Rising to the challenge: find out about the bakers transforming access to employment on page 12

UnLtd’s impact report
Read about enterprising people transforming our world for good
Meet some of the social entrepreneurs with bold solutions to today’s challenges
Find out what we learned and how we want to support social entrepreneurs

Rising to the challenge: find out about the bakers transforming access to employment on page 12
Our vision
A future where enterprising people are transforming our world for good.

Our mission
We find social entrepreneurs with bold solutions to today’s challenges. Through funding and support, we help them to realise their potential and create lasting change.
Welcome to UnLtd, the foundation for social entrepreneurs. As newly-appointed Chair and Deputy Chair, it has been a pleasure to step up to lead UnLtd’s Board of Trustees this year. We are deeply honoured to be part of an organisation that is making a huge difference to the UK. Knowing this, it is always a pleasure to meet people who say: “UnLtd was there for me, right at the start of my journey.” Thanks to this support, for every social entrepreneur UnLtd funded last year, they improved 832 lives.

UnLtd has always had strong principles that run through the organisation, and this year staff and board worked together to define them. We wanted to capture the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of what we do. We committed to three values to guide us through our work: bravery, inclusivity, and accountability.

That bravery is very much part of our DNA. When social entrepreneurs face challenges, UnLtd takes a leap to meet them, whether that’s through innovative charity partnerships, meaningful mentorship or working to overcome the systematic barriers that constrain who can become an entrepreneur.

Our commitment to inclusivity has seen UnLtd challenging ourselves this year, both in who we support and how we do it. See page 21 to hear thoughts from Sade, one of our social entrepreneurs in residence, on how we could better support social leaders with deeply lived experience.

Our ethos of accountability comes out in our continuing focus on three key areas of impact. From page 6 you can read more about how we’re delivering on these goals.

We are living through interesting times. The question UnLtd asks is not whether social entrepreneurs can solve some of our most pressing challenges — the people we work with demonstrate this potential every day — the question is what can we do to support them better in their endeavours. We’re looking forward to helping UnLtd continue to find answers.

Nicholas Farhi and Sue Charteris
Making an impact
15 achievements from 2017/18 that show our theory of change in action

We find, fund and support social entrepreneurs to reach their potential

62% of the social entrepreneurs we funded were women, compared to just 40% of the wider sector.1

£6,450
Average award
With cash awards, tailored support and investment, we support social entrepreneurs to realise their vision for social change. This year the average amount we gave out to each individual was £6,450.

335
People supported
In 2017/18 we supported 253 social entrepreneurs to develop their ideas and start up. We supported a further 82 to scale up to help their business flourish.

Opportunities for all
We aim to enable people from all backgrounds and circumstances to be social entrepreneurs. In UK business, 5% of companies are led by BAME individuals, and in the social enterprise sector that figure is at 12%.1 UnLtd’s figure is almost twice that, at just under 24%.

And act to break down barriers social entrepreneurs face to maximise their impact

94%
Routes to market
94% of our social entrepreneurs working to address employment issues said we helped them find routes to market. On page 26, see how award winners have got their products into supermarkets.

Back ing sustainable social business
For every £1 we awarded to social entrepreneurs, they generated £2.50 in revenue. The support from UnLtd is just one early step in their path to success.

Building partnerships
We raised £7.7m of external income through partnerships to fund our ambitions for social change. This is a huge step towards our 2021 strategy to raise £10.2m.
We work with innovators to transform the system

78% of social entrepreneurs feel valued and understood for the change they create

30 Leaders with lived experience
We worked with 30 leaders with lived experience to create a system where people who have first-hand experience of social issues have the opportunity to solve them. See page 21, Sade, Social Entrepreneur in Residence, expands on how we could better support these social leaders, and the steps we’re already taking.

Thriving communities
We shine a light on the potential of local communities and leaders to grow sustainable solutions to social challenges. That’s why a quarter of the amount we invested in social entrepreneurs was spent in the UK’s most deprived areas.²

The change we want to see
Our support is about helping people achieve their dreams of social change. 84% of UnLtd Award Winners felt confident to act for social change as a result of our support.

And society joins in taking social entrepreneurs mainstream

Unleashing potential
For every social entrepreneur we supported, 17 jobs and volunteering opportunities were created. For more on our work transforming access to employment, turn to page 10.

Making the news
The public had great opportunities to learn about social entrepreneurs in their area this year. UnLtd was featured in national and sector media 49 times,³ and we saw individual award winners featured every week in local and national press.

