



## Collected case studies:

### Youth (16 - 24) employment

- *Preventing youth unemployment*
- *Improving education outcomes*
- *Develop skills employers want*

This paper brings together a number of case studies on how cities from the UK and beyond have made use of youth employment programmes.

#### **Younger generations entering the labour market today face different challenges compared to previous generations.**

Shifting demographics, the increasing number of graduates and the changing shape of the labour market all have an impact on young people's employment prospects.

Cities can promote youth employment by working in collaboration with relevant organisations, matching supply and demand, increasing the accessibility of services, and creating new effective and efficient pathways into employment.

#### **The case studies demonstrating how cities make the most of youth employment programmes and what they are trying to achieve are split into eleven groups:**

- **Providing support to move the unemployed into work**

The government has made a renewed commitment to devolve power to give cities greater control over local housing, transport, healthcare and skills. Employment and skills has been a central feature in these policies, particularly the City Deals and Local Growth Deals, designed with the overarching aim to move the unemployed into work.

- **Improving young people's employment outcomes and work preparation**

Strong local leadership is a pre-condition for city-wide collaboration. Partnerships can make individual organisations and initiatives more financially sustainable over the long term by allowing organisations to leverage multiple sources of funding.

- **Closing the skills gap between supply and demand**

Best practice in youth employment support demands strong connections between employers and employment services providers.

- **Investing in youth employment programmes**

There is growing recognition of the need for independent support or a backbone organisation to coordinate, leverage resources and build capacity through best-practice sharing and professional development.

- **Giving employers a voice within the workforce development system**

Data sits at the heart of the most successful collaborations. Sharing data with employers and having conversations with them with regards to how the workforce of the future look like for them can prove crucial to the successful development of youth employment programmes.

- **Improving young people's employment prospects**

Sharing data, adding flexibility to the system and providing comprehensive funding streams are all effective ways that cities can use to improve young people's employment prospects.

- **Diminishing the negative consequences of dropping out of school**

Targeted intervention can lead to better outcomes. And different approaches are required for those that are 'disengaged youth' vs 'work ready'.

- **Reengaging young people**

Tailored, continuous support can re-engage young people and help ensure they complete their qualification or course, or stay in employment.

- **Addressing barriers to work for young people**

Interventions are more likely to be effective if a coherent package of measures is in place to address the multiple barriers to work that young people may face.

- **Reducing the number of young people NEET**

Reductions in ring-fencing and individual targets can lead to greater efficiencies and better outcomes, as demonstrated by the Total Place and Community Budget pilots.

- **Improving school to work transition**

Creating a simple and coherent vocational pathway can help deliver efficiencies and reduce duplication, overall improving school to work transition.

## Providing support to move the unemployed into work

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## Filling gaps in national provision

**Lead organisations: MyGo, Job Centre Plus**

**Location: Ipswich, UK**

**Year: 2014 to present**

**Keywords: City and growth deals; Youth (16-24) employment programmes**

**Read the full report here: [City deals and skills](#)**

MyGo in Ipswich is one example of local partners using agreements with national government to fill gaps in national provision. As the UK's first youth employment centre, set up following Greater Ipswich's City Deal, the centre acts as the delivery vehicle for the area's Youth Guarantee. It offers all 16-24 year olds in Ipswich and the surrounding area free training, career and employment support. It works with Job Centre Plus to provide additional intensive caseworker support at the centre, including helping young people find and prepare for interviews. It also offers a range of training programmes, such as IT, construction and business admin. The Centre also reaches out to employers to ensure it is aware of local job and work experience opportunities and offers shortlisting services to firms.<sup>1</sup>

## Improving young people's employment outcomes and work preparation

Strong local leadership is a pre-condition for city-wide collaboration. Partnerships can make individual organisations and initiatives more financially sustainable over the long term by allowing organisations to leverage multiple sources of funding.

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## Mapping out services, identifying gaps and integrating services

**Lead organisation: Sunset Park Alliance**

**Location: Brooklyn, New York, US**

**Year: 2009 – 2012**

**Keywords: Youth (16-24) employment programmes; Employment prospects; International**

**Read the full report here: [Youth Opportunity: Lessons from the US](#)**

The Sunset Alliance in Brooklyn formed out of a growing recognition that the impact of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) working with disadvantaged youth in the area was limited as each one worked in isolation.<sup>2</sup> A consultant was hired by an early funder of the Alliance to reach out to youth organisations and other key neighbourhood stakeholders with a member of the local community board who helped broker relationships.

Organisations then worked together with the consultant to map out existing services, identify gaps and develop a “no wrong door” or integrated service delivery model, which aimed to ensure that “each young person gets the right programming at the right time.” The consultant's role was phased out as members took greater ownership of the Alliance. Ultimately six of the eight original agencies formed the founding

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.its-mygo.co.uk/about/>.

