



Commission for Youth Social Enterprise

Research

Introduction

While there is much talk about young people, there is a lack of research about what drives young people to want to actively change their world. The Commission for Youth Social Enterprise has set out to fill this void by conducting an on-going research project on young people's social ambition.

The Commission began as a group of 21 young social entrepreneurs with their own successful businesses and organizations but wanted to make it easier for others to make change. The research project began by asking: "How can society equip young people to make a lasting positive impact on their world?" but has refined its scope to ask:

- What is a working definition of youth social enterprise?
- What are youth's attitudes toward social enterprise?
- What barriers and facilitators to social enterprise have young people experienced in the UK?
- What is happening with young social entrepreneurs in the UK?
- What are drives young people to change their world?

The interim report will discuss the scholarly literature on young people's social ambition, youth and social enterprise while setting out a roadmap for the rest of the Commission's project. Comprehensive literature reviews and thorough analyses of data will be incorporated into the report (due for publication in April 2009).

Research Methodology

Qualitative Interviews

In order to fill the gaps in the literature, the Commission for Youth Social Enterprise will be conducting a qualitative research study by interviewing 100 young people between the ages of 16-25. The sample will be divided into two populations: 50 socially active youth and 50 unengaged youth. Participants are any individuals residing within the UK who are between the ages of 16-25. Both samples will be identified and recruited through quota sampling with representative quotas for age, gender, and ethnicity.

The Commission Research Team is made up of the Commission Coordinator, Research Assistant, Research Interns, Volunteer Researchers, and Commissioners. They will be trained in qualitative interview skills as well as how to facilitate focus groups. Additionally, some members of the Research Team will be instructed on how to transcribe, annotate, and edit recorded interviews.

Data from interviews will be used to explore attitudes and definitions by looking for trends within each sample population. Highlights from interviews will be compiled and posted on the Commission website to update the public on our research.

Quantitative Survey

Additionally, interviews will be used to further explain the findings of our quantitative survey. This survey aims to measure the social ambition of youth while gathering additional data on their experiences with social activism and other entrepreneurial activities.

The qualitative survey will be distributed to any individual residing in the UK between the ages of 16-25. Surveys will be distributed online with the hopes of receiving 500 respondents.

Focus Groups

The Commission will host focus groups from January to March 2009 in order to explore specific themes within our research. The format of each focus group is flexible but will each contain between 5-10 participants between the ages of 16-25. Two focus groups will be held in London and three additional focus groups to be held in large cities across the UK. Discussion is led by a member of the Commission Research Team who will encourage input from each participant. Focus groups will be recorded and transcribed to be included in our findings.