Transforming society
Through every entrepreneur we supported, 832 people’s lives were positively impacted through the creation of jobs, access to relevant products and services, and the wider community benefits our award winners create.

Exploring purposeful business
We are helping more business leaders wake up to the power of purpose with the launch of our new tool, Purposely. The new site offers an easy route to embed purpose into the articles of association for companies limited by shares, and it had 1,106 visits in its first week.

See our full theory of change at unltd.org.uk/theoryofchange
Meet the social entrepreneurs

Here is a glimpse of just some of the 335 we’ve supported in 2017/18

**Cardiff Salad Garden**
Sophie Durnan
Supplying to some of the best restaurants in Cardiff, Sophie Durnan and her team run a hidden garden growing baby leaf salads, picked to order, delivered on bike. She works with asylum seekers, refugees, individuals with mental health problems, and other disadvantaged groups from within the city who help in all aspects of the greenhouse.
[cardifssaladgarden.co.uk](http://cardifssaladgarden.co.uk)

**Carlisle Undercroft**
Kimberley Watkin
Kimberley Watkin is renovating a Grade II Listed building under Carlisle train station into a multipurpose venue for the local community. The affordable space will be used by local businesses and artists for events including art exhibitions, film nights, local community events, weddings and much more.

**The Swan Song Project**
Ben Slack
Ben started the Swan Song Project in West Yorkshire, inspired by how his grandma always lit up at music, and at his singing. He writes songs with end of life in mind, working one to one with patients, recording them and creating a CD for them to keep. Participants say it has helped them communicate difficult things to their loved ones, make sense of their experience, and gain a great sense of pride through creating something that can be cherished for years to come.
[swansongproject.co.uk](http://swansongproject.co.uk)

**The Filo Project**
Liz Dennis
The Filo project has been operating successfully for four years. It provides small group day care for people with early to moderate dementia. The clients spend a day, or more, a week, with a host and co-group members in the host’s home, enjoying a meaningful and quality social time. The funding award will enable the co-founders, Dr Liz Dennis and Libby Price, to expand their business across the south-west to benefit more people and have a greater positive impact.
[thefiloproject.co.uk](http://thefiloproject.co.uk)

**Beam**
Alex Stephany
Beam is the world’s first online crowdfunding platform focused on funding employment training for homeless people.

Beam partnered with homelessness charities who recommend individuals ready to undertake employment training, including Shelter, St Mungo’s and Centrepoint. Each campaign is personalised to that person’s unique talents and aspirations. As well as sourcing new funds to provide these opportunities, the crowdfunding model allows homeless individuals to build support networks through those who fund their campaigns.
[beam.org](http://beam.org)

**Weirdspace**
Shi Blank
Weirdspace is a ‘makerspace’ with a focus on using technology to produce experimental and unconventional projects and art installations. The technology industry is alienating to many women and minorities. Shi and her team aim to demystify the complexities and elitism of it by sharing their experience and knowledge, and creating an inclusive environment.
Community Souls
Rickard Stewart
Community Souls is a cleaning company based in London employing those dependent on benefits or low income, and supporting them into full-time work. They work with people in areas of high deprivation, empowering them to take control of their own positive futures. The venture then provides both personal and professional development, as well as employment.
communitysouls.co.uk

Tech Styles
Himani Bhardwaj and Lloyd Thompson
Tech Styles is a unique breakin event which is held annually in Bradford, the old woollen “textiles” capital of the world. “Tech” in dance terms is a string of movements and “Style” is a dancer’s character and way of movement. Himani works as part of the Tech Styles team, which hosts Hip Hop events across Bradford. Tech Styles 4 took place in an unused space, transforming it for the benefit of the local community. The high quality events draw people to Bradford from around the UK and internationally, improving the sustainability of the dance sector within Yorkshire.
tranquilproductions.co.uk
30 areas we are working in

Millennium Awards Trust Resilient Community Areas
1 Inner Dundee
2 Argyll and Bute
3 Glasgow
4 Bradford
5 Sheffield
6 Grimsby
7 Stoke-on-Trent
8 Dudley
9 Crumlin
10 Brighton
11 Plymouth

Local Trust Areas
1 Central Jarrow
2 Barrowcliff
3 Tang Hall
4 Greatfield
5 Keighley Valley
6 Little Hulton
7 Collyhurst
8 Sale West
9 Palfrey
10 Birchfield
11 St Peter’s and the Moors
12 Bountagu
13 William Morris
14 St James Street
15 South Bermondsey
16 Riverside Community
17 Dover
18 Whitleigh
19 Par Bay
Changing places

Social entrepreneurs are transforming their neighbourhoods and creating sustainable businesses. Through our work we have seen how social entrepreneurs work tirelessly to make their communities more equitable, sustainable and resilient

In January 2017 we came together with Local Trust, and over 80 people, to explore how we can best support social entrepreneurs to build more Resilient Communities. We brought together people from local communities across the UK along with international social entrepreneurs from Hungary and Detroit to find out how we can best harness the power of people in places.