<sup>2</sup> Foundation Center (2011) Sunset Alliance for Youth; interviews.

membership of the Alliance. As a collaborative entity, the Alliance engaged in youth recruitment for all programs, created a centralised database to track youth services, and is coordinating new standardised training sessions for the teachers, caseworkers and job developers of all member agencies. Partners also established Supporting Potential in Our Neighbourhood in response to the number of young people not able to sustain attendance due to academic and personal challenges. The curriculum combines life skills such as conflict resolution with academic skills such as reading and writing, and work readiness skills, such as financial literacy.

As a consortium, partners were able to find the “right door” to services more efficiently. In the first year of the Alliance, a total of 302 youths were served and 295 referrals were made with 65 per cent of youth ‘sticking’ at the partner agency. The model enabled each agency to retain its own culture, philosophy and autonomy, while working collectively to improve outcomes for youth. Partners reported significant increases in financial efficiencies, significant increases in revenue and leverage over new funding sources, and increased and improved service delivery. The partnership has since ended due to funding decisions, highlighting the challenges associated with private funding and the need for sustainable funding models that have a level of accountability to local communities.<sup>3</sup>

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### Promoting city-wide collaboration using mayoral influence

**Lead organisation: Boston PIC**

**Location: Boston, Massachusetts, US**

**Year: 1980 to present**

**Keywords: Education; Youth (16-24) employment programmes; Employment prospects; International**

**Read the full report here: [Youth Opportunity: Lessons from the US](#)**

The Boston PIC is the convener of the Boston Compact, the city’s historic collaborative school improvement agreement between the Mayor, the leaders of Boston’s business and higher education communities, Boston Public Schools, and the Boston Teachers Union. The Compact brought together the resources of public schools, universities, trade unions and the Mayor’s Office to improve student academic achievement and work preparation. The long-running success of the Compact has required strong leadership to attract significant corporate investment and sustained engagement.

The Boston Compact was established in 1982 as a partnership between the business community and the public schools, and run out of the Mayor’s Office. The essence of the Compact was an agreement whereby the school system would work to improve education and learning outcomes, and in return, businesses, colleges, and labour organisations would provide jobs and postsecondary educational opportunities for graduates. The Boston PIC has run a summer job programmes as well as job-counselling services at several high schools for the last 25 years. It acts as an independent umbrella for the development of business-school programmes and is a ‘safe and reliable avenue for businesses to engage’. Businesses were also attracted by the clear improvements in educational and employment outcomes that resulted from the Compact.

The Compact’s goals are designed to be durable, resilient and measurable. Periodically, however, the Mayor and the Superintendent of Schools call for a new Boston Compact when circumstances change, new

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<sup>3</sup> Interview.

leadership is in place and it is viewed an appropriate time for a renewed collaboration focused on shared goals. The most recent Compact was signed in 2000 and incorporated new state accountability measures (goals), SATs, and other indicators of academic achievement, alongside data on success in college.

## Closing the skills gap between supply and demand

Best practice in youth employment support demands strong connections between employers and employment services providers.

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### Working with anchor institutions

**Lead organisation: Baltimore Integration Partnership**

**Location: Baltimore, Maryland, US**

**Year: 2011 to present**

**Keywords: Youth (16-24) employment programmes; Employment prospects; International**

**Read the full report here: [Youth Opportunity: Lessons from the US](#)**

Baltimore's education institutions and hospitals have been working together for several years to improve the economic vitality of communities in the city. Partnership between these 'anchor institutions', large employers and spenders with an inherent stake in the city, has been developed in part through the Baltimore Integration Partnership (BIP) to advance economic inclusion through anchor institution hiring, purchasing and capital investment powers.<sup>4</sup>

BIP is funded through Living Cities<sup>72</sup> and local match. It is governed by a board with members from the nine anchor institutions. The Board and BIP-specific work groups have worked together to identify, define and address complex economic issues in the city. Partners used demonstration projects to sustain momentum and identify promising strategies to build upon through partnership work. Data was central to informing these efforts, and promoting transparency and accountability. The first phase focused mainly on financing capital projects and connecting local residents to workforce services, training and jobs in those projects and others. BIP completed a review of the first three years of the partnership, drawing out several lessons for the second phase, including: establishing a more narrow strategic focus; expanding anchor institution representation on the board; and increasing business and financial institution participation.<sup>5</sup> It also recognised the need to move beyond the focus on capital investment due to low levels of demand in the city, towards a focus on the hiring, training and advancement and procurement practices of the anchor institutions.<sup>6</sup> In the workforce development area, BIP has been working to identify where the employment opportunities are and to better understand the internal and external barriers to local hiring. As part of this work, BIP is connecting with workforce training organisations to help meet their hiring needs. The second phase of BIP is moving forward in alignment with the new Baltimore City Anchor Plan.

Signed in June 2014, the Plan calls on city agencies and local institutions to discuss how they can share goals and resources to address public safety, business and the quality of life in the city.<sup>7</sup> The city's anchor

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<sup>4</sup> Interviews; City of Baltimore (2014) The Baltimore City Anchor Plan: A community and Economic Development Strategy, City of Baltimore.

