

2024



IMPACT REPORT



MY LIFE MY SAY	
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Our Work

MY LIFE MY SAY

My Life My Say is a youth-led, non-partisan movement on a mission to encourage young people to participate in democracy, and get every single young person voting.

We're recognised as one of the leading drivers of youth engagement in the UK, reaching over 6 million young people since 2013, increasing access to democracy, and affecting real change that benefits the greater good. We have worked with many notable decision-making institutions in the UK to help enhance young people's engagement in decision-making processes.

In 2018, the Cabinet Office announced My Life My Say as a Democracy Champion, particularly for our Democracy Café methodology. In a short timeframe we have built an exceptional reputation for empowering young people, proven our ability to strategically influence policy and empower young people in the UK.

We have garnered the praise of the UK Government, Mayor of London, UN Youth Office, US Embassy in London, Mayor of Los Angeles, and European Parliament, amongst others.



A RECORD-BREAKING YEAR FOR MLMS

Welcome to the My Life My Say Impact Report, a celebration of another landmark year for our charity.

Words by Dan Lawes, Co-CEO (Grants & Partnerships) and Melisha John, Co-CEO (Governance & Operations)

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The Give An X Campaign was a standout achievement in 2024, generating **488,846** click-throughs to the government registration website — a record breaker.



As Co-CEOs of My Life My Say (MLMS), we are proud to present our 2024 Impact Report, which marks a transformative year for youth civic participation in the UK. The early General Election in July 2024 provided a critical opportunity for MLMS to deliver impact across our core pillars of engagement, leadership, and voter registration.

The Give An X Campaign was a standout achievement in 2024, generating 488,846 click-throughs to the government registration website — a record breaker. Supported by creative messaging, 300+ partnerships, and outstanding media coverage, the campaign reached over 13.8 million people. This success reinforced the vital role of young people in shaping democratic outcomes and showcased the best of youth-led campaigning.

We continued to deliver our Democracy Cafés, modernising the 17th-century



coffeehouse tradition, offering young people spaces to discuss issues impacting their lives. Between Jan 2024 and Mar 2025, we hosted 38 democracy cafés. The Next Gen Conference further amplified youth voices, bringing together 500 young participants and key decision-makers to the Barbican Centre, bridging the gap between youth and policymakers.

2024 also saw the reinvigoration of The Squad, as we equipped 50 young leaders with advocacy, campaigning, and public speaking skills and grew to over 400 active members. In July 2024 Mete stepped down as CEO and moved onto the board after being made Deputy Mayor of London for Environment and Energy. The seamless transition to the new Co-CEO model allowed the organisation to build towards an even bigger 2025. As we look to 2025 and beyond, our commitment to youth-led change remains unwavering. We will continue to create spaces for dialogue, empower young leaders, and increase youth voter participation to build a democracy that is more inclusive and representative. On behalf of MLMS, we thank our partners, funders, and especially the young people who inspire us daily. The future of our democracy is brighter because of them.

Dan Lawes & Melisha John
Co-CEOs, My Life My Say





A Word From The Chair

A PIVOTAL YEAR

Driving Change: Youth at the Heart of Democracy

Words by Andrew Roughan
Chairperson, My Life My Say



As Chair of the Board of My Life My Say, I am proud to present our 2024 Impact Report, which highlights our work during a pivotal year for youth civic engagement in the UK. The General Election in July underscored the importance of MLMS's mission to empower young people and amplify their voices in shaping a more inclusive democracy.

A defining achievement of the year was the award-winning Give An X Campaign, which encouraged nearly half a million young people to register to vote and reached millions more through innovative partnerships and dynamic campaigning. This initiative demonstrated

the extraordinary influence of youth-led activism on democratic outcomes.

MLMS also expanded our Democracy Cafés, offering spaces for meaningful dialogue, and strengthened our leadership programmes, equipping a new generation with the skills to drive change. Through these efforts, we have continued to bridge the gap between young people and decision-makers.

I extend my deepest gratitude to our partners, supporters, and, most importantly, the young people who are leading the way. Their energy and vision inspire us to build on these successes in the years to come.



GIVE UP?

