

Are you aged 13-25 and living in the UK? Would you like to be part of a national youth-led project to influence research, policy and campaigns? at the Mental Health Foundation? We need you!

Please read carefully before filling in your application form.

Link to form: <https://forms.gle/eXdqePGen9SY8LJK6>

1. What is the MHF Young Leaders (MHFYL) Project?

The project is a partnership between the Mental Health Foundation and Leaders Unlocked. [The Mental Health Foundation](#) (MHF) is the UK's charity for everyone's mental health and has prevention at the heart of what they do. The Foundation aims to find and address the sources of mental health problems so that people and communities can thrive. [Leaders Unlocked](#) is a social enterprise providing a platform for young people to influence and shape the decisions that affect them in society through youth-led social action projects.

The MHF Young Leaders Project enables young people to work alongside national charity, the Mental Health Foundation, to address mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people. Following the success of the programme over the last 5 years, we're very excited to be able to offer this opportunity for another year to all young people in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The MHF Young Leaders will work with the Mental Health Foundation on important practical projects to inform and co-develop resources for campaigns, research and policy recommendations to make a difference to young people's mental health.

The project will enable 13–25-year old's to:

- **Influence social action and advocacy work at MHF** by supporting them to participate in collaborative conversations with policy professionals and decision-makers, influence MHF's policy recommendations around young people's mental health helping to bring policy recommendations to life using insights from peer research, and representing other young people at parliamentary and policy-related events where relevant.
- **Support MHF to strengthen its insights and approaches to supporting mental health** by contributing knowledge and evidence that informs research, policy, campaigns, and practice across the organisation and beyond. This would involve working closely with key departments across MHF, including Research, Policy and Campaigns, to share insights gathered through internal workshops with fellow

Young Leaders and wider groups of young people through the Peer Research project.

- **Contribute to strengthening MHF's understanding of their key thematic areas** including Working Lives, Online Lives, Prevention, and Bullying & Discrimination, by helping to shape research priorities, inform MHF policy recommendations, and influence campaign content. This would provide an opportunity to develop expertise in collaboration, insight generation, youth participation, research, and cross-team working.
- **Shape communications at MHF** through contributing to national campaigns such as Mental Health Awareness Week, contributing to and co-producing content for awareness days, and supporting the Foundation to strengthen their online presence to engage a wider audience, including young people.
- **Gain critical research skills** through taking part in the Leaders Unlocked facilitation and peer research training to strengthen their confidence in leading peer research focus group discussions, and collecting and analysing insights collaboratively with research professionals.

The young leaders play a key role in the work that happens at the Foundation and contribute to the development of great resources. Take a look at some of the brilliant work the young leaders have co-produced and influenced over the years: [Unlock Loneliness campaign including the policy recommendations](#), [Mind Over Mirror campaign including the policy recommendations](#), [Healthy Relationships campaign](#), [Feeling our way blog](#), Mental Health Awareness Week [2021](#) and [2022](#). [SITUATE Project](#), [BAM Programme](#), [COVID research](#), [Gaming & Mental Health](#), [Loneliness Policy Recommendations](#), [Body Image Recommendations](#), [Children and Young People Mental Health Coalition's 15th anniversary – Building Blocks](#), [Small Talk, Big Change – Online Lives](#), [Social Media Consultations](#).

Further information about MHF Young Leaders

<https://leaders-unlocked.org/projects/mental-health-foundation-young-leaders/>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/programmes/programmes-families-children-and-youth-people/mhf-young-leaders>

2. Who can join MHF Young Leaders?

We are looking for participants aged 13-25 years who are living anywhere in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and have an interest in mental health. In total, we are seeking to recruit up to 20 young people to join the existing group of Young Leaders based across the UK. Activities take place online and occasionally in person.

We are looking for young people who are dedicated team players and willing to get involved with all the events and activities that are part of the MHF Young Leaders project.