<sup>5</sup> For further information see <https://www.livingcities.org/>.

<sup>6</sup> Community Science (2014) Baltimore Integration Partnership: BIP 1.0 Final Evaluation Report.

<sup>7</sup> Interview.

institutions are seen as an integral part of the Mayor's economic development plans. Representatives from the city and the institutions will agree to meet quarterly and the Mayor and Presidents of universities and hospitals will meet biannually to discuss progress. Building on the work of the BIP, priorities to increase local hiring include completing an inventory of available jobs for Baltimore City residents and a workforce plan at anchor institutions, and creating a pipeline of qualified local residents that are trained and ready to apply for job openings at anchor institutions and at businesses in the surrounding communities. Other priorities are establishing a linkage between the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS), anchor institutions, and the Mayor's Office for Employment Development (MOED) to create career pathways and educational opportunities for Baltimore City students and graduates, and connecting career development staff from the anchor institutions with MOED to provide a pipeline of students for Youth Works and Employ Baltimore-Ready to Work for You initiatives. One of the most critical lessons to emerge from the BIP's work was the need to align its efforts with other initiatives in the city and the Plan aims to achieve this. As Terry Sawyer from the Loyola University Maryland stated, "there is a spirit or an attitude of collaboration that's been enhanced since the mayor's been serious about this anchor plan. It's not just all doing good things, but doing it in a comprehensive and organized manner".<sup>8</sup>

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### Creating alternative routes into the professional service sectors

**Lead organisation: Year Up**

**Location: 14 cities and HQ in Boston, US**

**Year: 2000 to present**

**Keywords: Youth (16-24) employment programmes; Job creation; Youth skills training; Employment prospects; International**

**Read the full report here: [Youth Opportunity: Lessons from the US](#)**

Since 2000, Year Up has worked with over 10,000 young people in 15 cities across the US, providing entry-level routes into professions such as finance and IT. These are jobs that have the potential to provide good wages and do not necessarily require a degree.<sup>9</sup> Year Up students face barriers to employment and higher education. They work with young people who may have been in foster care, involved in the court system or in substance misuse. Among Year Up students, 70 per cent are black or Hispanic, 60 to 70 per cent have dropped out of college, and others are working in minimum wage jobs.

Students complete six months of intensive training, with mentoring and coaching, to improve their professional skills before going on to a sponsored internship with a company. Students earn an educational stipend during training and in their internship and can earn college credits. Students are supported through their internships by their mentors and weekly visits to Year Up during their time with companies. Participants are largely recruited through word of mouth and referrals from high schools and community partners. Applicants to the programme firstly sign up online, attend an open day and complete an application with a two-page essay before being invited to group and individual interviews to test their dedication, attitude and motivation. Once onto the programme, students sign a behaviour contract, where they 'fire themselves' from the programme if they do not meet the professional expectations of Year Up. Year Up aims to change employer practices in developing and sourcing talent.

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<sup>8</sup> City of Baltimore (2014) The Baltimore City Anchor Plan: A community and Economic Development Strategy, City of Baltimore.

<sup>9</sup> Interview.

Beyond its core programmes, Year Up:

- Seeks to influence employer practices through the development of an online, digital employer platform to provide information, tools and resources for employers.
- Brings employers together to share their experiences in B2B forums.
- Aims to ‘future proof’ its students by equipping them with transferrable skills and working “not just to understand where the job market is now but how it is changing”.<sup>10</sup>
- Identifies growing sectors using real-time labour market information provided by Burning Glass and has local advisory boards that advise on anticipated demand.
- Invests about \$25,000 in each of its students, which is substantially more than typical youth employment programmes.
- Uses a unique revenue model in which corporate internship partners cover a significant portion of this cost.<sup>11</sup>

As the organisation has expanded to operate in 14 different cities across the US, it has had to ensure that there are a significant number of entry level job openings and that the local philanthropic community is large enough to support the launch of the programme and ensure it is self-sustaining.

The programme has achieved a number of positive outcomes, including: 100 per cent placement of qualified Year Up students into internships; over 90 per cent of corporate partners would recommend the Year Up programme to a friend or colleague and 85 per cent of graduates are employed or attending college full-time within four months of completing the programme. Initial results from a small-scale impact study conducted by Mobility demonstrate that Year Up students experience significant earnings gains after a year in the labour market, compared to a control group.<sup>12</sup> Year Up participants earned about \$13,000 more than members of the control group over the three years after the programme and participants’ earnings were 32 percent higher than those of the control group.<sup>13</sup> Year Up participants who graduated and secured jobs in either of the programme’s two target occupations, IT and finance, earned the highest hourly wages (\$17.42–\$18.89).

