

## Web page title: Challenge and Change Fund

**Challenge and Change exists to centre young changemakers – individuals, collectives and movements who are not only imagining better futures, but actively building them.**

Young people are already doing the work, organising, resisting, repairing and building. But too often, their work is underfunded.

Challenge and Change is for you if:

- You're **18–25 years old** and living in **England**
- You're using your **lived experience** to lead change
- You're an **individual, or part of a collective or movement**
- You're **already involved in social justice work** but lack resources
- **ready to create the change you want to see and want to create positive lasting impact**

We're funding **38 young leaders** in 2025 with **£10,000 grants** over 12 months – supporting people working across a wide range of issues.

Applications close at 11:59 PM on Sunday 14th September.

**If you'd like a PDF version of this page, please click here.**

### About the fund

Launched in 2020, Challenge and Change was created by and for young people with lived experience of injustice. Every version since has been designed **with** the leaders it serves. The 2025 edition is no different – co-created by five amazing advisers with support from The Centre for Knowledge Equity and The Blagrove Trust.

This fund exists because we know young people are already leading change – but often without the funding or support they need to grow.

### **This year, we're also backing climate justice!**

Out of the 38 grants, 13 are reserved for work focused on climate justice. For Challenge and Change, we define climate justice as:

Climate justice means repairing the unequal harm caused by climate change – especially for communities who are most affected but least responsible. It's about **ensuring everyone has clean air, access to green spaces, healthy food, space to heal and a voice in shaping their future.**

Climate justice recognizes that **solutions must be community-led and culturally rooted – not one-size-fits-all.** It's about **land justice, food justice, and the right to nature,**

**especially for those historically excluded or harmed.**

Examples of climate justice in action:

- Campaigning for clean air in polluted neighborhoods
- Protecting and reclaiming public land for community use
- Supporting Indigenous and local food systems (ways of farming and cooking that existed before colonisation of land)
- Taking young people from urban cities on trips to connect with land and culture
- Creating space for frontline communities to lead climate solutions
- Educating others to challenge harmful systems and mindsets

**Climate justice is not just environmental — it's social, cultural, and deeply human.**

We would like to give a special thanks to [The Ellis Campbell Foundation](#) and The Roots and Routes Fund (the [Co-op Foundation](#), [the Energy Saving Trust Foundation](#), [OVO Foundation](#), and [Impatience Earth](#)) for their financial contributions allowing us to grow the programme.



### **Who this fund is for**

We're here to back young people who are living the issues but stepping up to create the change. Over 12 months, we'll fund work tackling a wide range of injustices affecting young lives and communities.

This year, we have reserved funding for 13 partners to do work that is specifically focused on Climate justice – with the remaining 25 partners being able to work on any social injustice theme as long as it's not oppressive in nature.

Challenge and Change is for you if:

- You're 18–25 years old at point of application, and living in England
- You're using your lived experience to lead change

- You're an individual, or part of a collective or movement
- You're already involved in social justice work but lack resources
- Ready to make positive lasting change on an issue that affects you and others

**As the Challenge and Change team we will be considering the below to build a diverse cohort:**

- Young people that really care about their community and are using their lived experience to truly create change in their environments and looking to develop their practice.
- Young people who may be from rural areas that often get overlooked.
- Anti-oppressive work that is not at the cost of another person's freedom
- How young people are representing their communities and the tone of voice they choose to use.
- How young people represent themselves – we care about their potential and how they can imagine change happening in their communities.
- Collaboration over competition.
- Clarity of work, a clear plan of action.
- A range of locations and themes

Here is a flavour of some of the lived experience leaders we've backed before:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRP8jAY-qWg&t=515s>

[Click here to explore more inspiring stories!](#)

**Who this fund is not for**

- Non youth led organisations (for this programme, organisations run by those aged 26 and over) that want to launch work on behalf of a young person or group of young people.
- One-off pieces of work (e.g. an art installation) that are unlikely to lead to longer term change or where there is no intention to continue the work further.
- Young people who have never been involved or done any form of prior social justice work.
- Young people that are established in their changemaking work, e.g. already have received £10,000 or more in grant funding, and could access Blagrove's other funding.
- Young people wanting to set up a business, which has a social purpose component alongside it but is not its core focus.

- People who are looking for loan repayments, living costs or to pay for education or courses.

### What You'll Receive

- **£10,000 grant** over 12 months
- A **storyteller** to co-create and platform your journey
- **In-person Welcome Day** (Saturday 8th November, London)
- Dedicated funding for your **wellbeing**
- Support from our team and access to experts (e.g. safeguarding, legal)
- Personal and professional development opportunities which you will get to help shape

### How to Apply

Head to our [APPLICATION FORM](#) to apply in writing, by video or by voice note.

Applications close at **11:59 PM on Sunday 14th September**.

Applicants will hear back by **Friday 10th October 2025**.

If we need anymore information, we will be in touch. All funding decisions are made by our advisers (former Challenge and Change partners).