GIVE AN X

A Landmark Campaign for Youth Participation

Words by Mete Coban MBE, Founder and CEO (2011-2024), My Life My Say, Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy



As the Founder of My Life My Say and the Deputy Mayor of London for Energy and Environment, I am immensely proud of the Give An X campaign.

This initiative stands as a testament to the power of youth-led, non-partisan efforts aimed at ensuring every young person is registered to vote and ready to participate in the democratic process.

The campaign represents a groundbreaking alliance constituting a diverse array of individuals, institutions, brands, and over 300 organisations behind a vital shared goal. Together, we have worked

tirelessly to register new voters across the country and promote civic education, fostering an informed and engaged electorate for both today and future generations.

The impact of this campaign belongs to all of us - the youth sector organisations that shared the message with their networks. It is rare that such a broad coalition is able to unite behind a single goal.

However, the Give An X campaign reflects the shared commitment we all have to amplifying young voices and ensuring their active participation in shaping our society.





18-24 YEAR OLDS
REGISTERED
TO **VOTE**
DIRECTLY THROUGH
GIVE AN X

4M

18-24 YEAR OLDS
REACHED VIA
GIVE AN X ADS

13.8M

MILLION
REACHED
ONLINE

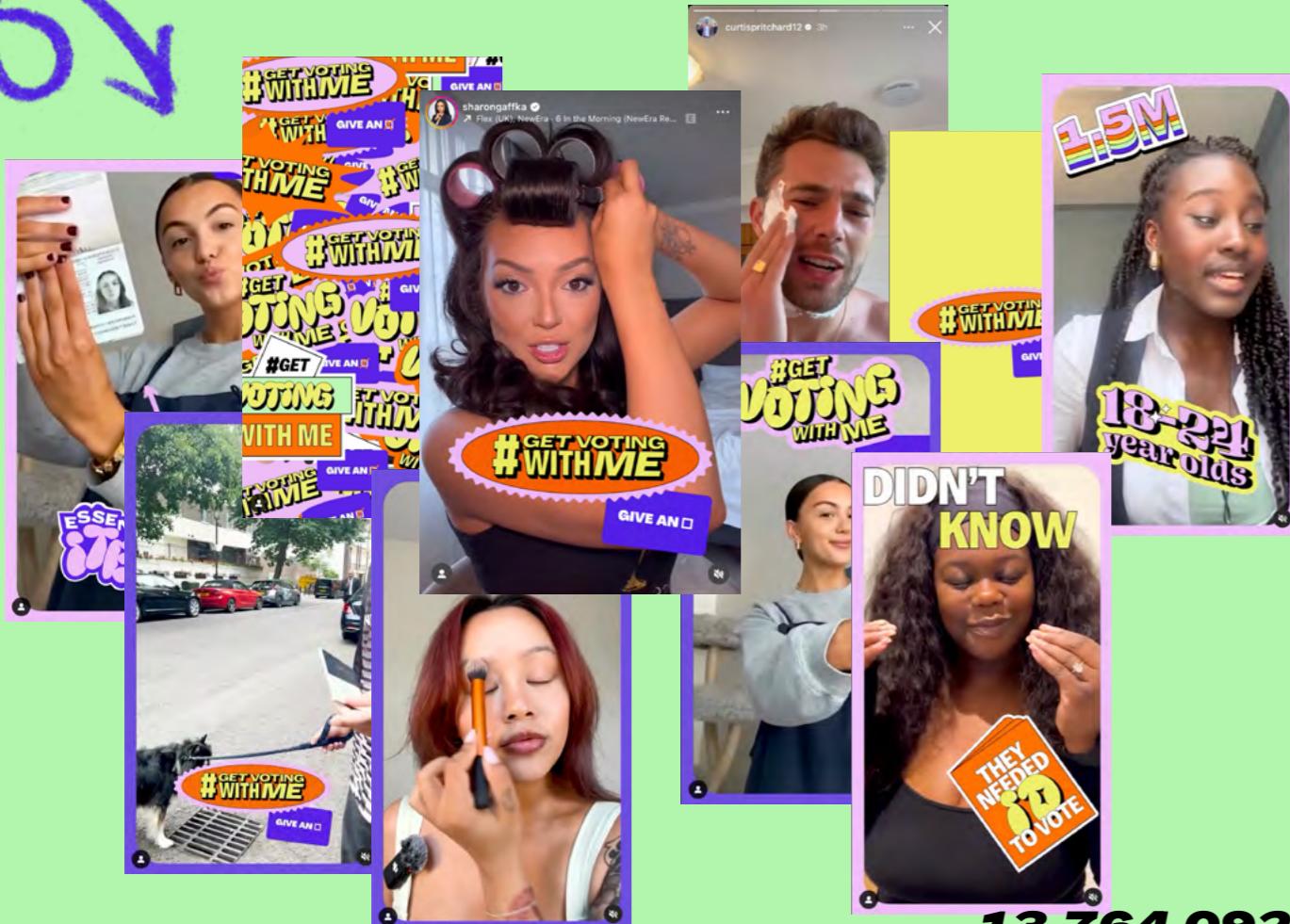
300+
PARTNERSHIPS

126

CELEBRITY
& INFLUENCER
ENDORSEMENTS



GIVE AN X SOCIALS



Case study: Get Voting With Me (#GVWM) Trend

In keeping with My Life My Say's commitment of meeting young people where they are, the Give An X campaign was primarily a digital campaign which utilised all of the social media platforms on which young people actively use – X, Instagram, Snapchat & Tiktok.

We were very grateful to receive grants for ads from Snapchat and X which we used to push our Give An X branded ads which, as the data above illustrates, massively helped increase the campaigns reach.

With 30% of young voters unaware of the introduction of new voter ID rules, we partnered with Wonderhood Studios to utilise the Get Ready With Me trend. We asked them to post their regular #GRWM content but halfway through, they'll pull out their ID and make the important point that, in order to be truly ready, their followers need their ID on them in order to vote. Collaborating with 11 major influencers, including Sharon Gaffka and Curtis Pritchard, this sub campaign alone was able to reach a combined following of 4.21 million people.