Employers’ incentives for working with Year Up go beyond corporate social responsibility. Year Up offers a recruitment pipeline to employers seeking to fill middle-skilled jobs that do not necessarily require a degree. With over 300 corporate partners, Year Up has established a strong network of private-sector employers by building a trusted brand. It widens its network of employers by “getting in the door with small asks” and “consulting with employers to understand their needs”.<sup>14</sup>

The programme’s reach remains limited, however. Year Up estimate there are six to seven million young people not in living-wage jobs or education, and that they serve less than one per cent of Opportunity Youth. Staff estimate that due to the limited number of spaces available, they have to turn away at least 50 per cent of eligible applicants. In an effort to widen its reach and build sustainable financial models, Year Up has begun to collaborate with community colleges and develop bespoke models for individual companies. Year Up Providence and Hasbro worked together to develop a curriculum to prepare young people for 250 permanent jobs at Hasbro, with Hasbro investing more than \$1 million to launch the programme. The company has committed to hiring 75 per cent of those who graduate from the training

<sup>10</sup> Interview.

<sup>11</sup> Roder, A. and Elliott, M. (2014) Sustained Gains: Year up’s Continued Impact on Young Adult’s Earnings, Economic Mobility Corporation.

<sup>12</sup> Roder, A. and Elliott, M. (2011) A Promising Start: Year Up’s Initial Impacts on Low-Income Young Adults’ Career, Economic Mobility Corporation.

<sup>13</sup> Roder, A. and Elliott, M. (2014) Sustained Gains: Year up’s Continued Impact on Young Adult’s Earnings, Economic Mobility Corporation.

<sup>14</sup> Interview.

and to helping the remaining graduates into sustainable employment elsewhere in Providence. The Professional Training Corps is a community college based model that provides an opportunity for students to engage in meaningful workforce training. In this model, students are dual-enrolled in the community college and Year Up; technical skills are taught by college faculty, while Year Up staff provide professional skills and other wrap-around services. Year Up is also sharing lessons and best practice with others to help improve ways of working.

## Investing in youth employment programmes

There is growing recognition of the need for independent support or a backbone organisation to coordinate, leverage resources and build capacity through best-practice sharing and professional development.

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### Leveraging resources and building capacity through best-practice sharing

**Lead organisation: Philadelphia Youth Network**

**Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, US**

**Year: 1999 to present**

**Keywords: Youth (16-24) employment programmes; Employment prospects; International**

**Read the full report here: [Youth Opportunity: Lessons from the US](#)**

The Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN) is a city-wide collaboration that “raises money as a collaborator and invests in the collaborative”.<sup>15</sup> The organisation stewards public and private funds to a single point of access with the aim to help young people (15-24 year olds) achieve economic, educational and personal success.

The PYN manages a \$28 million budget with 80 per cent spent on programmes. Two thirds of funding comes from public sources with the remainder coming from the private sector. The PYN contracts with a network of 50 to 60 not-for-profit organisations to identify marginalised youth and reconnect them to college and career pathways. There are 50 full-time staff with an additional 40 to 50 staff employed in summer, whose job is to “know everything and connect the dots”.<sup>16</sup> The PYN also runs some programmes directly. The PYN describes itself as an organisation promoting collective impact rather than just a fiscal management agency. It plays a role as a convenor for best practice sharing and to advocate for systems change. The PYN also acts as a single point of access for business and it has a strong relationship with local businesses having established a number of champions in the private sector including the Chamber of Commerce. While the PYN is not generally considered to be as bureaucratic as government, it is still subject to the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). In this regard, it acts as a translator to other organisations. Oversight of all public and private funding for youth employment support in the city means that PYN can align resources to bring programmes to scale, fill gaps in provision and introduce new education options, and review and adapt approaches. In a context where the mayor serves a 4 to 5 year-term and there is a lack of stability in city government, the PYN also provides greater consistency and certainly for local stakeholders. The city government is, nevertheless, an important part of the system.

To date its programmes serve approximately 10,000 young people per year in Philadelphia, although its impact is considered to be wider due to its advocacy work. The graduation rate increased from 49 per

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<sup>15</sup> Interview.

<sup>16</sup> Interview.

cent in 2006 to 65 per cent in 2012/13, and is attributed to partners coming together to work collectively to reduce dropout rates (the target is 80 per cent).<sup>17</sup> The Philadelphia School District remains in severe financial crisis, however, and wider youth support programmes are also under-resourced (there are 15,000 applicants for 7,000 placements). Yet as a result of its success within this context, other cities like Pittsburgh are actively seeking to replicate the model used by PYN.

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### Using an intermediary organisation to leverage resource

**Lead organisation: City Connect Detroit**

**Location: Detroit, Michigan, US**

**Year: 2001 to present**

**Keywords: Youth (16-24) employment programmes; International**

**Read the full report here: [Youth Opportunity: Lessons from the US](#)**

City Connect Detroit (CCD) was established as a partnership between ten foundations to play a convenor role and identify national funding sources for youth programmes. Partners realised the resources were bypassing Detroit as they were not collaborating and coordinating activity. Municipal bankruptcy brought greater urgency to the situation.