### FAQs (Frequently asked questions)

**We will be hosting a [Q&A](#) on Challenge and Change on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August at 6:30pm, the Q&A will be recorded and all questions and answers added to this section of the website.**

#### **1. Can I use AI to support with writing my application for Challenge and Change?**

We understand that AI can be a helpful tool to support with applications, particularly for those who may struggle with written communication, so we do allow it.

However, we want to understand your personality and vision, and it is clear when someone has used AI as it takes this away – so please be aware that it may negatively impact your application if you solely use AI rather than using it as a supporting tool. We are also aware of the negative environmental impact that AI has so we ask anyone who is using it to be mindful of this.

#### **2. Would you fund projects that have already started?**

Yes. Challenge and Change is for young people who are already doing social justice work, or as we call it “demonstrating”.

**3. Are we eligible even though we’ve had small grants (a couple £100) before and have raised our own funds?**

Yes. As long as you have not received significant previous funding (£10,000 or more) and still need support to take your vision and plan to the next level.

**4. Would you fund registered social enterprises?**

We would consider funding registered social enterprises as long as;

- The social purpose is core to your work (rather than being a profit-making business with a social purpose component alongside)
- You do not have access to significant funding from elsewhere

**5. Could funding be used for DBS checks?**

Our grant funding can be used for this purpose, but we would not fund DBS checks in addition to the main grants.

**6. Do I need my own safeguarding policy to get funding?**

No. We will be offering safeguarding training at the welcome day, as those who do not yet have a safeguarding policy will need to follow Blagrove’s safeguarding policies and procedures.

**7. Do you need to include a budget breakdown when you apply?**

No, we do not ask for a full budget breakdown, however we encourage those who are applying to consider creating a rough budget for yourselves, so you know realistically how you plan to spend your funding.

**8. Do you have to have your team already or can you apply individually then form a team?**

No – you can apply as an individual and then later decide to form a collective. We would suggest being cautious about applying as a collective when the collective hasn’t formed yet though, as we would want to be confident from your application that you’ll be able to carry out the work and use the funding applied for in full.

**9. Can the funding be used to fund a course or degree?**

No – We cannot fund individual qualifications under Challenge and Change.

**10. Are we eligible if our work is events based?**

Yes! We really recognise the value of gathering in person. As long as your events are aiming for long term social change rather than just for general awareness raising and is more than one event then you would be eligible.

**11. Are we allowed to reimburse young speakers for their travel to events/ their time?**

Yes! We actively encourage all of our partners to pay for people's time (including their own), especially when asking people to act as consultants and give their opinions and expertise.

**12. Is the funding UK wide?**

This funding is only eligible for those living in **England** and all funding must be used to benefit communities in England too.

**13. Is it OK if our project goes outside England in the future?**

We are not able to fund any work outside of England. However, if you find other funding to support expansion once your work is more established then as long as all of our funding is used within England, then your project could end up going worldwide!

**14. What support will be available, aside from funding, for successful applicants?**

We will be offering a support offer consisting of connections to previous Challenge and Change partners for peer networking and knowledge exchanges, access to masterclasses, access to Blagrove and the Centre for Knowledge Equity's teams and a wellbeing grant. We will always share any relevant opportunities that we come across too.

**15. Can we have a mix of ages? e.g. in our collective, One is 26 and the others are 25 and under.**

As long as the majority (75% or more) of the collective fit within our age criteria, and the application comes from someone who fits within our age criteria then you would still be eligible.

**16. Can we have a mix of lived experience leaders and those who do not have direct lived experience but are passionate about supporting the change we want to make in our collective?**

We understand that collectives and movements will look different, and you may have people who bring expertise to the work, without necessarily sharing your lived experiences. As this is a fund for young people with lived experience, 75% of your collective/movement should share some common lived experience of the injustice you are trying to change, if you have support from a small percentage (25% or less) of those who do not share your lived experiences, you are still eligible, but those with the direct lived experience must take the lead and have ownership over the funding.

**17. Can refugees and asylum seekers apply?**

Yes! If you are someone who does not yet have the right to work in the UK, we just ask that you are fiscally hosted (a trusted registered organisation supports you in holding finances) and that you develop a clear expenses policy. If you have the right to work and your own bank account, then you are able to apply in the same way as everyone else.

**18. Will I receive feedback on my application?**

Yes. Everyone who applies will receive feedback on their application. Due to the number of applications we receive, this feedback may be top level, but we commit to giving feedback to everyone.

## **Glossary**

**Lived experience** – First-hand knowledge of a social issue you're working to address

**Lived experience leader** – Someone using that experience to lead change in their community

**Collective** – 2+ people working together towards a common goal

**Movement** – A broader effort for change, often involving many people

**Social justice** – Fairness in how resources, rights, and opportunities are shared in society

We've used definitions from the **LEx Movement**, based on Baljeet Sandhu's research *Lived Experience Leadership: Rebooting the DNA of Leadership*.