



**LEADERS
UNLOCKED**

**STRATEGIC
PLAN
2025-27**



ROSE DOWLING
CEO

Rose founded Leaders Unlocked in 2015 and has since led its mission to enable young people to have a stronger **voice** and **influence** on the issues that affect their lives.

**LEADERS
UNLOCKED**

FOREWORD

I'm excited about delivering this new strategic plan for lots of reasons.

First and foremost, it has been co-produced with the Leaders Unlocked **Youth Board**, and it feels like a great reflection of the board's ambition, creativity and innovation.

The plan centres **paid work for young people**. A recent milestone for us as an organisation was in 2023, when we achieved 65% of our workforce coming from our projects. In this plan, we set out our ambition to extend the paid employment opportunities we are able to offer young people, providing an expanded progression route for young people coming from our projects.

The plan focuses on **talent and innovation**. It builds on the successes and learning of our recent strategy internship programme, which supported 20 young adults to develop innovative projects in response to urgent social issues. By 2027, we want to be a hub for youth-led innovation and to have developed a **Social Incubator programme**, providing a tiered system of support to young people who want to start their own projects and ventures.

We know we can't deliver this plan alone, that's why we'll be seeking new alliances, as well as building on our existing partnerships, to realise our ambitions. **We are looking forward to collaborating with you and your organisations to make it happen and make a difference for young people across the UK.**



MAIR WILLIAMS

MEMBER OF THE YOUTH BOARD

Mair has been involved with Leaders Unlocked since 2021. She also created Leaders Unlocked's first podcast along with another young person, as part of a joint internship.

INTRODUCTION

My name is Mair Williams, and I'm from Anglesey in North Wales. I've been a part of Leaders Unlocked for about 5 years, joining different projects such as the IOPC Youth Panel, the Youth Board and the Internship scheme.

Leaders Unlocked is an amazing organisation that supports young people to use their voices to create change in many different ways. To me, one of the most important ways that this can be done is through communication and creativity. I think encouraging people to express themselves creatively is so important, and I'm excited that we have Communication and Creativity one of our key priorities in this plan.

There is something for everyone in this plan. There are so many different opportunities for young people to be involved over the next 3 years, from joining panels, to gaining paid roles, and having the opportunity to deliver workshops.

I'm looking forward to seeing the impact that this plan will have. One of the most important outcomes will be to influence decision-makers so that changes can be made. Another crucial outcome is education, both educating other young people through the workshops we deliver, and educating professionals in key roles that affect young people's lives.

OUR MISSION



ORGANISATIONS

Across sectors, we help organisations to involve the people who matter and change decision-making for the better.



YOUNG PEOPLE

We enable young people to become leaders and influence the issues they care about most in society.



IMPACT

These experiences transform young people's lives through increased confidence, skills and access to opportunities, whilst also improving organisations' responsiveness and decision-making.

"Leaders Unlocked enables young people to have a stronger **VOICE** and **INFLUENCE** on the issues that affect their lives."

**LEADERS
UNLOCKED**

VISION 2027

1

A HUB FOR YOUTH-LED INNOVATION

New priorities and programmes, designed by young people.

2

A SUPPORT STRUCTURE FOR YOUNG LEADERS WHO WANT TO START THEIR OWN VENTURES

A social incubator providing support from early-stage ideation to registering new entities.

3

A RECOGNISED EXPERT IN YOUTH-LED SOCIAL CHANGE ACROSS THE UK

Becoming more embedded beyond England in the other nations of the UK. Increasing our influence on UK policy-making.

4

PROGRESSION FOR MORE YOUNG LEADERS INTO PAID ROLES

Expanded numbers of young leaders progressing from participants to paid roles within Leaders Unlocked and beyond.

5

A CLEAR IMPACT STORY

Using creativity and communications to focus on showing the difference we make and our social value.





**LEADERS
UNLOCKED**

KEY PRIORITIES

TALENT &
INNOVATION

COMMS &
CREATIVITY

POLICING

HEALTH &
WELLBEING

EDUCATION

CRIMINAL
JUSTICE

TALENT & INNOVATION

OUR GOALS

Promote our
STRATEGIC INTERNSHIP MODEL
– seek further funding and support
for this model

Develop a Leaders Unlocked **SOCIAL INCUBATOR**
scheme to support young leaders to start their own
ventures and gain funding for their own initiatives

Identify new
PRIORITIES AND PROGRAMMES
in collaboration with young people

HOW WE ARE GOING TO DO IT

**SHARE LEARNING
AND OUTCOMES**
from our internship
programme –
through webinars,
publications, etc.

**DEVELOP AND PITCH THE
LU SOCIAL INCUBATOR**
– a support structure for
young people who want to
get projects funded or start
entities

**PARTNER WITH
EMPLOYERS & BRANDS**
that match the
aspirations of our young
leaders

**OFFER PAID STRATEGY
INTERNSHIPS AND
FACILITATION ROLES**
to diverse talent

**WORK WITH OUR
YOUTH BOARD**
to scope future priorities
and programmes

COMMS & CREATIVITY

OUR GOALS

**EMBRACE CREATIVE ARTS
AND WORK WITH
ARTS PRACTITIONERS**
to diversify our outputs

**BUILD A MAILING LIST AND
DEVELOP A NEWSLETTER**
to increase the visibility of our
work with stakeholders

Increase our **VISIBILITY AMONG
YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS THE UK**
through outreach, merchandise and
social media