We use an innovative readiness indicator to assess which further communities have the right conditions in place to develop powerful solutions, and where our support will make a difference. We used this to identify 11 areas funded through the Millennium Awards Trust. 2017 also heralded a new partnership between Local Trust, UnLtd, and 19 Local Trust areas. The community entrepreneurs we’ve supported include an employment support company in the West Midlands working with young people to prepare them to become job ready. In a coastal community a venture offering therapeutic workshops for recovering drug and alcohol users now has 93 members attending its events. And in north-west England a thriving childcare centre offers local families a service that meets their distinctive needs, and is now entirely self-funding.

Over the next three to four years we are confident that the social entrepreneurs in these 30 areas, and the ventures they run, will create powerful change for local residents.

Pam Hardisty — Head of Community Entrepreneurship, UnLtd
Dundee: a connected community of social ventures

One social enterprise in Dundee has become a source of inspiration for innovative change, and is a hub of activity.

Founder and Chief Executive of The Circle in Dundee, Kirsty Thomson, is proud of the difference her venture makes. “People are using the space because it’s accessible and affordable and there’s a real sense of community developing here.”

In 2015 Kirsty visited the former skills centre with a client looking to open a new premises. Her client didn’t take to the 1970s office block, but Kirsty saw potential and after two years of negotiations, she signed over the lease for the property in April 2017.

The Circle is now home to 18 tenants. It’s an amazing place where many UnLtd funded social entrepreneurs are working together. The tenants share resources, everything from expertise, ideas and strategies, to tangible things like volunteers and equipment. There are regular events to strengthen relationships between the organisations and help drive the future sustainability of The Circle.

“This building was lying derelict and the difference we’re already starting to have, both on the physical space and the community, within two years, is brilliant.”

Some 300 people a week are accessing The Circle’s various services and there is a waiting list for office space. The finances also look healthy. 95% of their income comes from trading and just 5% from grants. Kirsty has ambitious plans for the future and The Circle’s team of staff is growing steadily.

Places like The Circle are at the heart of what we’re doing with our Resilient Communities work. By establishing ecosystems of creativity and innovation we can start to build bigger ideas and develop communities of people dedicated to social change. It’s really exciting work, and a great way to foster innovation in places.

Ruth Coustick-Deal — Communications Officer, UnLtd

The Circle

Dundee is one of the local areas where UnLtd is offering funding and support over the next three years.

thecircledundee.org.uk
Uppertunity — uppertunity.org.uk (left) and Better:Gen — bettergen.co.uk (above) are social enterprises resident in The Circle
Sofab Sports operates a chain of sportswear shops employing young adults with learning difficulties.
Although the UK currently holds record employment levels of 75%, many people still face barriers to work. Disabled people are twice as likely to be unemployed compared to non-disabled people. Social enterprises are working to change this.

We are finding, funding and supporting those who improve access to employment for all. In 2017/18 we made 68 awards to individuals addressing issues relating to employment. Some are creating jobs for those who otherwise wouldn’t have them. Others provide employment-related support — skills and training. They remove barriers and smooth the path for more people to move into rewarding work. Last year the social entrepreneurs we supported created over 1,000 jobs and volunteering opportunities.

To explore how we can reduce the disability employment gap, we’ve brought together social entrepreneurs, influencers and pioneers, including Scope, the Department for Work and Pensions, UBS and the Employment Related Services Association. We launched our Thrive accelerator to ensure that ambitious ventures bringing about change can scale up, offering a package of bespoke support, peer-to-peer learning and opportunities for investment.

With a concerted effort we can promote good practice and make it as easy and attractive as possible for employers to harness the talent and energy of disabled people.

Joel Attar — Award Manager, UnLtd

Research by Social Enterprise UK indicates that over 69% of social enterprises are working with people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Access to employment

Our economy thrives when people are earning a living, and conversely not being in work impacts on people’s income, health and happiness. Statistics that reflect a steady drop in unemployment in the UK don’t tell the full story. For example, many people with complex lives or additional support needs, including those with disabilities, ex-offenders and people who have experienced homelessness, still face barriers to finding meaningful and appropriate employment.

