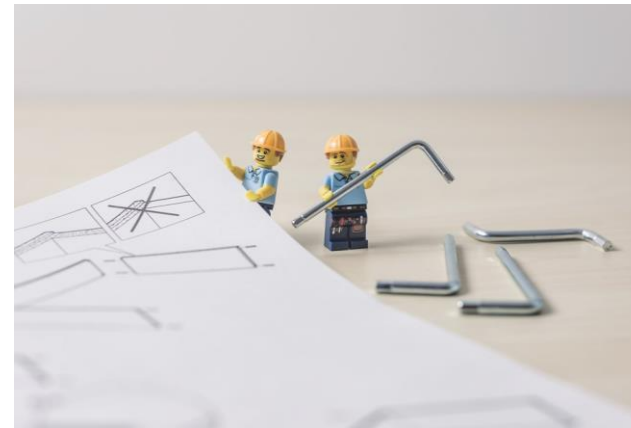


Youth Toolkit: Setting up a Youth Group



1 - Idea Development & Practicalities

You've had an exciting idea to start up a new youth club and have the motivation to get it off the ground. This stage is an ideal time to harness the initial enthusiasm to match your project to the needs of your community and work out the feasibility of where you can deliver your project.



1.1 Consultation: Speaking to young people & the wider community



Young Minds have a helpful toolkit on designing and running consultation events [here](#) which includes activities that you could use and goes through some suggestions of how you might like to structure your consultation event.

A good youth project meets an identified need in the community. If you've made the decision to set up a youth group, it's likely that you have existing links in with the community and may have even already spoken to young people about what they want. Whatever the reason behind your decision though, it's essential to gather this firsthand knowledge, speaking to both young people and other members of the community to ensure your youth project fits with the community's needs. This is typically done through a consultation process – whether that involves sending a survey out through existing mechanisms such as schools and social media, speaking with young people in their existing spaces, or holding an event to demonstrate what activities you have in mind and chat through ideas with young people.

Questions to consider

- What youth provision is there currently in your area?
- Has there been any history of youth provision locally that could young people's attitude towards a new group?
- Do young people in your area want a new group? What are their interests, what activities would they like to see?
- What kind of club will you be? (e.g. a place for young people to hang out and socialize; or a club with educational / developmental purposes which offers activities that challenge and stimulate young people)
- Are there any other services you can link into that could provide additional support your youth group? Have you contacted your district/borough council or parish/town council to see what support they may be able to provide?
- What do other members of the community think?
- What age will you cater for? (e.g. a Junior club for under 13s; a Senior club for 13+; or a wide age range)

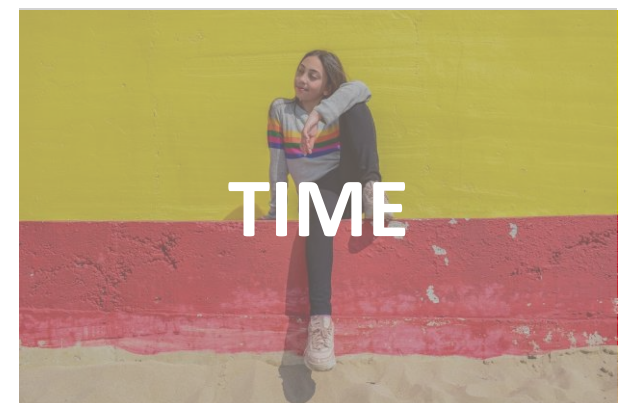
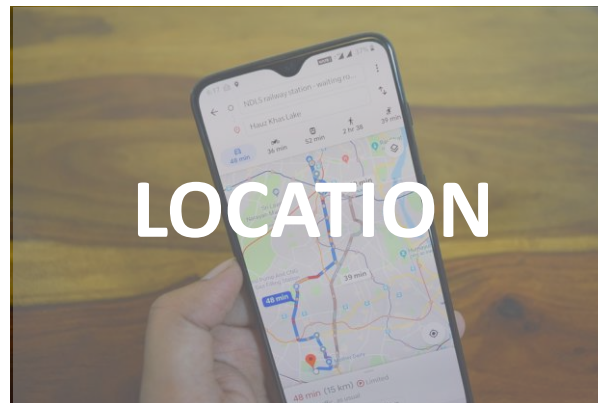
<p>RUNG 8 - Youth initiated shared decisions with adults: Youth-led activities, in which decision making is shared between youth and adults working as equal partners.</p>
<p>RUNG 7 - Youth initiated and directed: Youth-led activities with little input from adults.</p>
<p>RUNG 6 - Adult initiated shared decisions with youth: Adult-led activities, in which decision making is shared with youth.</p>
<p>RUNG 5 - Consulted and informed: Adult-led activities, in which youth are consulted and informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of adult decisions.</p>
<p>RUNG 4 - Assigned, but informed: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, decision-making process, and have a role.</p>
<p>RUNG 3 - Tokenism: Adult-led activities, in which youth may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback.</p>
<p>RUNG 2 - Decoration: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, but have no input in how they are planned.</p>
<p>RUNG 1 - Manipulation: Adult-led activities, in which youth do as directed without understanding of the purpose for the activities.</p>