Use comms and creativity to
shout about our **IMPACT
AND SOCIAL VALUE**

HOW WE ARE GOING TO DO IT

**BUILD RELATIONSHIPS
WITH CREATIVE
PRACTITIONERS** who we
can work with as associates,
e.g. animators, illustrators
poets, musicians, designers

**LAUNCH THE MAILING
LIST AND NEWSLETTER**
building up reach and
engagement year on year

**HIGHLIGHT PERSONAL
STORIES** across channels to
showcase the personal growth
and progression of young
leaders involved with LU

**PRODUCE AN
IMPACT REPORT**
and showcase to
mark the 10-year
anniversary of LU
in 2025

**WORK WITH LU
YOUTH BOARD** to
develop outreach,
merchandise and social
media approach to
comms with young people

POLICING

OUR GOALS

Continue to **EXPAND THE YOUTH COMMISSION** model to reach 75% of police forces by 2027 (so far, we've reached 40%)

Expand the **NATIONAL VOICE AND INFLUENCE** for young people in the policing sector – reaching policy-makers and system leaders

Understand and **SHARE THE IMPACT** we've made in the policing sector since 2015, including the **SOCIAL VALUE**

HOW WE ARE GOING TO DO IT

RAISE THE PROFILE of our work in policing and its impact – e.g. publications, conferences, PR, awards

Develop the **NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION CONFERENCE** as a national influencing platform with policy-makers and system leaders

PROMOTE OUR ANNUAL POLICING SURVEY with bigger reach year on year

USE THE 3-YEAR PARTNERSHIP WITH IOPC to influence system change and push for reforms through joint influencing activity

BUILD WIDER PARTNERSHIPS to influence change in the policing sector – e.g. with policing bodies, civil society, parliament and select committees

HEALTH & WELLBEING

OUR GOALS

EXPAND THE REACH OF OUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING WORK ACROSS THE UK – including in Scotland and Wales

BUILD EXPERTISE IN HEALTH INEQUALITIES, working with under-represented groups to address equity issues in access and treatment

Continue to build **LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHANGE** with health charities, NHS, academics and campaigning organisations

HOW WE ARE GOING TO DO IT

PROACTIVELY PROMOTE THE MH:2K MODEL to new partners and areas across the UK

DEVELOP INNOVATIVE NEW PROJECTS AROUND HEALTH INEQUALITIES – e.g. new work on Shame, building on internship work

RAISE THE PROFILE OF OUR WORK in health and well-being, e.g. through conferences and sector publications

WORK COLLABORATIVELY with existing health partners on joint long-term work to influence policy-making decisions about youth mental health

EDUCATION

OUR GOALS

EXPAND THE GEOGRAPHICAL REACH
of the Student Commission
across the UK – with a key focus on
Scotland and Wales

**FORM NEW PARTNERSHIPS
TO SUPPORT INNOVATION** – grant
funders, partnership with universities,
and brand partnerships

SHARE THE IMPACT
that we are having through the
Student Commission with system
leaders and policy-makers

Launch and evaluate a
**PRACTITIONER
TRAINING OFFER**
for education

HOW WE ARE GOING TO DO IT

**WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE
AND THE SECTOR TO
DETERMINE A NEW TOPIC**
for the Student Commission to
tackle (e.g. sustainability,
neuro-diversity).

**PURSUE A PILOT
PROJECT IN SCOTLAND
AND/OR WALES**
using the Student
Commission model

**IDENTIFY AND APPROACH
GRANT FUNDERS AND
BRAND PARTNERS**
to support innovative work
within education

**PUBLISH AN
IMPACT REPORT**
for the Student
Commission on
Racial Justice

RAISE AWARENESS
of the work we are
doing in FE but with
HE

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

OUR GOALS

Amplify the voices and influence of
*YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CHILDREN'S
SECURE ESTATE AND IN PRISONS*

Support young people with justice experience to
*DESIGN AND PILOT NEW INTERVENTIONS
FOR CHANGE*

SHOWCASE OUR IMPACT,
understand our social value,
and forge new partnerships

HOW WE ARE GOING TO DO IT

Recruit young people with
justice experience to take part in
*PAID INTERNSHIPS AND
FACILITATION ROLES*
(funded by the Esmée Fairbairn
Foundation)

*HOLD AN ANNUAL
LEADERSHIP RESIDENTIAL*
with justice-experienced
young people to develop
their own projects and boost
their leadership journeys

*FORGE PARTNERSHIPS
WITH UNIVERSITIES,
THINK TANKS,* etc. to
help understand the
social value of our work

REACH OUT TO FUNDERS
to support the future
development of the Young
Justice Advisors and Young
Advocates for Youth Justice

Produce and
disseminate an
IMPACT REPORT
for the Young
Justice Advisors



“ There has been a real culture change at the top—
this has been the biggest element. We had such a
challenge as to how to engage thousands of young
people in Nottingham, a massive generational gap,
we spoke a different language, it was overwhelming.

Leaders Unlocked has helped us to
BRIDGE THAT GAP
and now we understand each other more.”



CONTACT US

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Sign up to our mailing list [here](#).



LEADERS UNLOCKED

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