Our social entrepreneurs are directly creating employment opportunities and delivering employment-related services for people who face particular barriers to finding work. We are committed to helping social entrepreneurs to develop sustainable and scalable solutions. We continue to work closely with government, business and employers to ensure social entrepreneurial models and solutions reach a wider audience.
Step and Stone began small, involving people with a learning disability in making a lavosh flatbread. The food proved to be popular and the idea grew quickly into a business. Before long, they were selling to delis and fine food shops across Bristol.

The venture received funding and support from UnLtd in February 2018, helping the team to scale both their ambition and social impact. The lack of opportunities for people with learning disabilities has wider effects than just employment. People with learning disabilities can experience social isolation. A big part of Step and Stone’s work goes beyond training technical skills and raising confidence, it also focuses on creating a community. Regular social outings help build friendships between staff and volunteers.

Setting up a social venture has certainly had its challenges, but Jane Kippax is adamant that it’s been worthwhile. “This is without doubt the most rewarding thing I’ve ever done. However, resilience, persistence and passion are the qualities that have kept us going through the tough patches.”

The venture’s next move is to open a cafe in or near Bristol, to offer an even greater range of opportunities and show the public the talents of the young people who work there.

“Stepping out

Jane Chong and Jane Kippax, both parents to children with Down’s syndrome, are among the social entrepreneurs already transforming access to employment. Together they run the Bristol-based bakery Step and Stone, which provides employment and training opportunities for young people with learning disabilities

We were appalled that only 6% of people with a learning disability are in paid employment and were determined to have an impact on this figure by setting up a project which would provide training and education and progression into meaningful employment.”

Jane Kippax — Co-founder of Step and Stone

stepandstone.co

Ruth Coustick-Deal — Communications Officer, UnLtd
Partners in change
With Scope’s commitment to achieving equality for disabled people and UnLtd’s mission to find innovative social entrepreneurs, we can’t think of a stronger partnership to create bold solutions to reduce the disability employment gap.

“If you are disabled, want to work and can work, the odds are stacked against you: from finding a job to keeping a job, and even what you get paid. Research Scope commissioned shows that disabled people needed to apply for 60% more jobs than non-disabled people before finding work.

These barriers show why it’s so important we find more effective and innovative ways to help disabled people find work. This is why I’m so excited about our new partnership with Scope. We plan to support around 60 social entrepreneurs together, developing solutions to these issues. Some of them will have early stage ideas we can nurture; some have a winning idea ready to scale. Many will have experience of living with a disability and may well have gone through the hassles and heartache of finding work themselves. Through them, we hope to reduce the disability employment gap.”

Nas Morley — Director of Partnerships and Influence, UnLtd

“We’re delighted to join forces with UnLtd in an innovative partnership providing bold new ways to get more disabled people into work, with the same opportunities as everyone else. It's a key part of our organisational strategy. Many disabled people face barriers to entering, staying and progressing in employment, unable to fulfil their potential and participate in the UK economy.

The disability employment gap is the difference in the rate of employment of disabled people and non-disabled people, and it has stuck stubbornly at 30 percentage points for over a decade. Our partnership with UnLtd will demonstrate that social entrepreneurship and investment can be a powerful part of tackling this inequality, and we’re off to a great start with the launch of our social accelerator, Thrive.”

Lisa Quinlan-Rahman — Executive Director of Customer Strategy and Experience, Scope

Transforming Employment for Disabled People
A new partnership between UnLtd and Scope to support social entrepreneurs across the UK to start and grow their ideas. Scope estimates that even a small rise in the number of disabled people in work could bring billions of pounds into the UK economy.

Thrive
This year, applications opened for Thrive, an accelerator programme that will help social ventures to scale their impact. UnLtd will be working with Scope to support 24 ventures over a three-year period. What makes Thrive different is the opportunity for the social ventures to apply for up to £50,000 of investment to fuel further growth, together with invaluable post-investment one-to-one support to help them make the most of the capital they receive.

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Lisa Quinlan-Rahman — Executive Director of Customer Strategy and Experience, Scope
The power of mentorship

At UnLtd we know that starting up a social venture is one of the most exciting journeys one can ever embark on. We also know it can feel like a very long, lonely road at times.

Social entrepreneurs, especially during those early stages, often have sole responsibility for everything, from the smallest delivery detail to visioning and executing a five-year strategy. Having access to a network of peers, mentors and professionals who offer support on that journey is invaluable. So much so that some of the social entrepreneurs UnLtd works with tell us that these relationships prove more valuable than the money we provide (although the money is good, too).