MLMS was incredibly grateful to partner with Freud's throughout the general election, an extraordinary collaboration that amplified the 'Give An X' campaign. Their support ensured that the Give an X message was not only heard but resonated deeply with a diverse audience.

The impact of Freud's efforts was evident in the extensive media coverage achieved, with the campaign receiving 107 pieces of

coverage across various formats. This included national broadcast, print, online, consumer, and regional outlets.

Most importantly, we recognised that authentic representation would be crucial to peer-to-peer engagement. As such, we invested significantly in media training for young campaign spokespeople, equipping them with the skills to effectively communicate the campaign's key messages.



YOU ALREADY VOTE, SO VOTE

MLMS, in partnership with Ogilvy UK, launched the You Already Vote, So Vote campaign ahead of the local elections, addressing research that found young people were 68% more likely to vote in reality TV competitions than in actual elections. To bridge this gap, we enlisted a diverse group of influencers from Big Brother, Love Island, and Britain's Got Talent, including Ashley Glazebrook, Bradley Riches, Sharon Gaffka, Will Best, Frankie Foster, Molly Marsh, Kai Fagan, and Tanyel Revan.

The campaign combined

a dynamic influencer and PR strategy with a 30-second cinema ad narrated by Big Brother's Marcus Bentley, featured in Pearl & Dean cinemas and on Out-of-Home (OOH) platforms at The Outernet. By meeting young people where they already engage, we turned passive interest into real political action, engaging them to vote where it matters.

Award-Winning Impact

MLMS are honoured to receive multiple awards for our work in the general election,

including Charity of the Year (Gold) at the Digital Marketing Awards 2024, alongside four Silver awards for Copywriting, Design or Art Direction, and Creative Solution. We also received Silver for Social Purpose: Charity at The Drum Awards 2024. These accolades highlight the impact of our efforts in mobilising young voters and ensuring their voices are heard. We are grateful for our partnership with Ogilvy UK, which played a pivotal role in driving voter registration and ensuring that young people's voices are heard where it truly matters.

PARTNERSHIPS

VOLUNTEERING
MATTERS



plexal



Ogilvy

J R
R T Joseph
Rowntree
Reform Trust



F R E U D S +



tinder



LONDON
GAMES FESTIVAL

UK YOUTH

SKATE
CABAL

change.org

Scouts

Berkeley
Foundation

RECLAIM



MISSION44

phf Paul Hamlyn
Foundation



UNIVERSITY OF
GREENWICH

deliveroo

BEN&JERRY'S

Lime

TONY BLAIR
INSTITUTE
FOR GLOBAL
CHANGE

THE
DIANA
AWARD

BITE
BACK

#iwill
movement

YOUTH
LEADS.



