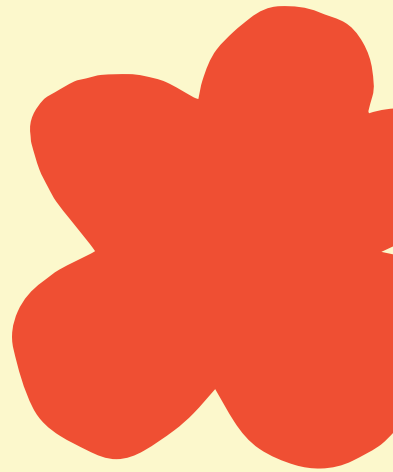
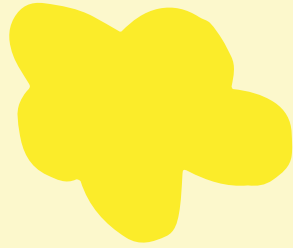


How to do a social action project



A TOOLKIT FOR CHANGE



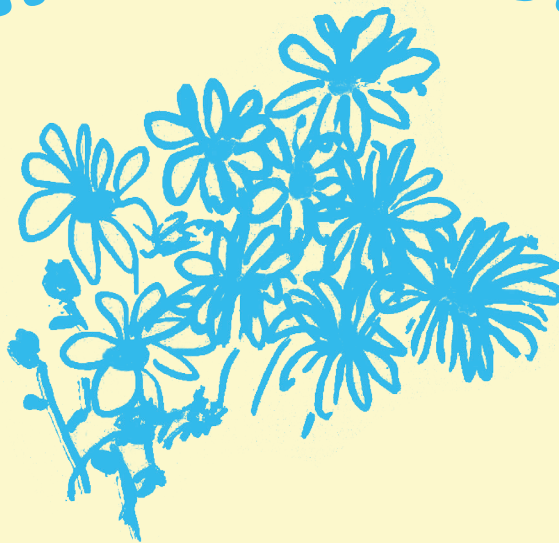
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Introduction



The Trussell Trust is an anti-poverty charity that supports a UK-wide network of food banks. A **food bank** is a place in local communities that people can go to access emergency food when they are struggling to buy food for themselves and their families, while meeting all of their other bills and daily needs, like rent and mortgage, gas and electricity, travel and clothes. People can also get advice and guidance on issues relating to money and support at the food bank too.

Even though we provide emergency food and advice to families and individuals experiencing poverty and financial hardship, and though we are deeply proud to stand in solidarity with everyone facing poverty in the UK, we don't want food banks to have to exist.

Our vision is for a UK **without the need for food banks**; a UK where everyone has enough money not just to survive, but to live a healthy, happy, and safe life, where children and young people have everything they need to thrive.

Trussell Trust's youth participation group, **Stand for Change: Young People Against Poverty**, is made up of young members from across the UK. They are using their lived experience to build understanding about the causes and impacts of poverty, and encouraging more people to stand for change and end the need for food banks.

Who we are:

"We are young people, from across the UK, who are passionate about a common goal: fighting the causes of poverty and finding solutions for all.

We've lived through hard times, experiencing the constant worry of financial hardship. We want a better future for ourselves and others. We want to inspire other young people to join our fight against poverty."

This toolkit is designed **by young people, for young people.**

We hope that young people like ourselves find this a helpful tool to design and carry out projects and activities of their own; projects which have the power to **create positive social change** in their local communities and wider.

We know that young people have the knowledge, skills, and power to create real change, and we hope this tool supports you and those around you to put your ideas into action!



The start of a social action project

We think about the start of a Social Action Project as being like a seed, that has the potential to grow into something big and bold and exciting! **What are you passionate about?**

Sexism

poverty

DISCRIMINATION

• Stop.
• Global
Warming.

What issue do you want to solve or what positive change do you want to be a part of? That's your seed!

FEMINISM

• Ageism
• Abilism

STEREOTYPING

Homophobia

Racism!

POLICY change

STEREOTYPING
BODYS

Integration

Social action is about people coming together to help improve their lives and solve the problems that are important in their communities.¹

Can you think of some **examples** of social actions?

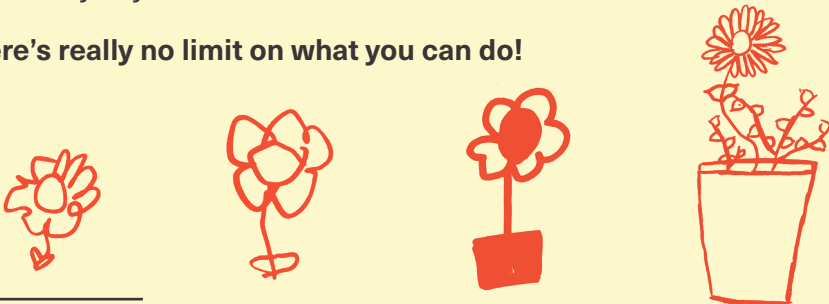
Educate! Spreading the word!
PROTEST Posters
Volunteering Charity fundraising

is a seed...

You could...

