



THE YOUNG FOUNDATION

Invitation to partner: Digital Activism (2011-2013)

The Young Foundation is seeking partners for its **Digital Activism** programme, which launched in March 2011. This is a two year programme funded through the Big Lottery's People Powered Change activities.

Our Aim

Our aim for the Digital Activism strand of work is to support communities across the country to use digital technology to build community activism.

We believe that digital technologies, ranging from social media like Facebook and Twitter through to smart phones and digital video, have the potential to galvanise local communities to take action on the issues that matter to them.

This could be through community campaigning, lobbying local institutions or business to act, or by encouraging local people to change their own attitudes or behaviours in order to improve local quality of life.

By practically supporting six communities across England, we hope to understand more about the role that technology can play in connecting and mobilising local communities to act, and to share good practice and lessons with other communities across the country.

What we will offer

The Young Foundation has developed a good understanding of how digital technologies like social media can be used to support local community activity. We now want to build on our experience to see how it can help communities to campaign and lobby for positive change in their areas.

We will work with communities over a period of two years to support their efforts to increase local activism through the use of digital technology. **This not a grant giving programme.** Instead, this support will include:

- Supporting residents to develop and implement a campaign **strategy or action plan** for change
- **Training** on how to make the best use of digital technology, including how to use popular social media platforms for campaigning, as well as specific digital tools that may meet a particular local need e.g. text messaging services, local fundraising platforms.
- Support residents to **map and involve** marginalised groups within their community

- Work with each community to measure the **impact** of local activism
- Support communities to transform their campaigns into **long term** power and influence

We recognise that digital technology will only be one part of the solution, so our support to communities will be broad, drawing upon our all of our experiences of working with communities to support empowerment over the past five years.

Who we want to work with

We would like to work with community groups that want to campaign or lobby for positive change in their areas and see digital technology as an important tool for doing it.

Community groups could be geographically based – i.e. an estate or neighbourhood group, or they could be groups with a common interest such as religion, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, etc.

The Young Foundation aims to work in areas where people find it difficult to exert power and influence over the decisions that affect their lives. We believe that these are often areas of high deprivation, poor community infrastructure and low levels of social capital.

We will consider working with any community group, regardless of their scale.

We require community groups to commit to the full length and all aspects of the project and to working in partnership with the Young Foundation. Groups must also be based in England.

How to Apply

If you are interested in partnering with the Young Foundation on this project, please submit a brief outline of no more than three A4 pages to us. This brief should include:

- **Who you are:** please tell us more about your community group and why you want to be involved in this project.
- **Your community:** where is your community? Who lives there? What are the problems and what are the assets of your community?
- **Your vision:** what do you want to change and how will it make your community better? What have you already tried to create this change?
- **Partnerships:** who else are you working with in your community? Who have you struggled to engage?
- Your **experience of using digital technology**.

The **deadline** for submissions is **5pm, Friday 17th June**. Please submit your proposal via email to Sophie.hostick@youngfoundation.org or by post to:

Sophie Hostick, The Young Foundation, 18 Victoria Park Square, London, E2 9PF.

We aim to select areas that are enthusiastic to the programme, are geographically spread and a mix of rural/ urban/ suburban areas, potentially with different degrees of deprivation and levels of social capital.

About the Young Foundation

The Young Foundation brings together insight, innovation and entrepreneurship to meet social needs. We have a 55 year track record of success with ventures such as the Open University, Which?, the School for Social Entrepreneurs and Healthline (the precursor of NHS Direct).

We work across the UK and internationally – carrying out research, influencing policy, creating new organisations and supporting others to do the same, often with imaginative uses of new technology. We now have over 70 staff, working on over 40 ventures at any one time, with staff in New York and Paris as well as London and Birmingham in the UK.

Our track record

Since its launch, the Young Foundation has developed in-depth experience of working in neighbourhoods and with communities, through programmes such as Local 2.0 and our work on deprived social housing estates; and with local agencies through our neighbourhood collaboratives (working together with over 25 local authorities). We have built an understanding of community dynamics and the practical ways to boost wellbeing, belonging and resilience in local areas through our wellbeing programme.

We have an established track record of successfully creating and supporting social ventures, building on the legacy of Michael Young. We act as an incubator of social ventures, helping to turn promising concepts into sustainable ventures through the provision of intensive concept development and business support, understanding of and relations with public sector commissioners, and provision of appropriate finance.

For more information about our Building Local Activism work, please contact Sophie Hostick sophie.hostick@youngfoundation.org