelerator projects to have impact in at least the third layer (power within the community), having built personal power and power within the Foyer.

We understand that every service is at a different stage in its youth leadership journey, and will consider your service's start and end point when making decisions. Successful proposals will significantly shift power in favour of young people in the context of that service.

D. Projects that are founded on the principles of diversity and inclusion

All young people should have access to opportunities that develop their confidence and leadership skills, and that give them a say in the decisions that affect them. We want to fund projects that are consciously inclusive.

We are looking for projects that are actively designed from the outset to be accessible and attractive to young people across the spectrum of gender, sexuality, cultural background, race, disability, religion and belief. People should also not be excluded on the basis of their length of time already spent in the Foyer, confidence levels, experience levels, caring responsibilities, or other obligations they have. We will take particular note of projects that go out of their way to include underrepresented young people.

E. Projects that are courageously ambitious, while being mindfully realistic

This fund is designed to feed creativity. We encourage blue-sky thinking, daydream ideas and the spirit of adventure. What would you do if there were no restrictions? If money was no object? If you had all the time in the world? Think laterally, think big, and think bold!

We also want to fund those ideas that are most likely to have a positive, lasting impact. We are looking for proposals that demonstrate the strength of the concept through research, statistics and a robust development process. Make sure to include smaller milestones and targets on your journey to the bigger goal.

3. Eligibility



You can apply on behalf of your service if the service is based in England (this is due to the restrictions of our funder) and meets the following criteria:

- Your service is a current member of the Foyer Federation and has been an active member for at least the most recent 12 months. Should your service leave our membership during the funded period, we reserve the right to withdraw funding.
- The main beneficiaries of your proposal must be young people aged 16-25 who live within your Foyer service.
- The request for funding from the Youth Power Fund must be no more than £15,000 per year for three years. If you intend to apply for match funding or top-up funding from another source, please outline this in your application.

We also require the following to be in place and accounted for:

- Your service must have approval from your parent organisation (for housing associations) or senior leader (for charities) to receive the funding from us.
- A senior member of staff must be enthusiastically on board with the project. To demonstrate this, we will ask that your Head of Service (or equivalent) is involved in the application process and at least one learning cohort per year of funding.
- You must have a member of staff allocated to manage, monitor and evaluate the project over the lifetime of the funding. Should this person leave, a replacement must be named to the Foyer Federation fund manager prior to the previous lead leaving and a full handover of the project completed.
- At least 30% of your budget must be directly invested in young people.

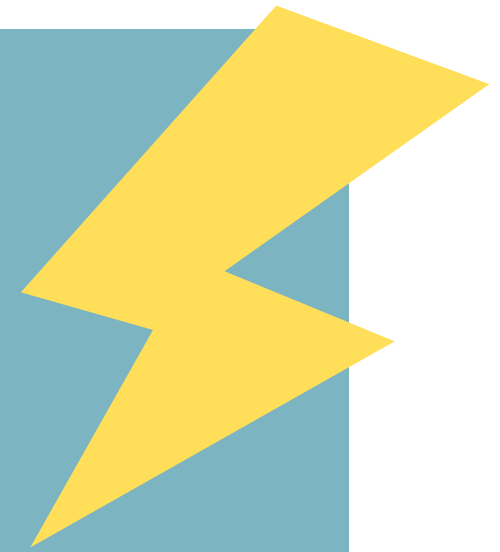
We can fund:

- Direct costs associated with delivering activities in line with the project stated in your proposal. This may include project staff, materials, equipment, room hire, volunteer expenses and project evaluations.
- Programme development. This may include planning, testing new ways of working, training and development, tech or IT needed to achieve outcomes, and increasing capacity to support collaboration and partnership working.

We do not fund:

- Core/fixed costs to support the day-to-day running of your organisation.
- Purchasing or refurbishing land or buildings.
- Activities that make profits for private gain.
- Religious activities.
- Activities that replace government funding.
- Activities that benefit individuals only.
- Overtly political or lobbying activities.
- Things you've spent money on in the past and are looking to claim for now
- Loan repayments
- The topping up of organisation reserves.

4. What to expect from the Youth Power Fund



The Youth Power Fund champions new approaches in Foyers, and it is also a new experience for the Foyer Federation and our funder, the Blgrave Trust. We will work closely with all funded projects to share knowledge and experience, and to offer support when and where it is needed. There are three key principles we will stick to when delivering this programme, detailed below.

We will share learnings with the rest of our network so each service can try what works for them. We will also share beyond our network to demonstrate the power of Advantaged Thinking approaches and the power, talent and potential of young people.

a. We work in partnership with young people

We will work collaboratively with a team of Young Consultants for the duration of the Fund to ensure their views and experiences are central to each element of its running. This guidance and the application questions were co-created with young people, and young people will be involved in assessing applications, reviewing reports, and delivering the learning cohort. They will be asked to share insights and recommendations to bolster the work of each funded project and offer you a young person's viewpoint from outside your service.

b. We support your continued learning and development

As part of the funding agreement, each funded service will be required to participate in a learning cohort. This will include a mixture of in-person and online workshops, peer learning, and more informal one-to-one support. Topics, formats and any additional elements of this learning programme will be influenced by your feedback and evolving needs as the Fund progresses.