TNM

URBANRISE
IGNITING FINANCIAL LITERACY IN EVERYONE

aspeninstitute

BADU

headspace

DE
of

38Degrees
people power change

HereEast

global
academy

CHATHAM
HOUSE

ELECTHER

FBB
FOOTBALL BEYOND BORDERS

KUROGO

thred..
media

SAFE
PASSAGE

John Ellerman
Foundation

CITY BRIDGE
FOUNDATION

Future
Generations
Commissioners
for Wales

SCHWARZMAN
SCHOLARS
清华大学苏世民书院

SHAPE
HISTORY

AND MANY MORE

STEERING GROUP

The campaign was distinctively youth-led, driven by the enthusiasm and dedication of young individuals who took the reins in all aspects of its planning, execution, and outreach. Here's what they had to say...

**EDEN BYRNE, 20
NORTHERN IRELAND**



"This year was my first time voting in a general and local election. I did feel a bit overwhelmed and nervous but the Give an X campaign really helped me to feel less overwhelmed about knowing what to bring on voting day in terms of registration ID and knowing how the process will work. It helped me to register on time for the local elections which led into the general elections. I really hope that the new government does a lot for young people and listens to their voices and make sure that they are heard. I was also a member of the Give an X campaign steering group and we were a group young people who helped to make sure that the campaign was running smoothly. We were able to give our insights into the design of the campaign and what we wanted from it and also the direction that it should go and it was really great to be part of this. I was really proud of how successful it was and to be a small part of its success was really important to me."

"This general election was my first. After studying and working in this space, I've definitely been waiting for it. Working on the steering group was so rewarding, getting to see my input into decisions made, from the name to the graphics and key messaging, was so impactful. I never saw myself working on such an epic and successful campaign and to say I did that is the ultimate achievement. Just seeing so many people voting for the first time and learning about the political system was a surreal thing for me."



**ABDIRAHMAN AHMED, 24
BASED IN LONDON**

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**I NEVER SAW
MYSELF WORKING
ON SUCH AN
EPIC
CAMPAIGN.**

Give An X

ENGAGEMENT ON THE GROUND

From Football to Ice Cream: Engaging Young Voters

Words by Hayley Biley, Engagement Manager at My Life My Say



In a world where traditional approaches to youth engagement often fell short, particularly in politics, Give an X broke new ground by partnering with brands to create unique activations that resonated with young people. Our core values lay in meeting young people where they already were—rather than trying to draw them in.

Many brands focused on attracting young people to their platforms or venues, but we quickly realised, after reviewing previous youth voter registration campaigns, that this approach didn't truly engage them. Instead, we collaborated with brands that young people already connected with, giving us a distinct advantage in capturing their attention and

motivating them to register to vote.

Our partnerships were deliberately chosen based on the preferences and insights of young people themselves. To guide our efforts, we established a steering group composed entirely of young individuals, ranging from regular voters to those less politically engaged, with representation across the UK. This diverse group shaped our campaign, offering valuable input on everything from selecting brand partners to defining what was "cool," even influencing the campaign's name—Give an X (previously, it was going to be called "My Future, My Vote"—a much less compelling name!).



Don't Sit On the Sidelines

One of the standout initiatives from Give An X was Don't Sit On the Sidelines, launched in partnership with Fulham F.C., embedding voter registration messaging into the matchday experience. With Fulham's deep community ties and passionate fanbase, the campaign aimed to engage young people, many of whom were not yet registered to vote.

The initiative kicked off with a feature in Fulham F.C.'s matchday programme, reaching thousands of fans. By meeting young people where they are, Don't Sit On the Sidelines framed civic engagement as a natural extension of the teamwork, commitment, and community values that football embodies. The campaign leveraged the stadium's visibility to connect with fans of all ages—season ticket holders and first-time attendees alike—making voter registration an integral part of the matchday experience.