This is why we set up UnLtd Connect, a pro bono community of business professionals who all believe business can, and should, be a genuine force for good. They volunteer their time and skills to support this growing movement. This commitment is one of the cornerstones of UnLtd’s support, and last year alone we engaged over 400 volunteers, accessed by over 180 social entrepreneurs.

Whether it’s a long-term relationship with a trusted mentor or a more focused conversation with a lawyer or a group of industry experts, all introductions are designed to provide social entrepreneurs with the confidence, skills and networks they need to thrive and stay well, while growing their ventures. The impact doesn’t stop there, our volunteers tell us they also gain hugely from working with us, making the relationships we broker a real win-win for everyone involved.

As social entrepreneurs’ needs mature and change so does the support required from the Connect network. Better support with routes to market, increased regional diversity and increased alignment with UnLtd’s impact streams are only some of the developments that will keep us busy in the coming year.

Marika Finne — Connect Manager, UnLtd

“I found being a mentor an enormously rewarding experience, with significant learning for me, and for my mentee. The trust built between the two of you is extremely personally enriching. If you can help your mentee achieve success, thanks to your input, then the sense of accomplishment is as real for you as it is for them.”

Leon Saunders Calvert
Global Head of M&A and Capital Raising Propositions, Thomson Reuters

“Leon has been a blessing, his attitude was that anything is achievable if there is structure and willpower applied to the situation. His empowering words and heartfelt guidance really helped change my perspective on things and I am truly grateful to have him in my life.”

Dean Blair
Founder, Songs of the Street
(Clockwise from top) participants from a Transform Ageing consultation event, a group at Move it or Lose it, a host meeting with The Filo Project, and Camilla de Bernhardt Lane from Aquafolium.
Reimagining later life

A vastly improved life expectancy, one of the great triumphs of the last century, may be one of the great challenges of this one. But it’s also a great opportunity to reimagine health and wellbeing, and social entrepreneurs are leading the way.

Over one million people in later life say that they feel lonely, more than 60% experience discrimination in their daily life, and three-quarters feel their talents and skills are ignored by society. Social entrepreneurs are tackling these issues every day. Their innovations range from a ‘go anywhere’ falls-prevention device, to ‘forest bathing’ and everything in-between! They are forging new pathways to independence for and with people in later life.

Many of the social entrepreneurs we supported this year to build a healthier experience of later life were part of Transform Ageing. Bringing together people in later life, social entrepreneurs and commissioners of health and care services, Transform Ageing defines, develops and delivers people-centred solutions that better support the needs and aspirations of older people.

Through this programme we’ve learnt a huge amount about the role that social entrepreneurship can play in solving the challenges and opening up the opportunities presented by an ageing society, particularly around the power and importance of engaging local communities, how to grow solutions that benefit the individual and the wider system, and the support that is required to make all of this happen.

We want the UK to be the best place to grow old in. Together with social entrepreneurs, people in later life, community organisations, civil society, commissioners and policy makers, we are working to create a positive later life, characterised by health and independence, choice and opportunity, active contribution and connectivity.

Sam Alford — Award Manager, UnLtd

By 2040, nearly one in four people in the UK will be aged 65 or over. This demographic shift is exerting untold pressures on existing health and social care systems. Already over one million people in later life say they always or often feel lonely. This is all the more concerning when we know that loneliness correlates to poor health.

We need a radical reimagination of the experience of ageing if we want to ensure the health and social and economic wellbeing of people in later life. We launched two programmes last year, Transform Ageing, and Solutions for an Ageing Society, to help social entrepreneurs unleash their potential.

Together we supported 24 social entrepreneurs in 2017/18 through the Transform Ageing programme.

Transform Ageing, funded by the Big Lottery Fund, is delivering better solutions to, for and with people in later life in the south-west.

LOTTERY FUNDED

 Transform Ageing, funded by the Big Lottery Fund, is delivering better solutions to, for and with people in later life in the south-west.
Sewing it together

The Sewing Rooms started as a social enterprise to build confidence in women in Skelmersdale, West Lancashire, and now it’s a shining example of how one good idea can be replicated in completely new environments.

Paula Gamester got the idea for The Sewing Rooms in 2008, when she was working with people with mental health issues, as a business adviser for the Chambers of Commerce. She noticed that the women in the group weren’t moving forward with their businesses as fast as the men were, because they lacked confidence.

When she heard IKEA were looking to work with social businesses to make curtains, she seized the opportunity to use sewing to bring people together, boost their confidence, and start something new. The Sewing Rooms now makes curtains for its customers and runs workshops in the store, using any surplus profit to create jobs.