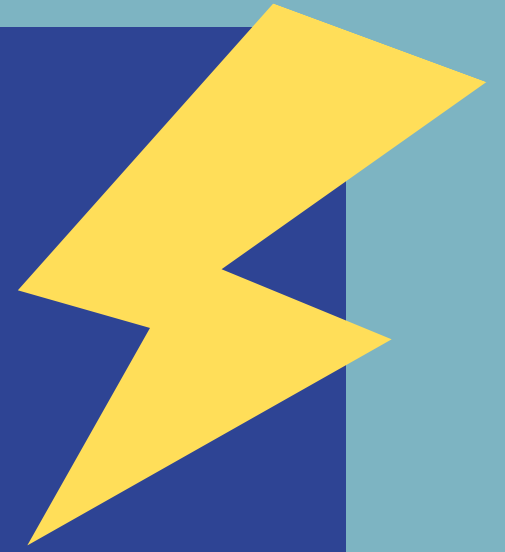
c. We track progress and share learning

For each year of funding, Foyers will be required to submit a mid-term and end-of-year report. These will capture progress against headline goals and include a mixture of quantitative and qualitative information. We will share a template for you to use for these.

We will also capture reflections, experiences, challenges and solutions shared during the learning cohort meetings as these may highlight important and interesting elements not touched on in the formal reports.

We will also ask young people from each service to share their experiences through storytelling each year, in whatever format best suits them. These personal reflections and narratives are a powerful way to illustrate the impact your work has on young people as individuals and leaders.

5. Spark and Accelerator funding streams



In designing this fund, we wanted to create the conditions for creativity and innovation to thrive. We are approaching this in two ways:

A. Accelerator. We will award funding up to £15,000 per year for three years to four Foyers. This is based on learning from the Listening Fund that stable investment over a longer period gives projects the space, time and resources to take risks, try things they might not otherwise be able to, and build on what they learn.

B. Spark. In year one, we will award funding of £5,000 for one year to three Foyers. This is to enable us to invest in ideas from services with a creative ‘spark’ that needs a bit more experimentation or trialling. In year two, we will select one or two of these projects for funding for two further years at either £15,000 or £7,500.

You may choose to apply for either Spark or Accelerator funding. If you apply for Accelerator funding and are unsuccessful, we will consider your project for Spark funding unless you opt out on the application form.

Timeframes for Y1

January 2022: 31st January – applications close

February 2022: 21st February – decisions announced

March / April 2022: visits to funded services
Y1 payment made to Foyers

October 2022: mid-term report from Foyers due

March 2023: early in the month – end-of-year report from Foyers due
end of the month – renewal decisions made and Y2 payments made to Foyers

6. How to apply



You can choose to apply using our written application form, or by video. Both methods will be asked to respond to the same questions, so you can choose whichever method suits you, your young people and your project best.

If you are planning to use video, please ensure you have gained consent from the participants first. This should be done using a written consent form. We can share a template with you if you require.

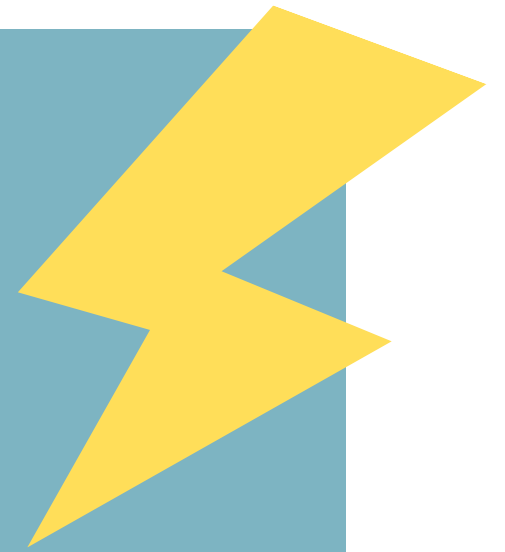
Please get in touch if neither of these options is possible for you. We're happy to discuss other ways for you to apply.

[Click here to download the application form from our website](#)

To apply, please return a completed copy of the application form, video and other attachments to kate@foyer.net by 9am on Monday 31 January.

You can also click here to download a sample copy of our Terms and Conditions. All grant funding will be subject to our Terms and Conditions, which will be shared with services awarded funding to sign.

7. Helpful resources



[Ladder of participation](#) – blog and model

[The public engagement continuum](#) – blog and model

[12 Habits of Successful Change-Makers](#) – guide

[Social change grid](#) – tool

[Power sharing discussion guide](#) – tool

[Unleashing young people's social power](#) – blog

[Youth-led change in the UK: understanding the landscape and possibilities](#) – report

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