Ben & Jerry's: Scooping Up Votes

Ben & Jerry's was a game-changing partner in the Give an X campaign, helping mobilise and educate young voters ahead of the UK General Election on 4 July. More than just lending their name, they took action—meeting young people face-to-face on National Voter Registration Day with free ice cream and voter registration support.

The campaign hit the road in a Ben & Jerry's van, stopping in Birmingham and Manchester to spark conversations (and serve more ice cream) before the election. Their involvement proved that democracy doesn't have to be dull—it can be exciting, creative, and memorable. Give an X became a movement, encouraging brands, youth organisations, and companies to drive long-term youth political engagement. By sharing insights and experiences, the initiative laid the groundwork for a more participatory democracy.



ENGAGEMENT ONLINE

Our partnerships with the likes of Snapchat and Tinder were key in terms of us taking politics into spaces that it hasn't been before. As part of the campaign, we have spoken a lot about "meeting young people where they are", but it's also part of My Life My Say's mission to engage young people that are not typically engaged in politics. Seamlessly appearing on such popular apps without a doubt helped us reach those young people who wouldn't have seen our content on other platforms.

In partnering with Snapchat and Tinder, we broke new ground in reaching young people exactly where they are. On Snapchat, our custom Give an X augmented reality filter got young people engaged with key issues in the run up to the election, in a dynamic and fun way. Working with Tinder, we placed Give an X promoted content throughout the app to remind young people to get to the polls and make their voices heard.

Words by Remi Olokun, Social Media Lead at My Life My Say



The filter saw **3,000** people registering to vote every five minutes via Snapchat!

Our Youth Engagement Strategy: Engaging Those Hard To Reach

BRIDGING THE GAP

From its inception, My Life My Say has remained committed to a core mission: enhancing and sustaining better youth engagement in politics. As the go-to organisation for companies seeking to connect with supposedly hard-to-reach young individuals, we challenge the assumption that disinterest defines many young people's connection to politics. It's crucial to recognise the diverse intersections within the youth demographic across the UK, rather than lumping them into a homogenous group. In line with our dedication to amplify the voices of the underrepresented in politics, we collaborate with young people to discover solutions for engaging those not yet politically involved. A primary focus is dismantling stereotypes associated with young people, particularly the enduring myth that Gen Z, in particular, is apathetic towards politics. Our extensive and continually growing community disproves this notion. The Youth Index poll conducted with Opinium reinforces this by revealing that young people are not disinterested; in fact, they

actively prioritise key issues like the Cost of Living crisis and climate change. Despite their engagement with crucial issues, there exists a disconnect between young people and politicians, with significant levels of distrust. Our Squad Leadership programme, spanning 12 months and recruiting 12 young individuals each quarter, addresses this gap. It provides workshops, fosters connections across the political spectrum, encourages healthy debates, and supports the creation of political movements or social organisations. We also strive to make politics more accessible. By allocating most of our funding to minimise barriers, we prioritise accessibility over exclusivity. For example, our Next Gen conference is a free, all-day event, and we set aside funds to assist young people with travel expenses, ensuring their active participation. We eliminate any dress code to ensure comfort, embracing a "come as you are" policy. To combat the perception of politics as boring, we adopt a unique formula, bringing musicians, influencers, and streamers alongside

politicians. This approach, unique to My Life My Say, encourages engagement. While young people may initially come for their favourite influencer, they stay for the meaningful conversations between influencers and local politicians. My Life My Say goes beyond engaging already politically active youth. Our work addresses the inherent inaccessibility of politics to ordinary individuals aged between 16-30. The current state of politics, laden with jargon and inaccessible language, excludes those without formal education in the field. We strive to break down these barriers, making politics, conversation, and debate as accessible as possible for all.

Words by Hayley Biley, Engagement Manager at My Life My Say





MELISHA JOHN

Co-CEO, Operations & Governance

Melisha is Co-CEO at My Life My Say, working alongside Dan Lawes to advance the organisation's mission of civic engagement and community empowerment. With over a decade of experience in work-based learning roles, she champions practical, experience-based education for young people. Passionate about fostering positive energy and a supportive work environment, Melisha aims to expand the organisation's reach and inspire the next generation through meaningful engagement and hands-on learning.