Hart's Ladder of Participation above can be a great prompt when thinking about the youth participation you'd like to implement in your youth group

1.2 Researching practicalities

Once you have established what the need is (what your young people want!), there are a few logistics that you need to consider to ensure you can deliver sessions that are safe as well as engaging. It's a good idea to do some research around the following:

- Where will you hold your sessions? Is there a public building such as a community centre, church hall or school you can use?
- Is there room to do more than one activity at the same time? Such as a space for quieter activities? Is it an easy space to supervise?
- What about an outdoor area you can use when the weather is nicer?
- Who else uses the venue? What are the management of the venue like?
- Does the venue have any storage space where you can keep any resources? If not, do you have anywhere to store equipment?
- Is the venue accessible? How will young people get to and from the venue?
- Is there availability at a regular time each week that suits the needs of the group?
- How many workers are needed for a programme of activities? What are your staff ratios? The NSPCC offer some ['best practice' guidance](#) on adult to child ratios. We always think 3 adults can bring a lot to a project, giving you all more space to operate and giving the young people enough access to you all for support
- How many youth workers will be recruited?



1.3 Recruitment: Management Committee

One of the key practicalities that is good to work on at an early stage is building a strong, passionate team around you that understand the needs you've identified and/or bring skills to the table that may benefit the project. Finding your team can be broken down into two elements; the management committee (who are responsible for strategic level governance, such as decision making, legal liability, monitoring finances, fundraising and so on) and the youth workers who will be leading or supervising session delivery.

Management Committee

No matter what the organisational structure of your group (more info on structures to come!), the management committee should be made up of at least 3 people to cover the 3 main roles of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. One person will also need to be the named 'safeguarding lead'. Beyond this, you may also like to recruit additional members to lead on specific responsibilities such as fundraising or a young people's representative. The number of roles within your management team is defined in your constitution.

Your management committee will be responsible for governing the group and directing how it is managed and run. A management committee may also be called trustees, the board, governors, directors or something else.

For support giving your management committee a good foundation in their responsibilities, our expert governance officer delivers the "Introduction to Trustee Roles and Responsibilities" course. We are also able to offer support specifically around trustee recruitment, retention and succession planning, as well as helping to resolve any issues that you may be experiencing. Find out more about our trustee support [here](#).

For general information and guidance, these sites are a useful introduction:

- CAS' free online E-Learning modules: [TrusteeLearning - online Trustee Learning](#)
- Charity Commission guidance: [The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do \(CC3\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)



Once you have consulted with your young people to establish the need that your project will be meeting and researched the practical elements that you will need available, the next step is to look at what scaffolding needs to be in place before you can “open your doors”. Whilst not as exciting as the ideas stage, having these essentials in place from the beginning will help ensure you have a strong foundation to apply for grant funding further down the line, ensuring you are robust and improving your sustainability.

2 - Governance, policies and procedures

2.1 Decide on a governance structure

In the early stages of setting up a youth club, we would recommend looking into what legal structures are available for your group and which would suit your needs best. Most youth groups that have an income of under £5000 per annum do not register as a charity and are run as an 'unincorporated organisation'. This structure still requires you to be governed by a constitution, have a management committee and follow charity law, but means you are not registered with either the Charity Commission or Companies House. In an unincorporated organisation, the management committee have the legal responsibility for the project as individuals. This means that they take on personal responsibility for the organisation's debts and liabilities.