Sewing Rooms tutor Laura Scott is building on that work with our Transform Ageing programme, which is spreading great innovations to new parts of the country. She travelled to the south-west from Skelmersdale to recruit 60 ‘Silver Sewers’ to sew three banners representing the towns of Brixham, Paignton and Torquay. She plans to take the banners to community centres across the south-west to enlist sewers and spread the word. “For the older sewers, it’s all about connecting. We do mindful sewing, using it as a way to build confidence and create.”

Working with The Sewing Rooms allows Scott to combine her passion for both care and sewing. When newcomers are nervous to try sewing, Scott reassures them with a simple task like sewing on sequins. “People know how to do it, but they get nervous at first.” However, before long, participants have forgotten their worries. “People get so enthusiastic and engrossed in it,” Scott says. “It’s fun and it’s friendly and it gives a purpose to their lives.”

Ruth Coustick-Deal — Communications Officer, UnLtd
From sour lemons to lemonade

The founder of Sour Lemons, a social enterprise addressing the lack of diverse leadership within the creative and social sectors, outlines her vision for ensuring those with lived experience of social issues lead on solutions.

With the support of an UnLtd Do It award in 2016, Sour Lemons launched our pilot training programme, which gave 12 young leaders the skills, knowledge and networks needed to build professional career paths and understand the value of their lived experiences to create social change. All of them are now in new employment, training, or running their own initiatives. More importantly, they all say the process was life affirming and are now leaning on their diversity of life experiences to inspire change.

We developed a consultancy model where our Young Leaders (or Lemons as I call them) use their experiences of being excluded from cultural spaces to work with organisations to become more inclusive. The social sector intends to stop injustice, yet it creates injustice by denying those with first-hand experience of social issues, the opportunities to solve them. People like me are considered an exception to the rule. My mission is to make sure my story isn’t unique.

In 2017 I had the pleasure of becoming the Social Entrepreneur in Residence at UnLtd. This position placed me at the heart of the Leaders with Lived Experience project to understand why there’s a lack of people like me leading the social change work.

I was inspired by UnLtd’s commitment to recognise the value of lived experience, what this means for the organisation, and for the wider sector. We all learned a huge deal over the last year. The standout learnings for me are:

• You can’t just focus on the individual, you need to look at the wider systems too
• A successful team will include people with both lived and learnt experience (and one person can have both)
• Lived experience is the key to finding solutions to the biggest social issues facing our communities.

Sade Brown — Founder, Sour Lemons

Sade Brown
Sade specialises in nurturing diverse talent, partnership development and community engagement. Sade is currently UnLtd’s Social Entrepreneur in Residence, a Red Bull Amaphiko Fellow and a trustee for the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre.

sourlemons.co.uk

Leaders with Lived Experience
Our Leaders with Lived Experience project brought 30 people together in Birmingham and Bristol to tackle how those who have first-hand experience of social issues are denied the opportunity to create the solutions. We want to see experts by experience in positions of influence, so they can use that expertise to pioneer positive social change. We also challenge ourselves to understand how to ensure UnLtd works in a genuinely inclusive manner, and make real change here too.
A national strategy for social entrepreneurs

UnLtd’s Policy Team is working with the Government and other decision-makers to create a more enabling environment for social entrepreneurs to start up and scale up. Here’s what we’ve been up to this year.

**Future of Civil Society Strategy**
2018 saw the publication of the first Civil Society Strategy in 15 years. We used this opportunity to let the Government know about the amazing work our social entrepreneurs do and urged the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) to address the barriers social entrepreneurs face. We teamed up with Social Enterprise UK and the School for Social Entrepreneurs, reaching out to social entrepreneurs across the country for their ideas. These views, along with evidence from our work, formed the backbone of our recommendations, and we were pleased to see that many of them feature in the final Strategy.

While the Strategy could have gone further in embracing our vision for a braver, more inclusive and more accountable civil society, we welcome the announcement of the strengthening of the Social Value Act, the calls for more co-design and collaboration on a local level, and the Strategy’s broad interpretation of civil society, embracing all who act to create social value, independent of the state.

**Inclusive Economy Partnership**
UnLtd was also invited to become part of the Government’s new Inclusive Economy Partnership (IEP). The IEP is a partnership of businesses, civil society and government departments that are working together to solve some of society’s toughest challenges, to help all communities and everyone within them feel they belong to and can participate in the UK economy.

