

## Stronger Together EU-UK Network of Youth Organisations

### Terms of Reference

A network of UK and EU youth organisations was one of the key recommendations from the [Stronger Together consultation](#) as part of the [EU UK Youth Stronger Together project](#) which has been delivered by the British Council and co-funded by the European Commission between February 2023 to January 2025.

Its establishment would respond to demand from the youth sector and would draw on the energy and existing work of its members. The network is a practical, effective way of supporting ongoing EU-UK dialogue and acting in support of the other youth recommendations:

- Advancing negotiations on UK-EU youth learning mobility
- Strengthening opportunities for cultural exchange and mutual understanding between young people in the UK and the EU
- Strengthening youth participation in public debate and policy dialogue on the future of EU-UK relations.

This is an opportunity to connect the many networks, organisations and groups in the UK and EU whose aims align with the recommendations and maximise their collective potential to generate learning, action and influence. This Terms of Reference sets out the initial working arrangements for the proposed EU-UK network of youth organisations.

#### PURPOSE OF THE NETWORK

- To build a sustainable community of EU and UK youth organisations
- To enable youth organisations to support and advocate for:
  - Greater access for young people to quality opportunities for EU-UK youth exchanges and intercultural education
  - Young people's involvement and participation in shaping the EU-UK relationship

#### OBJECTIVES

The scope of objectives is informed by the Stronger Together Youth Recommendations and will include:

- **Connection:** Strengthening the connection and sense of unity amongst UK and EU youth organisations
- **Cooperation:** Increasing cooperation in the youth field between the UK, EU and Member States
- **Opportunity:** Enabling youth organisations to create more inclusive and accessible opportunities for young people across the EU and UK to learn, live, work and study



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- **Collective voice and influence:** Stakeholder engagement and action on shared organisational and youth priorities
- **Learning:** Sharing experience and insights and facilitating mutual learning between youth organisations

Additional specific priorities for the network may also be determined by its members and may shift over time in response to the context and needs.

### PRINCIPLES

The network will be established with these parameters and principles.

- **EU-UK** – The network is for organisations based in the UK and EU member states. A balance between EU and UK organisations will be sought
- **UK wide** – There will be representation from across the UK and will recognise devolved issues. The network will set national targets and monitor for representation across the UK.
- **Youth focused** - It is by and for young people
- **Inclusive** – The network strives for a diverse membership and to be accessible to all, representing the diversity of young people living in the UK and EU, for example, young people from low-income backgrounds, disabled individuals, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ youth and migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The network will seek to reach out and widen participation to those not currently represented in existing networks.
- **Inclusive practice** – the network will assign a lead on inclusion to monitor and support practice, including on the use of plain language, image and text accessibility, and digital engagement.
- **Adding value** – The network will connect with and contribute to the wider ecosystem.

### MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

#### Full membership

Full membership of the network will be open to all organisations who are committed to the purpose and objectives of the network and who are EU or UK youth focused organisations. This includes organisations who have departments or dedicated programmes that are youth serving and aligned with the aims of the Network, but which may not be solely youth organisations.

#### Associate membership

Associate membership will be open to individuals, aged 18 or over, who are committed to the purpose and objectives of the network and can contribute to the aims, and will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Associate members may also be sought to support representation from specific groups

#### **Age**

The network is taking a broad definition of youth, as young people aged 11 to 35, in order to be inclusive across different definitions of youth in the UK, devolved



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nations, and the EU. However, representatives of organisations in their role as participating members of the network should be between 16 and 35.

Where representatives are 16 – 17 years old, the members organisation will take responsibility for safeguarding, for example with adult support where necessary.

Associate members must be 18 or over.

### **Membership application and termination**

Interested organisations can apply to join the network by responding to a simple application form. This will include:

- A statement that the organisation meets the basic criteria outlined above
- Details of the named person or people who will represent the organisation
- A short explanation of why they would like to join the network
- Details of their legal status and relevant policies

Membership will be refused to any applicant that does not meet the membership criteria above or does not represent the principles of the network. For example, an organisation that does not specifically serve young people, or is discriminatory in any way.

There is no fixed term for membership. The co-chairs may jointly remove members of the network who are inactive, or who no longer meet the membership criteria, following a review and an invitation to consultation with the member in question.

The network will be proactive in regularly reviewing its membership, particularly for organisations which have not yet been reached or groups who are not yet represented in the groups and will endeavour to reach out and engage them. Diversity and accessibility will be embedded from the start.

Associate members will apply through, or will be asked to submit, a form with additional questions regarding their interest, existing networks or organisations they are part of, and their work with and access to young people.

A review panel comprising the Chairs and the working group will assess applications in the initial stages.

## **GOVERNANCE**

### **Roles**

The network will be member-led, with members taking up two rotating Co-chair positions, supported by a working group, or working groups, as necessary.

### Co-chairs

2 Co-chairs will be selected from amongst the members on an annual basis – one from the UK and one from the EU.



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The Chairs will take responsibility for the day to day running of the network, ensuring it is fulfilling its purpose. They will act as a point of contact for potential partners, funders and members. Chairs will have the power and responsibility to:

- Organise and set the agenda for network meetings
- Notify members of network meetings, at least 14 days before the meeting takes place.
- Maintain a list of members of the network
- Approve new network members
- Convene working groups to support them in their duties or to lead on specific discussion and actions as necessary

All Members will have the right to:

- Take part in network meetings and activities
- Contribute their experience and expertise
- Take an active role in shared network communication and actions

Full members will have the right to:

- Elect the chairs on an annual basis at the AGM
- Propose amendments to the TOR, for approval by membership vote.

In the matters above, all full members will be entitled to one vote, and proxy voting will be allowed. One third of membership participating in a vote will be considered quorate.

Additional roles or dedicated task groups, for example on specific issues, may be initiated as the network evolves.

### Network Meetings

- At least one annual general meeting and three network meetings will take place per year
- Meetings will predominantly take place online, enabling wider participation and minimising costs. However, in-person meetings may be arranged, where funding permits, to strengthen relationships and enable deeper conversations and more focused planning and collaboration
- Where face to face meetings take place, they will be held in different locations to enable the widest possible participation.
- Member organisations will be able to send multiple representatives to meetings. Member organisations are encouraged to identify young people who are able to represent their organisation within network meetings. Where member organisations wish to be represented by a young person under 18, the representative must be accompanied a provide a supporting adult from the member organisations to take responsibility for the safeguarding, welfare and general support of the young person.



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## **Data Protection**

The network will abide by the data protection policy of the Chair organisation. This policy will be available to members.

The Network database with contact information of members will be passed on to each new Chair organisation.

## **ANNEX: Stronger Together Youth Recommendations**