Why incorporate?

The main reason that groups consider incorporating is 'limited liability'. By becoming an incorporated organisation, the group forms its own legal entity, separate to the individuals who run it. This means that the personal assets of the trustees are protected, except in limited circumstances. You may like to consider incorporating if you have significant financial responsibilities such as: Employing staff; Delivering services under contractual agreement; Regularly entering commercial contracts
Owning a freehold or leasehold

CIO or CIC?

If you're considering incorporating, the two most up-to-date forms are a "Charitable Incorporated Organisation" (CIO), or a "Community Interest Company" (CIC). One of the main considerations that would inform a decision between these two options is how you plan to generate income. If your group plans to be part of wholly funded by grants and donations, a CIO may be a good fit as there are typically a much broader pool of grant funds available than a CIC. If you're looking to generate most of your income by selling goods or services though, you may be better suited to a CIC structure. There are also wider implications of what each of these structures might mean for your group, such as whether a director is able to take a wage. If you would like to chat through what the different structures would mean for your group with our expert, you can book a free 1-1 governance surgery [here](#).

	Control / Ownership	Governing Document	Regulator	Limited Liability	Profit distribution	Charitable status available	Expectation to trade
Unincorporated Association	Management Committee	Constitution	Charity Commission	No	No	Yes (if purpose are solely charitable)	No
Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)	Board of Trustees	Constitution	Charity Commission	Yes	No – reinvested into the charity	Automatic	No – but can sell services in line with charitable purposes
Community Interest Company (CIC) – either limited by shares, or guarantee	Board of Directors	Memorandum & Articles of Association	Companies House & CIC Regulator	Yes	Yes – but must benefit wider community. Can pay limited dividends to private investors	No	Yes

2.2 Set out your policies and procedures

Policies and procedures establish how your club wants to work with young people, so staff and volunteers are confident about what action to take and when. Writing these can seem a little daunting if it's not something you've been involved with before, but there are lots of resources available to draw on and we are happy to help with anything you're not sure about too.

The UK Youth 'Safe Spaces Framework' runs through the essentials of what should be included in all your policy and procedures, specifically from the perspective of organisations that work with children and young people: [UK Youth 'Safe Spaces Framework'](#)

We can also provide examples of any of the following:

- Health & Safety (including risk assessments) – Girlguiding have some good resources for risk assessments specific to Youth settings [When to do a risk assessment | Girlguiding](#)
- Equal Opportunities / Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Safeguarding – Find our specialist support with Safeguarding [here](#)
- Confidentiality and GDPR - The ICO is an independent authority who's purpose it is to uphold GDPR; they have guidance and a template privacy notice [here](#). There is also guidance on writing a data protection policy from NCVO for community and voluntary organisations [here](#).
- DBS, Recruitment and Code of Conduct
- Consent forms and registration - The NSPCC have an example form [here](#) that also covers when to gain consent
- You may also want to consider the following policies: Anti-harassment and bullying; whistleblowing; social media; volunteering; disciplinary; grievance.

Resources that may be helpful to promote inclusivity in your group:

- [Include Autism | Ambitious about Autism](#)
- [Resources for inclusive education - ALLFIE \(the Alliance for Inclusive Education\)](#)
- [EmpowHER Toolkit - UK Youth](#)
- [Supporting young carers and their families | The Children's Society \(childrenssociety.org.uk\)](#)
- [Activities for your workplace | Time To Change \(time-to-change.org.uk\)](#)
- [Resources for youth professionals | Time To Change \(time-to-change.org.uk\)](#)

2.3 Insurance

As a legal requirement, you will need to have insurance in place so that you are protecting the club itself, as well as the staff, volunteers, young people and the public. There are plenty of providers that support youth groups and it's worth shopping around to find something that is aware of and fits your needs. A few good things to consider whilst you're talking to insurance companies include:

- How big will your youth group be?
- Will you employ staff or have volunteers?
- What activities will you be providing? Will you be doing any off-site activities?

There's a helpful article on Children & Young People Now that goes through some of the fundamentals, but do bear in mind that it's written by an insurance company: [What insurance do youth groups and children's charities need? | CYP Now](#)

Youth Focus
SUFFOLK

Where can I get insurance for my youth group?