- start community activities in your local park or community centre
- donate clothes, food, money, or devices to those in need
- do a fundraiser to raise money for a charity of your choice
- volunteer in a care home
- mentor young people to learn about sustainability
- do an ad campaign building awareness of a local cause.

There's really no limit on what you can do!



¹ Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, Policy paper, 'Social Action', (July 2016), <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/centre-for-social-action/centre-for-social-action#supporting-high-impact-projects-to-grow>>

Examples



During lockdown, Samira noticed one of her elderly neighbours was struggling with loneliness. She decided to organise a neighbour meet-up, inviting everyone down her road to stand at their doors every Thursday evening to socialise. She created hand-made posters with the details and posted them through her neighbour's doors. It was a great success that carried on for four months! This was a free and easy to organise activity, that tackled loneliness through a difficult period and built strength in community. Samira and her family now feel they have a strong bond with their neighbours.

Josh organised a litter pick-up with his local youth group. He had started to notice that his local park was getting very dirty; the bins were overflowing and people were leaving plastic and rubbish all over. Josh had recently learnt about protecting wildlife from plastic pollution, and so decided to get some friends together from his local youth group to clean the park. Working with the youth leaders, Josh approached a local business close to the park to sponsor them and donate money for cleaning and gardening equipment. By working with external collaborators, the group improved the local area and encouraged community spirit. His next project will be working with the Council to introduce a vegetable patch in the park!



Benefits

We've heard about what we can do to help our communities, and take action on important social issues, but what are the **benefits** of Social Action Projects?

There are many benefits for the community or our society when you take action together, like...



Community projects really help us to **connect with each other**, to **build bonds** across different friendship groups, different age ranges, different social groups, and different neighbourhoods.

When a community is connected it is healthier in lots of other ways too and this helps the people in that community to feel physically, emotionally, and mentally healthy too. When our communities are connected and healthy, we feel seen and heard and we work together to keep this up!



Skills

Not only does the community benefit from you doing a social project, but there are big **personal rewards** too! When organising a social project, you develop lots of different skills...



Doing a social project will help you build new life experiences and gain new perspectives on life that you might not have considered. It also might open the door to new opportunities, whether that is socially, in education, or jobs!

Nearly **9/10** young people care about making the world a better place.² **That's a lot of people!** But some people don't realise that taking action on issues is even possible. Of a group of young people surveyed who had never participated in a social action project, 'it had never occurred' to **32%** of young people to get involved. And increasingly over the years, **20%** of young people now believe that there are 'few/no opportunities in my area'.

But you've picked up this toolkit and that's the first step to taking positive action for yourself and your community!

Over the next couple of pages, you'll see just how easy it is for you to create your own Social Action Project. **Now is the time for us to Stand for Change and Get it Done.**

² Y Bratsa, C Mollitor & J Stevens, 'National Youth Social Action Survey 2019: Summary Report', Ipsos MORI, (May 2020), <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/931216/National_Youth_Social_Action_Survey_2019_-_Summary_Report-c.pdf>

Research and tools

So, we've got our seed for the project. We've got an issue that we care about, something we are passionate about changing in the world – no matter how big or small!

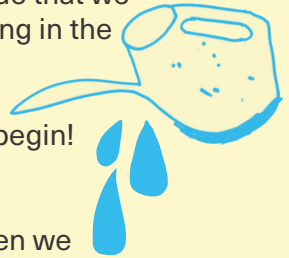
Now we need to **gather our tools**, plant our seed, and begin!

What do we do first? We've got to do some **research**.

What questions do we need to ask ourselves when we are researching an issue? You can use the box below to start answering some of these questions:

- Let's start with, why is this important to you?
- What is the real problem here? And what can realistically be done about it?
- Have there been any similar projects about your issue before?
- Maybe in your local area? Can you learn from them? Look at what worked for them and what didn't work.
- If you are involving a community group or other people in your project; how do they feel about the issue? Can you ask them? What are their needs when it comes to this problem?
- You could do this by running an event and getting people to share opinions, or inviting people to a community discussion group.
Get creative with how you do your research!

Research is vital to make sure you know the problem you're trying to solve inside out.



Collaborating



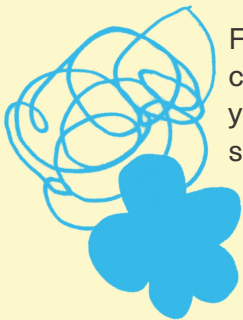
One of the best things about Social Action Projects is the partnerships you can make with the people around you.

Working together to take action is rewarding and builds many skills...but who are our collaborators that are going to help us achieve our goals?

This is where we start to map out the people around us who make up our support network. **Who are some possible collaborators that can offer support during our project?**

- **Friends & family** – these are the people closest to you, and will probably share some of your views, so get them on board!
- **School, college or university students and staff**
- **Community groups**
- **Youth groups**
- **Charities**
- **Local organisations**
- **Care homes**
- **Local and national media**
- **Council**
- **Your local MP**

Once we've decided who might be able to help us on our projects, **how do we approach them?**



Face to face is always the best option for making connections. By speaking to someone face to face, you get a better sense of the person and the qualities, skills, and resources they can bring to your action.