The consortium structure means that individual organisations take ownership and are very engaged as partners. Funders also act as champions bringing other funders to the table. Its overarching goal is to impact on the system of youth services, with a focus on summer employment. CCD aims to achieve this by establishing common standards (it has established a quality standards framework), and connecting employers to education and training providers. It also aims to improve the quality of placements by coordinating funding and building capacity among partner organisations (to date it has worked with over 95 CBOs and businesses in Detroit), and to create pathways for young people by ensuring programmes are connected to postsecondary education learning opportunities.

The Mayor has now made youth employment a major priority. As additional resources are deployed and programmes are established, CCD will be coordinating between partners with the aim of providing year round employment opportunities for over 5,000 young people. CCD plans to develop a competency based approach for placements and to tailor provision to the needs of individuals through a tiered structure. Going forward, CCD plans to keep infrastructure to a minimum, and continue to build trust and transparency among partners in the wider system with the aim of building more representation from education institutions and the private sector. The partnership is also currently working on building an electronic portal similar to ones that have been developed in Chicago and Philadelphia as there is still no single access point for young people. They also want to create a similar portal for businesses.<sup>18</sup>

### Giving employers a voice within the workforce development system

Data sits at the heart of the most successful collaborations. Sharing data with employers and having conversations with them with regards to how the workforce of the future look like for them can prove crucial to the successful development of youth employment programmes.

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<sup>17</sup> Philadelphia Council for College and Career Success (2014) The Sixth Annual Report to Mayor Michael A. Nutter.

<sup>18</sup> Interview.

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## Using shared data and evidence to drive demand-led interventions

**Lead organisation: Workforce Intelligence Network**

**Location: South East Michigan, US**

**Year: 2011 to present**

**Keywords: Youth (16-24) employment programmes; Adult employment programmes; International**

**Read the full report here: [Youth Opportunity: Lessons from the US](#)**

The Workforce Intelligence Network (WIN) in South East Michigan connects non-profits to what's happening in the labour market and aims to give employers a voice within the workforce development system. Their mission is "to create a comprehensive and cohesive workforce development system in Southeast Michigan that provides employers with the talent they need for success".<sup>19</sup> It is a collaborative effort between nine community colleges, seven WIBs and economic development partners, funded through grants from both Federal government and the state.

WIN uses multiple sources of labour market information to provide a comprehensive, up-to-date picture of supply and demand in South East Michigan. This includes publicly available sources of data such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), U.S. Census Bureau and Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). It also uses Burning Glass data to access millions of online job postings from job boards, the State of Michigan, company websites, and Craigslist, which can then be filtered through multiple settings to provide information on specific sectors or occupations. The data is verified with regional companies. The CareerBuilder Talent Intelligence Portal provides access to hundreds of thousands of online resumes to provide a better understanding of what skills and knowledge jobseekers have in the region. Using this data, WIN provides workforce development organisations and partnerships with real-time data on how and when people move from job-to-job and of the kinds of skills and experiences that lead to successful placement. It also provides up-to-date information on the profile of the current labour pool.

## Improving young people employment prospects

Sharing data, adding flexibility to the system and providing comprehensive funding streams are all effective ways that cities can use to improve young people employment prospects.

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### Evidence-based policy making

**Lead organisation: Centre for Economic Opportunity**

**Location: New York city, New York, US**

**Year: 2006 to present**

**Keywords: Youth (16-24) employment programmes; Employment prospects; Job creation; International**

**Read the full report here: [Youth Opportunity: Lessons from the US](#)**

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<sup>19</sup> Interview.

Data sits at the heart of the most successful collaborations. A number of cities have used data as a call to action, demonstrating the scale of the challenge or what can be achieved through the collaboration. The former Mayor of New York City Michael Bloomberg launched the Centre for Economic Opportunity (CEO) in 2006 in response to the recommendations put forward by a commission analysing the causes and consequences of poverty in the city. The CEO's remit is to identify, fund and evaluate solutions to lift families and individuals out of poverty.

Around half of the Centre's time and resources are focused on improving young people's employment prospects through education, skills development and access to job opportunities. The CEO provides a platform for ideas to be shared and generated. It plays a convening role, working with organisations such as the Youth Development Institute and the Workforce Professionals Training Institute in the city, to share lessons and inform the design of new programmes. The Centre attracts new innovators and it imports ideas; half the ideas in the CEO's pipeline are from elsewhere. The Centre has piloted close to 70 anti-poverty initiatives since its inception. These include asset development, education, workforce development, health and justice programmes. It works with 14 different evaluation and technical assistance partners to monitor and evaluate all of its programmes. Programmes are closely monitored from the outset, reporting monthly and quarterly, and with approaches altered if necessary. Monitoring plays an important role informing the timing and method of evaluation too. While randomised control trials (RCTs) are the gold standard in evaluation, conducting them is not always appropriate. With over 50 evaluations conducted in the last seven years, nine were RCTs. Between 2006 and 2012/13, 17 programmes have been discontinued. Others have been continued and expanded.

