

Catalyst consortium - FAQs

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What is Catalyst?

Catalyst is the name of a consortium, co-ordinated by NCVYS to act as the Department for Education's (DfE) strategic partner for young people. The consortium partners are:

- National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS)
- The National Youth Agency (NYA)
- Social Enterprise UK
- The Young Foundation

The consortium is supporting the sector to become more sustainable as part of a two year transition programme with the Department for Education. The name Catalyst was chosen as a signal that the consortium intends its activities to facilitate positive change for the sector without each organisation's core activities being compromised by the strategic partner role.

What is the purpose of the DfE's strategic partners programme?

'Strategic Partner' grants have been established to ensure Government gets advice about issues affecting voluntary and community organisations and to help capacity building of the sector through transition, in particular for smaller organisations. The themes for strategic partner grants are:

- Family Services
- Young People

- SEN and Disability
- Early Years and Childcare
- Overarching

What will the Catalyst consortium do?

NCVYS is responsible for the co-ordination of the Catalyst partnership which is divided into three strands of planned activity:

1. Strengthening the youth sector market
2. Equipping the sector to work in partnership with Government
3. Developing a skills development strategy for the sector

NCVYS leads on strands 1 and 2 of planned activity, and provides support on strand 3 which is led by the NYA. To do this, NCVYS are working to:

- Establish a social finance retailer that can pilot and then promote a youth-sector-specific social investment approach based on evidence of impact. It will be our job to co-ordinate the management of the retailer, ensure adequate finance is raised for the fund, identify organisations to participate in the pilot as well as the establishment of a brokerage service which will identify and broker investments that can be supported by a blend of social and commercial investors;
- Develop yeah CIC as a vehicle for the sector to build and access new and bigger markets. This includes the piloting of a young person-led approach to product development, the establishment of license and franchise agreements for use by youth organisations and social enterprises for products developed through yeah CIC and, finally, a business support programme (in collaboration with our Participation Works partners) for organisations and enterprises wishing to scale up their operations using a young people-led approach;
- Support the sector in representing issues to Government, including but not limited to the brokering of opportunities for young people to shape emerging youth policies and increasing the efficiency with which sector intelligence is shared;
- Build on the successful Progress project to develop a skills development strategy for the sector, supported by a range of products designed to meet the needs of employers, training providers and learners.

Through the workforce strand (strand 3), the NYA leads the formation of key strategic frameworks and structures to secure coherent and inclusive workforce development activity, which services the breadth and scope of the youth workforce. NYA are exploring options to develop an Institute for Youth Work - desired by and for the benefit of the youth sector and young people.

Under strand 1, The Young Foundation focuses on supporting the strengthening of the youth sector market and in particular the establishment of the social finance retailer. This will include mapping the sector for social finance, and the development of a framework for impact measurement that is accepted by the youth sector overall and builds on existing tools. The Young Foundation will also be working to provide an educational and capacity building programme around social innovation and social finance, working with organisations to get them 'investment ready'.

Again, under strand 1 Social Enterprise UK offers support to social enterprises delivering children and young people's services who wish to replicate their work through franchise models. Building on its expertise in this field, they will establish a leadership programme to provide guidance and support to leaders looking to franchise, create practical online tools to help organisations get started, and support social enterprises to create their 'business in a box.'

Who benefits from the work?

In line with the purpose of the strategic partners grant programme, the work of the Catalyst consortium is targeted at the voluntary and community sector. There are however some elements of the programme of work where other sectors can benefit.

How did the Catalyst consortium establish whether there is a need for its work?

NCVYS led a successful consortium bid to act as the lead strategic partner for young people. This was awarded in April 2011. The bid proposals submitted to the Department for Education have arisen from ongoing work from within the expertise of the consortium partners. For example, the need to establish a social finance retailer was established by a working group following 18 months research into the area.

In the run-up to the application deadline, NCVYS as lead partner tested its proposals informally with a wide range of intended beneficiaries.

How does the Catalyst consortium consult and with whom?