We are very keen to ensure that the group is made up of a diverse mix of young people who broadly reflect the make-up of the youth population, particularly those whose

backgrounds or experiences are often underrepresented in discussions around mental health and underserved by mental health support (e.g. Young Males, particularly from racialised groups, Young People with experience of seeking refuge & asylum, Care-experienced young people, Young people with Long-term health conditions). This includes those who may have personal experience of mental health – either themselves or through family and friends.

3. What will I get from being part of MHF Young Leaders?

- **Discuss issues with experts:** You will meet and collaborate with a number of experts from the Mental Health Foundation, providing a young person's perspective on the issues around mental health and working with them to develop the all-important solutions to the issues at hand.
- **Develop your knowledge, skills, and experience:** You will gain valuable skills and experience, including research, facilitation, analysis, public speaking skills, presentation and networking skills. You will be able to use this experience for your CV, and when applying for jobs or courses.
- **Become ambassadors for other young people:** You will amplify the voices of young people in your area by helping them to get their views heard on the issues that matter to them.
- **Network and meet new people:** You will meet a diverse range of other young people living across the UK who are also interested in mental health. You will connect with various professionals with expertise in different areas and have the chance to learn from them.

4. If I join, what will I have to do?

Between June 2025 and April 2027, members of the MHF Young Leaders team will:

- **Take part in Campaigns:** Working with the information and communications team within MHF and Leaders Unlocked, you will have the chance to inform campaigns and/or content related to young people and their mental health, including the high profile Mental Health Awareness Week, hosted by MHF.

- **Take part in discussions exploring this year's key themes:** These are Online Lives, Working Lives, Prevention, and Bullying & Discrimination. You'll work with MHF teams offering insights into how these areas impact young people's mental health and wellbeing across a range of factors and how we can shape solutions to drive meaningful change.
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- **Carry out peer research to gather the views of other young people:** You will act as a 'Peer Researcher', which includes having discussions with other young people through workshops to gain insight into the chosen topic and shape MHFs work throughout the year. You will co-develop the questions and be supported to analyse the findings.
- **Advocate for young people across the UK and influence national work:** The Young Leaders play a key role in informing the work of MHF through co-developing ideas for change across policy and beyond. Policy focused events and workshops such as political party conferences, or sessions co-developing policy recommendations will give you the opportunity to share your ideas with leading decision makers through MHF.
- **Help to shape the way MHF works in the future:** We'll bring together MHF staff from across departments together with young leaders at the end of the project year to share learning, evaluate the project's success and develop strategic plans for the future of the Young Leaders project.

5. Will my expenses be covered?

When we do hold face-to-face meetings, we will reimburse your travel expenses to and from all events. We can also cover the travel expenses of a chaperone where absolutely needed if you are under the age of 18.

We would pre-book your train travel to London or elsewhere in advance of each event. Other travel expenses can be reimbursed, as long as you keep the receipts with you.

We provide all the food and refreshments for Young Leaders events, and we will do our best to accommodate any dietary requirements you might have.

Please note: We expect members to take public transport (e.g. train, tram or bus) wherever possible. However, if you think you need to drive then please do let us know in advance and we may be able to cover the costs of petrol (paid at 45p per mile). If your only option is to take a taxi, we might also be able to cover your taxi fare, but you should check with us in advance.

6. How do I apply?

Please fill in the application form and email it to bhavan@leaders-unlocked.org by **Tuesday 16th June.**

Link to form: <https://forms.gle/eXdqePGen9SY8LJK6>

If you'd prefer to apply via telephone rather than in writing, we'd be more than happy to organise this. Contact bhavan@leaders-unlocked.org and we will agree on a time that would work for a call.

7. What happens next?

Once we receive your application, we will then carry out brief telephone interviews with a shortlist of applicants. All applicants will be informed in the week of the application deadline whether they have been selected for an interview. Interviews will take place in the week commencing 15th June to week commencing 22nd June.

Remember: Please complete the application form by Monday 15th June or get in touch with bhavan@leaders-unlocked.org if you have any further questions. If you require support with your application and would like to conduct this over the phone, get in touch with the email above so we can organise a time for a call.