CAS works in partnership with PolicyBee to provide insurance for community groups, which you can find out about [here](#). Other example insurance providers include, but are not limited to:

- [Unity: Insurance for Children's Activities, Charities & Youth Groups](#)
- [Access: Children and Youth Group Insurance](#)
- [ThirdSectorProtect: Youth Club Insurance](#)
- [Ladbrook: Youth Group Insurance](#)
- [Markel: Children's Activities and Youth Club Insurance](#)

3 - Finances & sustainability

Even with keeping money managing to a minimum, almost all youth clubs will need funds to be able to pay staff, run DBS checks, hire venues, advertise activities, and provide any activity resources where needed. In order to manage your funds effectively and safely, there are a few good things to consider getting in place whilst you're setting up.



3.1 Getting a bank account

One of the first things you will need to do to get your finances in line is to open a bank account in the name of your youth group. This is important for keeping the group's money separate and means you will be all set for collecting donations and fees or applying for grants.

Most major banks offer free banking for small youth groups through their 'clubs and societies' accounts. Although the process of opening a bank account for a community group can take some time (with some banks taking several weeks and others even taking a few months), it is a key part of getting your youth group set up. The Resource Centre have a helpful article that takes you through what you will need to consider, including choosing a bank: [Bank accounts for community groups | Resource Centre](#) Good things to bear in mind for setting up a bank account and putting financial rules in place include:

- You will need to assign someone from the committee to act as Treasurer who will be responsible for monitoring the finances
- It's a good idea to set up a spreadsheet to record income and outgoings that includes details of where the money comes from and what it is spent on
- Bank accounts for community groups require two signatories from the management committee
- When exploring bank account options, think about ease of access when dealing with cash – you will need to have a system in place for handling petty cash and subs

Alongside setting up a bank account, your committee will need to agree your financial rules about how the group will look after it's money. You can find a set of sample financial rules here: [Financial rules | Resource Centre](#).



Training: We hold regular training sessions that cover finance essentials for Treasurers and Trustees. You can find out when the next one will be, along with our other training available for trustees here: [Upcoming Events – Trustee Training courses](#)

Top tip: If you're keen to get going with making grant applications whilst your bank account is still being set up, your local town or parish council may be able to hold funds for you in the interim. You would just need to contact them to see if they would be happy to put an agreement in place and would then list their bank account details on your grant applications.

3.3 Looking into income generation

If you've gotten this far, you'll have put a huge amount of passion, enthusiasm and effort into getting your youth group off the ground. To make sure that your group can keep running in the long term, the committee will be responsible for making sure that there is enough income to cover expenditure. You will identify what your running costs are in your business plan. At CAS, we have expert advice and support, not only on how to be successful in grant funding applications, but also in working towards building long viable futures for your project. You can find out more about the support with funding and sustainability, including 1-1 surgeries, training sessions, information and advice [here](#). As a starter for 10 though, why not start thinking about:

General income:

- Will you be charging subs?
- Are you Do you have any regular givers?

Grant funding:

- Suffolk Community Foundation - [Current Grants List \(suffolkecf.org.uk\)](http://suffolkecf.org.uk)
- Your local district or borough Council Community Grants:
 - Babergh & Mid Suffolk - [Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Funding » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)
 - East Suffolk - [Community grants and funding » East Suffolk Council](#)
 - Ipswich - [Community grant funding | Ipswich Borough Council](#)
 - West Suffolk - [Community grants \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](http://westsuffolk.gov.uk)
- Funding 4 Suffolk Portal - [Home | Funding 4 Suffolk \(idoxopen4community.co.uk\)](#)

Other avenues to explore could include:

- Corporate sponsorship
- Social enterprises (e.g. a pop-up tuck shop or t shirt printing by the young people)
- Fundraising events (e.g. sponsored run, paid breakfast event, raffle)
- Crowdfunding for specific cause (e.g. to fund a minibus, some sports equipment or the costs of a group day trip)



3.2 Budgeting and business planning

One of the best tools in your arsenal to demonstrate the passion and dedication within the project is a business plan. As well as outlining the steps you will take in order to reach your aims and become sustainable, a good business plan should shape how you tackle and overcome any challenges, offering a toolkit to steer key decisions in the future. Rather than being something that is left in a dusty drawer, it should be a live document that you come back to again and again, reflecting where you are now, where you want to go, changing and adapting in line with your group as it develops. Business plans can also be used to support funding applications if you plan to submit bids for any major grants or even if you're launching a campaign for donors to support the group. Robust financial planning, realistic forecasting, and an organisational roadmap all offer the scaffolding that support your group to be dynamic and sustainable

Writing a business plan

If you've completed the earlier steps around consultation, research, recruitment and governance, you'll already have some bones in place that you'll need for a business plan and you'll be able to pull these elements together into one document.