DAN LAWES

Co-CEO, Growth & Partnerships

As Co-CEO, Dan oversees the organisation's partnerships and overall delivery. He coordinated the Give An X Campaign which generated 488,846 click-throughs to the gov.register website and reached over 4 million young voters. He sits on the boards of The Diana Award and Young Manchester and has been appointed by Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP to advise the Department of Culture, Sport and Media on the National Youth Strategy. He received the Princess Diana Legacy Award for his work advancing the rights of children and young people.



HAYLEY BILEY

Engagement Manager

Hayley Biley is the Engagement Manager at My Life My Say, where she shapes the engagement strategy—leading on the organisation's core activities, including everything from Democracy Cafés to their flagship Next Gen conference. Hayley is dedicated to amplifying the voices of people of colour, especially women and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.



PARIS HABIB

Squad Community Manager

Paris leads the Squad Leadership Programme at My Life My Say, managing all things squad-related and building a strong, engaged community. With a background in creating spaces that bring people together, she supports Squad Members, Leaders, and Ambassadors while empowering young people to connect, grow, and make a real impact in democracy.



GEORGE SOMERS

Engagement Officer

After interning during the Give an X campaign, George joined as an Engagement Officer for Next Gen '24 in October. He studied Politics and Philosophy at the London School of Economics and is passionate about bringing young people to the forefront of political conversations through the Next Gen Conference and other initiatives.



REMI OLOKUN

Social Media Lead

Remi joined My Life My Say as Social Media Lead in January 2024, bringing a background in Policy, Politics, and Economics from the University of Birmingham and experience crafting standout campaigns for brands like Greggs, Days, and Harvester. Since joining, Remi has played a key role in the award-winning Give An X campaign—the UK's largest youth-led voter registration drive.



LILY MOTT

Engagement Officer

Lily, former Squad Leader at My Life My Say, now serves as an Engagement Officer, helping organize the Next Gen Conference. Originally from Colorado, she studied journalism, politics, international relations, and digital media at Washington and Lee University, Oxford, and Cardiff University. Lily is passionate about amplifying young voices in spaces of power.



JO CROSSLEY

Graphic Designer

Jo is the designer crafting our brands and campaigns from the ground up, with young people always at the helm. Her expertise spans branding, brand strategy, copywriting, packaging, and website design. Blending creativity and strategic insight, she uses her design skills to connect with our youth audience and grow My Life My Say's reach.



The Squad rebrand had to reflect the freshness and youth-driven nature of the group. The identity had to create just that – an identity, something

that young people could aspire to be a part of. We rebranded the Squad to visually create a sense of connection and shared identity.

Words by Jo Crossley,
Freelance Graphic Designer



Words by Paris Habib, Squad Community Manager at My Life My Say



This year marked a significant transformation for the Squad Network and Leadership Programme with a comprehensive rebrand. We partnered with Jo, our freelance graphic designer, to develop a fresh and dynamic look that reflects our values and mission. This rebrand encompassed a complete overhaul of the visual identity, including updated logos, branding materials, and design

assets for both the network and leadership programme. The rebrand has helped unify the programme's identity, creating a consistent and professional image that resonates with our community, partners, and stakeholders. The new branding not only modernises our presentation but also enhances our ability to engage and inspire current and prospective Squad Leaders.



Graduation Ceremonies

This year, the Squad Leadership Programme celebrated two graduation ceremonies:

- **March 25th, 2023:** Held at Plexal for the March 2023 cohort, where 8 Squad Leaders graduated.
- **November 22nd, 2023:** Held during our Next Gen Conference for the October 2023 cohort, with 7 Squad Leaders graduating.

Leadership Development Sessions

Throughout the year, Squad Leaders participated in impactful sessions designed to enhance their skills and knowledge:

- All About the Elections hosted by the Adam Smith Institute.
- Personal Branding with Kurugo.
- Community Organising: How to Build a Successful Campaign hosted by Dev Sharma in partnership with iWill.
- Run Your Own D'Café with MLMS.



Exclusive Opportunities

Squad Leaders accessed unique opportunities through our partners, including:

- Professional headshots and paid photoshoots with Mission 44.
- Launch of the APPG for Fair Elections.
- Lime Bike Photoshoot.
- Launch of BFPG's Annual Survey of UK Public Opinion on Foreign Policy.
- Attendance at UKREIIF.
- Participation in the Chatham House Annual Conference.
- Speaking on the Purpose Panel.