Five of the CEO's initiatives are being replicated in other cities across the US in recognition of their high impact. The CEO has also won an award for Innovation in American Government from Harvard University. Alongside the identification and expansion of a number of successful initiatives, the capacity building nature of the CEO's work means that other organisations are adopting new approaches in their work and ultimately serving their clients better. It has also helped encourage a culture of innovation among city agencies and service providers more widely. There are a number of reasons the CEO has been successful in achieving its ambitions. Firstly, it has a significant budget – between 2006 and 2013 it has totalled approximately \$657 million – and private foundations are attracted by the strong evaluation component and its transparent use of data. Second, funding the CEO through a city tax levy and the donations of private dollars from foundations, businesses and individuals gives the CEO funding flexibility, allowing programmes that are untested or potentially controversial to be funded entirely through private contributions rather than public money. Third, as mentioned previously, being structured as part of the Mayor's Office signals that the CEO is a priority for the Mayor and gives it influence in other departments. And fourth, the CEO rewards innovation and risk-taking and has established itself as a 'safe place' for risk taking. The CEO still faces a number of challenges, however. While the CEO was set up to break down the silos in government, many still exist. Parts of the Department of Education with responsibility for similar programmes to the CEO, for example, aren't aware of the CEO's work. Data sharing has a large part to play in this and at the moment there is no common platform to share data across the city's agencies.

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## Tackling policy barriers through effective collaboration

**Lead organisation:** Performance Partnership Pilots

**Location:** Up to ten cities across the US, US

**Year:** 2014 to present

**Keywords:** Youth (16-24) employment programmes; International

**Read the full report here:** [Youth Opportunity: Lessons from the US](#)

Funding streams can act as a barrier to effective partnership working and create fragmentation within organisations. Performance Partnership Pilots, passed by Congress in January 2014, will test the notion that additional flexibility for states and cities to pool funds and obtain waivers of certain programmatic requirements can help them overcome some of the significant hurdles they may face in improving outcomes for disconnected youth.

Up to ten sites may enter into Performance Partnership agreements to more efficiently and effectively use federal discretionary funding to improve outcomes for disconnected youth or those at risk of disconnecting. The agreements enable state and community leaders to blend funds from programs to meet the needs of disconnected youth. The federal Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services, along with the Corporation for Community and National Service, will have the authority to provide waivers from any statutory, regulatory or administrative requirement for related policies necessary for the selected pilot sites to execute the agreed-upon plan.

The aim is to ease the strain on communities trying to meet the needs of disconnected youth while advancing the goals of individual federal programs. In order to be successful, Performance Partnerships require leaders at all levels of government to work together to identify the root of policy barriers and to craft solutions that ultimately improve service delivery. It is viewed as a potential game-changer in the way services are delivered.

## Diminishing the negative consequences of dropping out of school

Targeted intervention can lead to better outcomes. And different approaches are required for those that are 'disengaged youth' vs 'work ready'.

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### Using targeted interventions

**Lead organisation:** Youth Competence Centres

**Location:** Antwerp, Belgium

**Year:** 2004 to present

**Keywords:** Youth (16-24) employment programmes; International

**Read the full report here:** [Delivering change: Cities and the Youth Unemployment Challenge](#)

In 2004, Antwerp set up three Youth Competence Centres that focused on diminishing the negative consequences of dropping out of school.<sup>20</sup> The Centres were open to all young people but focused on 16 to 25 year olds in a vulnerable socio-cultural or socio-economic situation.

Outreach was an important part of the YCC success. The Centres trained counsellors and sent them out into local communities to meet young people not in employment, education or training. Counsellors aimed to build relationships with these young people and provided them with advice on applying for a job or course and helped them identify which courses matched their interests. These young people were also encouraged to visit the Centre itself for further advice.

Data from 2010 shows that of the 129 young people that received intensive coaching, 41 per cent found a job, 16 per cent started a training course and 26 per cent returned to education. In total, 83 per cent achieved either an employment or training outcome. However, of those who moved into employment, 70 per cent were on temporary work contracts. The Flemish Employment Service noted the importance of hiring counsellors who themselves already had excellent local knowledge of disengaged youth hotspots and existing contacts with young people in order to be able to gain the trust and respect of the target group. Counsellors also need a thorough understanding of existing provision for young people, including employment programmes and the education system. These factors were found to explain differences in outcomes amongst the Centres and emphasise the importance of putting resource into counsellors' training and coaching.

## Re-engaging young people

Tailored, continuous support can re-engage young people and help ensure they complete their qualification or course, or stay in employment.

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### Preparing young people for job placements and providing support outside working hours

**Lead organisation: Blade Runners**

**Location: Vancouver, Canada**

**Year: 1994 to present**

**Keywords: Youth (16-24) employment programmes; International**

**Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Cities and the Youth Unemployment Challenge](#)**

BladeRunners is an employment programme that helps 15-30 year olds with multiple barriers to employment find careers.<sup>21</sup> The programme offers a training programme to prepare young people for job placements and 24 hour, 7 days a week support, as participants typically experienced problems outside working hours. The programme is funded primarily through provincial and federal government and agencies delivering the program have to obtain 'matched' funding.