The Catalyst consortium is committed to ongoing consultation with the intended beneficiaries of its work as well as other stakeholders. Exactly how that is done depends on the work area and information needed. For example, during the summer of 2011, NCVYS conducted its online summer workforce challenge survey which generated over 280 responses from a wide range of individuals and organisations. The National Youth Agency conducted an in-depth survey to establish whether there is a need for an Institute for Youth Work. The Young Foundation ran a number of consultation workshops to inform the development of an outcomes framework for youth work, as well as conducting a survey to inform their Growing Interest Report. NCVYS led a working group of 15 organisations to coordinate a response to *Positive for Youth* over the summer. NCVYS also coordinates a monthly network of national youth organisations to monitor and coordinate consultation responses with and on behalf of the sector.

How much funding was awarded?

The Catalyst consortium was awarded a total grant of £2,649,300, with up to £1,490,300 available in 2011/12 and £1,159,000 in 2012/13. The funding is split as follows:

- NCVYS receives £740,300 in year 1 and £541,950 in year 2 for work under all three activity strands and for its role in coordinating the consortium.
- The National Youth Agency receives £119,400 in year 1 and £117,400 in year 2 for its work under the youth policy strand and to support workforce development.
- Social Enterprise UK receives £70,000 in year one and £70,000 in year 2. The funding is available to support the development of the youth sector market as well as allowing SEUK to make a small contribution to the youth policy work.
- The Young Foundation receives £94,150 in year 1 and £62,200 in year 2. This allows the Young Foundation to assist the consortium in developing a social finance retailer and getting the voluntary sector ready for social investment.
- There is a further £499,250 earmarked for a range of organisations to aid the delivery of the consortium as subcontractors in year 1, and £330,250 in year 2. The purpose of making this funding available to delivery partners is to ensure that specialist expertise is available to the consortium and that funds are available to build voluntary sector capacity.

This is how much the different strands cost to deliver:

Activity	Year 1 (2011/12)	Year 2 (2012/13)
Strand 1: developing the youth sector market		
Establishing a social finance retailer	£238,050	£149,000
Developing Yeah CIC as a vehicle for the sector to build and access new and bigger markets	£171,650	£143,150
Strand 2: Equipping the sector to work in partnership with Government		
Co-ordination of youth policy and information	£217,900	£217,900
Strand 3: Developing a skills development strategy for the sector		
Facilitating collaboration	£301,400	£188,300
Developing sector skills	£461,300	£290,650
Programme management and evaluation		
Facilitating the consortium and external evaluation	£100,000	£100,000

Will there be financial benefits arising from the DfE's grant investment?

The Catalyst consortium has committed itself to raise £2.5 million social finance each year for investment in youth organisations that are ready to receive such investments. The activities of yeah CIC will also generate additional funds for the sector. The programme as a whole seeks to position the voluntary youth sector and its stakeholders to be able to benefit from funding streams such as those made available as investment in sector skills.

How will the work of the Catalyst consortium be evaluated?

All DfE strategic partners are subject to monitoring arrangements put in place by the Department for Education. In addition, Catalyst commissioned QA Research to carry out an independent evaluation of its activities. QA research will be conducting two surveys of beneficiaries and other stakeholders to assess the impact of Catalyst's work. The evaluation will involve young people as researchers and assess the consortium's performance against four Key Performance Indicators agreed with DfE.

Will the Catalyst consortium continue after the end of the grant period in March 2013?

Consortium partners are working towards developing a more sustainable youth sector through the work of the catalyst consortium, and in particular strand 1 which focuses on strengthening the youth sector market. All consortium partners are committed to partnership work and will continue to explore opportunities to collaborate with each other, formally or informally beyond the scheduled time-frame of the programme.

Who can I contact to find out more?

- For general enquiries about Catalyst, please contact Rob Candy (rob@ncvys.org.uk)
- If you want to find out more about work to strengthen the youth sector market, contact Beth Parker (beth@ncvys.org.uk)
- For enquiries about youth policy work, contact Faiza Chaudary (faiza@ncvys.org.uk)
- If you are interested in workforce development, contact Diane Evans (dianee@ncvys.org.uk)

You can also access the websites of the consortium partners for further information:

<http://www.ncvys.org.uk/Catalyst.html>

<http://www.nya.org.uk/department-for-education-catalyst-consortium>

<http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/about/about-us/our-programmes/catalyst>

<http://www.youngfoundation.org/our-work/youth-leadership/youth-leadership>