Record-Breaking Recruitment

In August, we launched a social media campaign to encourage applications for the Squad Leadership Programme. This resulted in a record-breaking 29 applications, with 15 selected for the programme, making it the largest cohort to date.

2024 Squad Leadership Statistics

The 2024 Squad Leadership Programme cohorts showcase diversity across gender, geography, and age. This year's leaders include 14 men and 17 women, representing regions from across the UK. Participants range in age from 18 to 26. As the programme continues to grow, it remains committed to developing empowered leaders from diverse backgrounds, equipping them to create meaningful change in their communities.

AMBASSADORS 23-24

The Ambassadors have been a cornerstone of our efforts to amplify youth voices and foster meaningful engagement across diverse communities. This year, the 2023-2024 cohort of Ambassadors exemplified leadership, creativity, and advocacy.

The Ambassadors of MLMS has expanded significantly this year, with two separate cohorts joining, bringing the total to 15 Ambassadors. These dedicated individuals have truly become the face of My Life My Say (MLMS), representing the organisation in impactful ways:

Democracy Cafés: Leading and delivering sessions to engage young people in meaningful political discussions.

Global Representation: Speaking at COP29 as part of the #GiveAnX campaign, advocating for youth perspectives on climate change.



Panel Discussions:
Representing MLMS on panels and public forums, showcasing the importance of youth voices in decision-making processes.

Abdirahman Ahmed with Urban Rise: A social enterprise dedicated to financial education. Urban Rise provides comprehensive workshops and resources aimed at empowering disadvantaged individuals, equipping them with the tools to achieve financial independence and success.

Ambassadors Driving Social Change

Beyond their work within the programme, several Ambassadors have gone on to establish their own social change initiatives:

James Kaguima with Skate Cabal: A community-focused organisation that empowers individuals through the joy of skating. Skate Cabal fosters inclusivity, well-being, and social change by bringing people together through this unique and uplifting activity.

The 2023-2024 cohort of Ambassadors has set a high standard for youth leadership and impact. Their work not only inspires their peers but also contributes to a more inclusive and equitable society. We are proud of their achievements and look forward to supporting their continued growth and success.



Words by Beth Dennis, Squad Leader, Birmingham, Age 21



I needed to learn more about politics and how to make meaningful change to help bridge that gap.

"I started at MLMS in 2023 as part of the Squad Leadership programme. At the time, I was very new to politics but I loved the phrase MLMS created "If you don't do politics, politics will do you." This inspired me to get involved. I had been doing social action and activist work since the age of 11 within healthcare, mental health services and disability rights but had never delved deep into the political world. I felt very frustrated by the gap between community members and political decision-makers so I knew I needed to learn more about politics and how to make meaningful change to help bridge that gap. We started the programme with a trip to Parliament to meet Kim Leadbetter, a labour MP. I was nervous going to the event as I felt very new to politics but I left feeling empowered because Kim genuinely wanted to share her knowledge as well as listen to our voices and our stories. It made me realise the title "politics" was scaring me when actually everything is affected by politics so we actually all know a lot more than we think. The system can look so inaccessible from the outside for young people but our own lived experience is our superpower into politics. Since, I have volunteered at two Next Gen conferences including co-hosting a democracy cafe at Next Gen 2024, spoke to the public within Birmingham about the Give an X campaign with Ben and Jerry's, held a round table event at the Conservative Party Conference and more. I am so excited to become an ambassador for MLMS as I want to continue working to changing the statistic that the median age of world leaders are 62 years old and young people aged under 30 are the least represented within decision making boards. Lets get young peoples voices heard!"

STATS

young people engaged face-2-face across the UK

45,650

young people have engaged with the charity since its inception

6M+

of our activities take place outside of London

81%

of young people who attended our events now believe they have a better understanding of the decision-making processes locally, regionally and nationally

260

young people have joined our Squad network

Democracy Cafés hosted

850+

450+

partnerships formed since our inception



Rethinking Democracy

DEMOCRACY CAFÉS

A My Life My Say Democracy Café stands as a contemporary revival of the 17th-century coffee house tradition, where members of society gathered to deliberate on local issues. Over the years, we have orchestrated 500+ Democracy Cafés, engaging more than 40,000 young individuals, with a noteworthy 80% taking place beyond London and the UK. Cities such as Aberdeen, Cardiff, Athens, New York, Washington DC, and numerous others globally have been part of this transformative initiative.

