SPACES 4 CHANGE

REIGNITING DISUSED SPACES

Spaces 4 Change will enable young people to create, shape and manage their own space. We will link young people and their social ventures to our partners to help convert their ideas into sustainable long term ventures.
**OUR GOAL**

Spaces 4 Change (S4C) is a new England-wide programme that will offer 100 Awards to individuals and informal small groups over the duration of the programme. The Awards will consist of cash grants, specific tailored development support and peer to peer networking to support the sharing of knowledge and learning. As part of this programme we will provide a cache of resources that will be publically available to help others outside of the programme to create their own social ventures ([https://see.unltd.org.uk](https://see.unltd.org.uk)). This will include a dedicated online space for young people to share and develop their ideas virtually. The programme will have a Research and Development approach which will ensure that we learn and adjust the programme as it develops, building on things that work and addressing challenges before they become embedded.

S4C will aim to enable young people to “do it for themselves” - to create, shape and manage their own space. In the process we will link young people and their social ventures to our partners to help convert their ideas into sustainable ventures that last well beyond the programme. We expect that this will generate a greater respect amongst a wider group young people for their public spaces and, for direct participant’s cases, make a significant difference to the long term space itself, which the wider community can then benefit from.

**We believe the wider community will benefit through:**

- A reduction in the use of sites for illegal activity
- The creation of a safer environment
- A better environment, achieved by encouraging nature conservation where none existed previously
- A more connected community – as residents come together to plan for and use the renewed space
- Disused space becomes available for the community

**S4C will offer 100 Awards to individuals and informal small groups over the duration of the programme**

**Young people, by engaging on this programme, will benefit by:**

- Gaining confidence to act for social benefit
- Gaining valuable skills including ‘soft skills’ such as communication, coaching, and ‘hard skills’ such as project management and delivery
- Gaining valuable management and leadership experience, increasing their personal networks and feeling more employable as a result strengthening and building positive relationships with each other, we have found that for every one person we support they inspire seven others to get involved
- Fostering greater environmental understanding and responsibility
- Increased connectedness to the community evidenced by formation of new relationships
The wider impact of this project will depend on the particular ventures that are set up by the Award Winners, and while we cannot predict their areas of focus, we know from past programmes community benefits have included:

- Reviving and opening up disused spaces to benefit the community as a whole, giving them access to utilise the space positively
- Stabilising effect on the local community as a whole, with young people becoming positive role models for other young people
- Encouraging the community to think differently about disused spaces and using the projects and learning as exemplars and guidance for other places to do the same
- Strengthening local confidence in young people on how they can contribute to environmental issues

Not only will we share the resources created on this programme with other young people who have an interest in creating their own ideas to unlock unused or underutilised spaces (land and buildings); we will also capture and share learning from the programme with other recipients of the Our Bright Future fund, to encourage peer learning amongst the organisations. And work with the partner panel to use the national celebratory event to share learning further afield.

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WHY SPACES 4 CHANGE

Spaces 4 Change (S4C) programme will replicate and scale our previous programme that ran from April 2011 to March 2012, designed to help social entrepreneurs to start and run social ventures that unlock unused or under-utilised spaces (land and buildings) for the benefit of young people aged 16-24. This programme provided financial and mentoring support for entrepreneurial individuals across the UK. The programme made 32 Awards of up to £5,000 to individuals or informal groups of any age, and provided them with support from a dedicated Award Manager at UnLtd. The programme helped to support ideas that not only had environmental impact, but also educational, cultural, recreational and citizenship based impact.

The learning from this programme highlighted:

• The most successful ventures entailed a combination of good local relationship building with key stakeholders, previous engagement with young people and an understanding of their needs, available and willing volunteers and supporting coordinating team, an adequate and secure space, a venture responding to a gap in what was available for young people, and an attractive proposition for young people themselves.
• Most ventures would not have been possible, or would not have developed to the extent that they have, without S4C funding.
• Award Winners appreciated and benefitted from the fluid, needs tailored and informal communications approach employed by Award Managers.

And, the recommendations for future programmes based on this learning were:

• Seek a range of outreach avenues.
• Maintain a strong personable presence at all stages of the Award programme, from application and enquiry stage, right through to venture inception and development.
• Maintain Award Managers’ flexibility to be responsive to Award Winners according to their needs, whether this is as a project planner, critical friend, or coach.
• Online and offline peer networks are essential in supporting and challenging social entrepreneurs at similar stages in their enterprise journey.
• Access to an expert panel fosters positive mentoring relationships and cuts through sectoral red tape.

We have drawn heavily on the experience and learning from this programme, and have combined it with our learning from ongoing support to aspiring young social entrepreneurs and with the funding from Our Bright Future, to deliver a high impact programme enabling young people to create their own ideas for unused and underutilised land and buildings to benefit the community, especially other young people.

WHY BECOME A PARTNER

• The opportunity to be part of an exciting new development in place based resilient communities work
• An exceptional personal development and learning opportunity for young people and staff
• A unique model of improving people’s lives, helping the local area and transforming disused space
• Association and recognition as one of the partners in the Spaces 4 Change Programme

• Development of your capacity and access to our skills and expertise over a 12- month period in this field
• A peer to peer support and learning experience via a partnership learning network
• An UnLtd contact person to offer tailored support
OUR VALUES

UnLtd’s mission is to reach out and unleash the energies of people who want to change the world for the better. We call these people social entrepreneurs. UnLtd is the leading provider of support to young social entrepreneurs in the UK and offers the largest such network in the world.

We aim to give people a first taste of leading a social venture. Some will test out their one off idea, some will start sustainable ventures which will survive into the longer term. We hope the young people we work with will become active citizens, developing interests in social action. To date, we have done this mainly by giving awards directly to young people. Award Winners are given funding for their idea and one-to-one support from our Award Managers to help them start up and lead their own social ventures. We aim to collaborate with partners to build the eco system of support to young social entrepreneurs on an ongoing basis and develop plans for sustainability.

- We believe in individuals who have the potential to make positive change in the world
- We believe in the value of social entrepreneurship across the spectrum, from local to global
- We put people at the heart of what we do, backing people first, projects second
- We support people’s ideas and passions
- We reach out and find people who can tackle the key issues facing society
- We know that communities facing social issues contain the people who will create the solution
- We minimise bureaucracy and maximise opportunity, trusting judgement and backing hunches
- We act with integrity and openness, and encourage learning, cooperation and understanding

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
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Our Bright Future is a £33 Million programme funded by the Big Lottery Fund and run by the Wildlife Trusts. Our Bright Future aims to tackle the three big challenges facing society today – a lack of cohesion, a lack of opportunities for young people and vulnerability to climate change.

Thirty one youth-led projects across the UK are receiving around £1m of funding to give young people the skills and knowledge to improve their local environments – from reducing marine pollution to minimising food waste. This young, ambitious and capable movement is ensuring this generation’s voice is heard in current debates around environmental improvements and a resource-efficient economy.