UnLtd, together with the Cabinet Office, Accenture, Movement to Work, and a host of other organisations are teaming up with the West Midlands Combined Authority to pilot a fresh approach to supporting young people into sustainable work.
“Embedding our purpose in our articles made it clear that our purpose wasn’t going to change if either of the co-founders left, and it wasn’t going to change when we took on investors, which was key for us. In the process of taking on investment it was very clear that that’s what the investors were buying into, and there weren’t plans to pivot away from our central mission as we scaled.”

Jemma Phibbs — School Space

Purposely

This year saw the launch of Purposely, an online tool that helps businesses incorporate their purpose in their articles of association.

Incorporating purpose in company articles has a profound impact as it allows businesses to fundamentally redefine success. Purposely is much more than a company law tool: it inspires companies to think boldly about their place in the world and make authentic and legally binding commitments to serve that purpose.

Purposely was designed and created in partnership with law firm Bates Wells Braithwaite, with strategic support from the DCMS.

Laura Kekuti — Senior Policy Officer, UnLtd

“We as an organisation are looking forward to taking part in the new opportunities created by Civil Society Strategy, such as the responsible business leadership group and the social enterprise forum. We will share evidence from our work and put social entrepreneurs and lived experience at the heart of these endeavours.”

Mark Norbury
Chief Executive, UnLtd
Lessons to take forward for 2019
An investment in learning pays off with interest. Here we reflect on some of the challenges and lessons from our year.

We’ve known for a while that the awards we make don’t always reflect the communities where we live and work. When individuals do receive our support, it hasn’t always met their needs. We’ve taken a number of practical steps to address that this year, including:

• Making inclusion one of our values and establishing a cross organisational team, which also included a diverse group of social entrepreneurs, so we could understand how everyone can flourish at UnLtd
• Investing half of the annual training budget in Design for Inclusion workshops for staff and trustees. These focus on power, privilege and the root causes of inequalities. If we are to change our external impact, we must also reflect the inclusion lens on ourselves
• Working with a group of leaders with lived expertise in Birmingham and Bristol to understand how we can better support people with lived experience of social issues
• Committing to develop our application process and piloting versions based on individual need.

Supporting social entrepreneurs to develop as social leaders is core to our mission. However, for them to flourish beyond our support, we need to pay attention to the wider system in which these ventures operate. We now aim to help social entrepreneurs work together to change these systems within each focus area, leaving a legacy of much greater impact.

We know we can’t do this alone. We need to work with social entrepreneurs, the people they serve, policy makers, civil society and the private sector to go after a shared goal and together apply pressure.

To make this happen, we are now working with Scope, Ignition Brewery, DWP, Employment Related Services Association, and UBS to together reduce the disability employment gap, putting social entrepreneurs’ solutions at the centre of our efforts.
So, what next…?
We want to be a foundation of (as well as for) social entrepreneurs. To make this a reality, we need to be closer to the people we support. We need much quicker feedback loops to learn about and refine what we do. We need to be comfortable testing ideas with small groups to see which ones resonate most.

The good news is that we have some strong foundations to build on. Over the past year we’ve started bringing the people we support into our offices as social entrepreneurs in residence. We have representatives from our community on our board and in our staff groups. But we still have some work to do to embed this across the organisation. If you’ve been supported by us in the past, or have ideas for this, we invite you to get involved.

Jami Dixon — Head of Research, Impact and Learning, UnLtd

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We’ve pushed ourselves to find new models of working, so we can be even better at embracing collaboration. We’ve run two externally-funded programmes where we set out to co-design our work.

Both pieces of work were co-delivered with partner organisations. We spent a lot of time focusing on what we wanted to achieve and how we were going to deliver the work (budgets, timelines etc). We didn’t spend enough time getting to know each other as individuals and organisations. After we came together to talk about our values and priorities, it became easier to work together.

We are now working to be even better at co-design and collaboration: building in time and resources for relationship building, becoming more comfortable with flexible plans and budgets, and creating space for reflection and learning.

To be a sector leader in how we evidence impact, we need to demonstrate the collective value of social entrepreneurs. We’ve realised that this is easier said than done. The issues that social entrepreneurs are tackling are often complex, and it takes time to see long-term benefits.

We need to better align our support to social entrepreneurs with the evidence demonstrating their value. It’s proving to be a balancing act. We want social entrepreneurs to collect meaningful data that is relevant for their business, their customers and their goals. We also need consistent data that we can aggregate. We don’t want to create additional and unhelpful reporting requirements. At the same time, we need robust evidence that demonstrates wider societal benefit.