Building on this rich tradition, we've introduced a groundbreaking, gamified iteration to further captivate the interest of young people throughout the UK. Our card game edition, launched at Google HQ, upholds the essence of meaningful discussion and debate while infusing elements of entertainment, such as randomised ice-breaker cards. This innovative approach aims to make politics more approachable, especially for those who may not already be actively engaged.





The Next Generation Conference: A Highlight of Our Annual Calendar

NEXT GEN

Next Gen: Give An X Edition at the Barbican

Our annual Next Generation Conference is the pinnacle of the year's activities, providing a dynamic platform to explore youth-led solutions to some of society's most pressing challenges. Building on the year's successful Give an X Campaign, we gathered at The Barbican Centre on Friday 22nd November, to celebrate our 6th annual Next Gen conference.

The event, hosted by Jermaine Jackman, welcomed over 500 young participants in the heart of London and featured distinguished speakers from activism, technology, business, and politics. Notable figures such as Alastair Campbell (former Downing Street Director of Communications and Strategy), Ayamé (TikToker and Activist), Amber Rudd (Former Health Secretary and MP), Jordan Schwarzenberger (Manager of the Sidemen), Ken Nwadiogbu (Multidisciplinary Artist) and Alex Holmes (Mental Health Campaigner) were

among the planned speakers.

The conference also saw the support of 30+ Partners, including Ben & Jerry's, Tinder, Football Beyond Borders, and more.

Our engaging panel discussions included:

- The Rest is Politics Youth Edition with Alastair Campbell and Jonelle Awomoyi
- Ask Iain Dale
- Tinder on Authenticity in Dating and Politics featuring Georgia Harrison, Jordan Schwarzenberger
- Badu Barber Shop with Ben West and Alex Holmes

The conference serves as a beacon for fostering dialogue, innovation, and collaborative solutions, amplifying the voices of the next generation in addressing societal challenges.





STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY IN 2025

In 2025, My Life My Say is excited to launch a number of initiatives dedicated to strengthening our democracy. This includes a national Votes at 16 campaign, in line with our commitment to strengthen democratic processes to encourage youth participation. This campaign builds on MLMS's mission to empower young people and represents a critical step toward ensuring young people are active participants in shaping their future. It will incorporate recommendations to the government about implementation, education and misinformation.

Central to our Votes at 16 campaign will be the youth-led component that defines MLMS's ethos. Young people will be at the heart of the campaign, shaping its messaging and engaging directly with parliamentarians. MLMS has always believed that young people are the best advocates for the change they wish to see. By providing them with the tools, platforms, and confidence to lead the charge, the campaign will embody the grassroots spirit that has powered our most impactful initiatives.

While Give An X was largely public-facing, the Votes at 16 campaign will adopt a more parliamentary-focused approach. This strategic shift reflects the nature of the campaign's objective: securing legislative change. Through a series of events, digital campaigning and lobbying, young people will

have the opportunity to connect directly with parliamentarians, sharing their perspectives and making the case for lowering the voting age. These interactions will be critical in building cross-party consensus and fostering genuine dialogue between young people and policymakers.

The campaign will also leverage partnerships with key stakeholders, including advocacy groups, educational institutions, and forward-thinking brands, to amplify its reach and impact. MLMS will draw on its proven expertise in coalition-building to ensure the campaign garners widespread support across sectors. We are committed to amplifying the voices of all four nations throughout the campaign, building upon the expertise of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, where great progress in this area has already been made.

As MLMS launches this ambitious national effort, we reaffirm our commitment to a democracy that includes and empowers the voices of all young people. The campaign represents a bold step toward achieving this vision, creating a legacy of inclusion and representation for generations to come.

A note of thanks to The Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust for providing critical funding for this campaign. We look forward to working with the campaign's steering group, advisory board and partners to make our mark on history.

@mylifemysay
mylifemysay.org.uk