With the sustainability of your group in mind, a business plan is the ideal place to also outline your expected income and expenditure, helping to forecast your budget. This identifies areas where you may need to seek additional funding streams and helps ensure that you will not be operating at a loss.

Not sure where to get started? The NCVO offer a step-by-step guide on completing each section of a business plan [here](#), read on for a one-page guide of what to include or get in touch to chat through things



3.2 Budgeting and business planning

As a starter for 10, the headings NCVO recommend for your business plan, along with a paraphrased summary of what each of these covers, are:

1. **Title page:** name, date, period the plan covers
2. **Contents:** update this once your plan is complete
3. **Executive Summary:** a short description of what you do; who you do it for; how you're doing it and what you need to achieve it
4. **About your organisation:** your vision, mission and values; history to date; what the group looks like today; legal status and aims
5. **What we do:** what services you provide and who you provide them to; how you developed your services and how you evaluate them; whether you will develop your services further, with any timescales
6. **Our market:** describe the young people using your services that are your beneficiaries (and/or customers if you're asking for subs) – how have they influenced your aims, what might change that could affect how you operate, who are they and what are their needs? Do you have a "typical young person", what makes them come to you, if you plan to expand, who will you target and how will you target them? If you have any major donors, you should also describe them in this section
7. **Market research and testing:** describe the research you've done to identify the needs of your community, along with any pilot activities you've held to help establish the level of interest
8. **How we reach our market:** describe how you will reach the young people who may attend your group, whether you're trying to reach new young people, or those already attending the group. Marketing channels could include social media, print media (flyers & posters), e-newsletters, emails, word of mouth, events, local radio and press releases. What do you need to tell your young people? Give a brief overview of your marketing strategy and plan. Describe your brand and how you communicate it and highlight key relationships for your marketing and brand
9. **Market analysis:** Complete a PESTEL analysis to identify big external trends and drivers that could have an impact on your group; who are your competitors and how have you identified them; complete a SWOT analysis and summarise what you have learnt from your competitors / how you'll stand out
10. **Operational plan:** Set out the key milestones for your group's aims, with an expected timescale, for example launch of your social media page by XX date, securing premises by XX date and initial volunteer recruitment by XX date; list the resources you need to run the group (such as equipment or premises), whether you have them or how you plan to access them and why these resources are needed (to demonstrate that your costs are realistic and relevant); describe any partners or suppliers you need to carry out the group; describe your transport and logistics, if relevant; outline your payments process; state any legal requirements such as DBS checks, food hygiene certificates; state what type and level of insurance you have or will need
11. **People, management and governance:** Outline the people who are vital to the group, describe your plan to bring in new skills or transfer knowledge across a wider team; Give brief bios for your core management team and board; include a structure chart of how the team are organized, with any new posts you plan to create
12. **Our impact:** describe your process for measuring, learning from and communicating your impact. The thinktank NPC has some helpful tools for taking your first steps into impact measurement [here](#)
13. **Cost and income structure:** give a summary of your main costs and a timetable for expenditure (fixed costs such as rent and insurance; as well as variable costs such as food provision for specific activities); outline your main sources of income, whether you have secured these or are forecasting them; describe any plans to diversify if you're heavily reliant on one income stream; describe your pricing strategy if you are charging for the group or activities
14. **Financial forecasts (the make-or-break point!):** complete a cashflow forecast (a prediction of your income and expenditure over a 12-15 month period) to ensure you have enough money to cover your costs; plan for annual increases in costs such as travel; describe how you've worked out each cost and any assumptions you have made (such as allowing for seasonal variations such as lower attendance during term time)
15. **Risk map:** Set out your main risks in a table; consider risks related to governance, regulation compliance, finance, operational risks and external risks. For each risk, decide how likely it is to happen, what impact it will have on your organisation and what you can do to reduce or manage the risk