We’ve created a new role in our research team, to work with ventures and staff to better connect these areas of work. We are also working closely to test out new ways of collecting data and have identified some academic partners to act as critical friends. It’s still early days, but one thing we do know for sure is that it isn’t one size fits all.
He was one of only 20 people selected from 20,000 applications from across the globe to be part of the two-year programme, designed to amplify the impact of Fellows’ work and inspire a wave of civic innovation.

Alex Smith
Cares Family founder wins Obama Fellowship
Alex Smith launched The Cares Family in 2011 to fight against loneliness and polarisation in the UK, by connecting young professionals and older neighbours to build new and lasting relationships.
In 2018 he was appointed an Obama Foundation Fellow, recognising his work creating transformational change in communities.

Refuge Hot Chocolate
Tara Mullan
This award-winning hot chocolate, took the food world by storm with spectacular success at the 2018 Blas na hEireann Irish Food Awards, taking home four awards — Best Hot Beverage, Best New Product in Ireland, Best Artisan Product in Ireland, and Best in Antrim. The hot chocolate is produced with ethically sourced ingredients, and the profits are donated back to a charity who fight against human trafficking.
instagram.com/refugehotchocolate

Social entrepreneurs have the ambition and talent to tackle the big problems in our society, but they need to be seen and to be understood in order to deliver these solutions. We want the world to know how much is possible when we back social entrepreneurs.

Going mainstream

UnLtd impact report 2018
Change, Please
Cemal Ezel
Change, Please have reimagined how people view a simple cup of coffee. Founded by Cemal Ezel, they are a social business who provide employment and other support for homeless people. They started through selling coffee at a stall. Their product is now available in over 300 Sainsbury’s stores, and on Virgin Trains. changeplease.org

Hey Girls
Celia Hodson
Period poverty is a real problem in the UK — one in 10 girls are unable to afford sanitary products and many skip school when they are on their period. That’s why entrepreneurs Celia Hodson and her daughters Becky and Kate started the business Hey Girls. They have a simple practical solution: for every pack of sanitary products you buy, one pack is given directly to help girls and women in need. heygirls.co.uk
Thank you

The achievements of UnLtd and our social entrepreneurs we’ve shared in this report would not have been possible without the organisations and partners we’ve worked with this year.

Access — the Foundation for Social Investment
Akin Gump
Bates Wells Braithwaite
Big Lottery Fund
Big Society Capital
Capacity
Centre for Better Ageing
Comic Relief
Companies House
Debevoise & Plimpton
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
Design Council
Deutsche Bank
DLA Piper
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Grant Thornton
Herbert Smith
Hogan Lovells
Mathys & Squire
Millennium Awards Trust
Orrick
PA Consulting
Pernod Ricard
Salterbaxter MSL Group
Scope
Sheridans
Simons Muirhead & Burton LLP
Skagen
South West Academic Health Science Network
Spirit of 2012
Stone King Solicitors
The Preston Associates
Thomson Reuters Foundation
UBS

“UnLtd is a highly regarded partner. Working with UnLtd enables UBS to grow our social entrepreneurship portfolio by providing funding, and mentoring from our employee volunteers. Together we are creating significant social change and impact across East London.”

Sarah Craner — Director, Corporate Responsibility and Community Affairs, UBS

How to work with us?
We are continually seeking new partners to support social entrepreneurs. Contact our Director of Partnerships & Influence, Nas Morley, to find out more. NasMorley@unltd.org.uk

Endnotes

All social impact metrics, unless stated otherwise, come from a sample based on our 2017/18 End of Award Survey (n = 175)

1 SE UK State of social enterprise survey report 2015. socialenterprise.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=828443a9-2f80-4c2a-ab2b-81befed6ed05

2 This calculation is based on the number of ventures that are based in the most deprived 20% of areas, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

3 Calculation based on our internal media monitoring tools of opportunities to see.

4 Figures from Scope’s research, 2018. scope.org.uk/media/disability-facts-figures

5 The Future of Business, State of Social Enterprise Survey 2017. socialenterprise.org.uk

Helping ambitious social ventures to scale

Thrive gives social entrepreneurs the chance to grow their venture, and deliver sustainable impact across the UK.

We will support groups of social ventures developing solutions in two distinct areas:
• Improving access to employment for those distant from the labour market
• Developing products and services for an ageing society.

Go to unlt.org/thrive to find out more

Sofab Sports was one of the first ventures to receive investment support from UnLtd to help scale up sofabsports.org.uk
Thank you to all our social entrepreneurs and partners for creating positive change. Find more stories at unltd.org.uk

(Clockwise from top) Find out more about the Transform Ageing project on page 16, Tech Styles breakin on page 5, Step and Stone’s baking on page 12 and Dundee’s enterprises on page 8