Employer engagement is a key element of the programme. In order to find jobs for participants and establish links with firms, coordinators go out into the community and 'sell' the program to potential employers.

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20 Froy, F. and L. Pyne (2011), "Ensuring Labour Market Success for Ethnic Minority and Immigrant Youth", OECD Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Working Papers, 2011 / 09, OECD Publishing.

21 Molgat, M. (2013) Bladerunners Building Partnerships To Support The Long-Term Employment Of Disadvantaged Young People, WAPES World Conference on Long-Term Unemployment in conjunction with the NASWA Winter Policy Forum.

Employers are not expected to enter into formal agreements beyond taking on a participant if they wish and are expected to treat them as any other employee. The programme also devotes a lot of time to help participants overcome the barriers beyond skills/qualifications that are preventing them from finding and keeping a job, such as substance misuse, homelessness, transportation costs and legal issues. Coordinators all have strong knowledge of what support is available in their communities and refer participants to the appropriate resource. It provides breakfast and lunch, living allowances, travel tickets, tools, equipment and work gear to participants during training. Support workers maintain contact through employment, which is cited as one of the significant factors contributing to the success of the programme. On the first day of work, a BladeRunners coordinator will bring the participant to the construction site and introduce him or her to the foreman, contractor or tradesperson, and to other BladeRunners. Over subsequent days, the coordinator will return to the site to ensure that all are satisfied with the placement. All those who start the programme can receive support up till they reach 31. As such, even if a participant comes back two years after receiving their initial training, BladeRunners will still provide them with job leads.

BladeRunners began in Vancouver in 1994 in the construction industry and as a result of its success expanded to other areas in British Columbia and into other sectors, including customer service and multi-media production. Around 75 per cent of participants complete the training and gain employment.

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## Designing and delivering programmes through the Youth Employability Service

**Lead organisation: Youth Employability Service**

**Location: Brighton, UK**

**Year: 2011 to present**

**Keywords: Youth (16-24) employment programmes**

**Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Cities and the Youth Unemployment Challenge](#)**

Intelligence and evaluation is crucial in effective design and delivery of programmes. In 2011, Brighton and Hove City Council established the Youth Employability Service (YES) to re-engage 16-18 year old NEETs. The service provides free information, advice and guidance on employment and training opportunities and access to benefit payments. It also offers assistance with CV writing, job searching, completing application forms and interview preparation and provides support to young people as they are settling into new roles.

The service has a number of drop-in centres across the city and uses social media, such as Facebook and Youtube, to share information. The service providers have also developed an app so that users can access information via their mobile phones. In a year and a half it has reduced the number of disengaged young people from 10 per cent to 6.6 per cent. The programme's success has been attributed to several factors, including: strong links with training providers, employers, Jobcentre Plus and the National Apprenticeship Service; input on how to improve the service from young people via the Youth Employability Panel; engagement via social media; and the monthly mapping of local provision.<sup>22</sup>

The service prioritises the tracking of all young people to keep the numbers of 'unknowns' low and offer disengaged young people an adviser to provide tailored support. Social media platforms are not only used to communicate with clients and promote the service but also to track young people. It has enabled the service to contact young people they would not normally be able to reach. In 2011/12 the situation of 12.8 per cent of young people was not known; in 2012/13 this had dropped to 4.8 per cent.<sup>23</sup> The council plans

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<sup>22</sup> Young people signing on for JSA must agree a contract to maintain contact with their YES adviser, who attends some joint reviews with JCP at eight weeks and beyond.

<sup>23</sup> Local Government Association (2013) Tracking Young People, LGA.

to increase support to more vulnerable learners with agreements to work closely with YMCA Supported Housing, housing associations, stronger family services, and Family Nurse Partnership practitioners.<sup>24</sup>

## Addressing barriers to work for young people

Interventions are more likely to be effective if a coherent package of measures is in place to address the multiple barriers to work that young people may face.

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### Delivering a wide range of services for young people

**Lead organisation:** YC Hertfordshire (formerly Youth Connexions)

**Location:** Hertfordshire, UK

**Year:** 2011 to present

**Keywords:** Youth (16-24) employment programmes

**Read the full report here:** [Delivering change: Cities and the Youth Unemployment Challenge](#)

One stop shops have been established in Hertfordshire where local partners come together to deliver a wide range of services for young people.

These include guidance on education, work, training and volunteering, advice on drugs, finance, health and housing. All provision is planned against a single five stage offer: 1. Tracking and contacting young people; 2. Assessing their needs; 3. Allocating a case worker and agreeing personalised action plans building a mix of personal, educational and employability skills; 4. Referring onto training or support for work; 5. Sustained participation with ongoing support and review with case worker. Youth Connexions works with training providers and employers through the Herts Provider Network and Hertfordshire Chambers of Commerce to identify progression routes and secure work experience placements. The council is also working with providers to offer support to employers taking on apprentices from disadvantaged groups.

The approach has resulted in a range of positive outcomes. During recession, the number of disengaged young people has dropped from 1,368 in 2010 to 1,087 in 2012. Within one year to June 2012 the number of young people leaving care and becoming disengaged has fallen from 26 per cent to 17 per cent, young offenders from 26 per cent to 22 per cent, young people with learning disabilities from 11 per cent to 9 per cent, and young people from deprived areas from 9 per cent to 7.5 per cent.

## Reducing the number of young people NEET

Reductions in ring-fencing and individual targets can lead to greater efficiencies and better outcomes, as demonstrated by the Total Place and Community Budget pilots.

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<sup>24</sup> Local Government Association (2013) Hidden talents II: re-engaging young people, the local offer, LGA.

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## Delivering greater efficiency and better outcomes through flexibility

**Lead organisation: Total Place Pilot**

**Location: Worcestershire, UK**

**Year: 2009**

**Keywords: Youth (16-24) employment programmes**

**Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Cities and the Youth Unemployment Challenge](#)**

The Worcestershire Total Place project aimed to reduce the number of young people (16 to 24 years old) NEET, which stood at 9 per cent in 2010.<sup>25</sup> With at least 24 separate local organisations and agencies linked to the agenda, the first step was to establish contact and develop relationships between them to begin providing a more efficient and integrated service. It was estimated that the annual expenditure involved with tackling NEETs exceeded £8 million with £400,000 spent on administration.<sup>26</sup>

The project team engaged with young people, local agencies, DfE and DWP to develop a new, more integrated approach. It found that young people were confused by the system of support offered to them and needed better information about what is on offer and why it is worth their while to engage. It also found that payment by outputs rather than outcomes had some negative results. For example, young people were being sent on courses/training at the same level they had previously completed, as it provided training providers with ongoing income. The pilot proposed establishing a single commissioning process, sharing data between agencies (including DWP) and the introduction of longer term planning with young people when they first become NEET. It also encouraged local employers to raise aspirations through introducing mentoring and business learning schemes into schools and colleges.

It was estimated that having a single integrated service would reduce the numbers of NEET young people and lead to savings of around £2.5 million a year. This includes administrative cost savings, as well a fall in unemployment support costs.

## Improving school to work transition

Creating a simple and coherent vocational pathway can help deliver efficiencies and reduce duplication, overall improving school to work transition.

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## Creating a simple and coherent vocational pathway

**Lead organisation: Local authorities**

**Location: London, UK**

**Year: 2010 – 2015**

**Keywords: Youth unemployment**

**Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Cities and the Youth Unemployment Challenge](#)**

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<sup>25</sup> Worcestershire Partnership (2010) Report of the Worcestershire Total Place Pilot.

<sup>26</sup> This excludes any JSA and Job Centre costs.

Three London boroughs focused their attention in the Community Budget pilot on issues where state expenditure and costs are highest. The aim was to deliver efficiencies, reduce duplication and drive down demand across the public sector through better joined up working between agencies. As part of this, the partners aimed to improve school to work transitions by creating a simple and coherent vocational pathway.

Partners planned to ensure young people had the information to make sound choices about learning and employment by incentivising schools to provide employability support (advice, training and work experience). Partners have a local commitment to pilot an Employability Programme in six Tri-borough<sup>27</sup> schools, to be funded jointly by local authorities, DWP and local schools and co-designed with schools, colleges, businesses, and the Greater London Authority. The plan is to run a small two-year pilot programme in a small number of schools with a predicted cost of £320,000. The proposal also sets out plans to strengthen the link between vocational skills funding and sustainable employment by increasing the proportion of funding paid for employment results, and streamlining and simplifying help for young people disengaged from work and learning.

Partners have identified a target population of 4,700 young people who are out of work and 3,500 young people to be given additional employability support in secondary school. Their analysis suggests that the pilot in six schools would generate savings to public services of £1.5 to 2.5 million per annum and around £6 to 10 million per annum if rolled out across all schools in the Tri-borough area.

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27 A six-year partnership between three London boroughs, Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, and Hammersmith & Fulham, to jointly provide council services.

## More information



The case studies in this document come from the reports:

‘*City deals and skills*’ published in 2015. Read it at: [www.centreforcities.org/publication/city-deals-and-skills/](http://www.centreforcities.org/publication/city-deals-and-skills/)

‘*Youth opportunity: Lessons from the US*’ published in 2015. Read it at: [www.centreforcities.org/publication/youth-opportunity-lessons-from-the-us-on-improving-young-peoples-employment-prospects/](http://www.centreforcities.org/publication/youth-opportunity-lessons-from-the-us-on-improving-young-peoples-employment-prospects/)

‘*Delivering change: Cities and the Youth Unemployment challenge*’ published in 2014. Read it at: [www.centreforcities.org/publication/delivering-change-cities-and-the-youth-unemployment-challenge/](http://www.centreforcities.org/publication/delivering-change-cities-and-the-youth-unemployment-challenge/)

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