• send email • friendly family •
go into university,
collage to get
them involved.
• call
• face to face

Try to be active about involving more people in your Social Action Project. Collaboration and connection create change and collectively we can achieve so much! You could:

- Visit a school and do a presentation on the issue you're trying to change
- Visit a charity to meet their staff
- Visit your local community centre and talk to the groups there about what they do, and what you want to share with them too

If face to face isn't possible or feels a bit scary at first, **there are lots of other options** to get you started too. You could arrange a video or telephone call with whoever you want to work with. Or if that's not possible, even an email or letter could work!

Whichever way you want to approach your collaborators, we recommend you do it with confidence and joy.

Remember... you're working on an amazing project to try and create positive change! That's a beautiful and inspiring thing and people will want to hear about it!



SMART goals



You've planted your seed! Your project is well on its way to growing into a flower. Before you start your actions though, it's important to **define your project clearly.**

Outline a start, middle and end to your project. List all of your actions and your objectives in a way that you can follow and track, so you know if you're going in the right direction or if you have to make any changes. When thinking about your actions, make sure they are **SMART goals...**

- S Specific.** Are these goals and actions specific? Have you outlined exactly what you want to do?
- M Measurable.** Can we measure how much we have achieved with our goals?
- A Achievable.** Are the actions we're taking actually achievable?
- R Relevant.** Are these actions relevant to the project? Will doing this actually help us achieve the change we want to see?
- T Time bound.** Have we set ourselves a time limit to do this in?

Following on, it's important that we set a **timeline** for our project. We don't necessarily need to set specific dates for things, but if you can that's great! Try to map out your timeline, being generous with how long it will take you to do tasks. Stuff often takes a lot longer than we think it will, and that's ok!

You will also need to speak with your **collaborators** to see if the timeline works for them too. Make sure everyone feels they can be honest about how much time and energy they can commit to the project. It'll really help in the long-term.



Budgeting

After defining your actions and your timeline, you have to think about a **budget** for the project.

When planning the budget, you must think about all of your actions and **how much they will cost**.

You can use this space to make some notes and **ask yourself some questions**:



- Are you paying yourself and collaborators for your time?
- Are you providing any transport? Could you cover people's bus tickets for example?
- Do you need a venue? How much does that cost?
- Have you got all the materials needed?
- How about promotion? Do you need to make a leaflet?



Funding



Depending on your project, it's likely that you're going to need a bit of money or funding to get your idea going and to bring it to life! You might even need a lot of funding!

But where do you even start when looking for money for a Social Action Project?

First of all, ask yourself if you can get anything for **free**.

Would someone be able to **donate time, space, materials, resources** to your project? Lots of people are happy to contribute resources to a well-planned project that will achieve change.

So why not try asking...if you are respectful and considerate when asking for help from individuals, you give them space to join something wonderful but also to say no if it's not something they can offer to you.

You could fundraise yourself too! Maybe do a sponsored run, or a bake sale, or sell art or other crafts. **Get creative** with how you raise money and have fun with it!



For **smaller projects** that require anything from £5 to £1000, you can look to:

- Your **school, college or university**
- **Arts organisations or galleries**
- **Youth groups**
- **Charities** that support projects in your local area
- **The council**

For **bigger projects** requiring more money, look at places like:

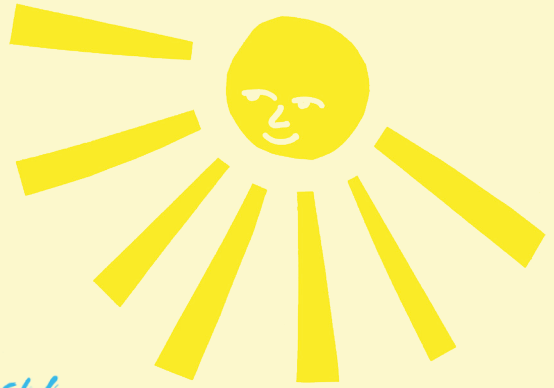
- **National Lottery Community Fund**
- **Arts Council**
- **Children In Need**
- **UnLtd** – an unlimited pot of money for social action entrepreneurs

You could do an **online campaign** to get your project funded by anyone who shares your passions, and there are lots of different website to try.

- **GoFundMe**
- **JustGiving**
- **Crowdcube**
- **SpaceHive** – pitch your project to be funded by charities



Great! You've fully planned your project. Need a couple of ideas to get you going?



Protest

Showcase/gallery

Community workshop

School

Fundraising events

EVENTS!

Discussion group

Ad campaign

Social structure

inspire
People

YOUTH
CLUB



There are lots of examples of exciting actions you could take.

Communicating

Now your flower is nicely growing, you've got to tend to it to keep it healthy!

What can you do to keep people **engaged with the campaign** and keep gaining momentum?

There are lots of ways you can communicate updates on your project with your community.

You can keep people excited about your project through:

- **Social media posts**
- **Blog posts**
- Creating **leaflets** and **posters** to display in your local area
- **Local media coverage** (contact local radio stations or newspapers to tell them about what you and your collaborators have achieved)

The more hype you create and maintain, the **bigger the change** you'll see from your Social Action Project!



You did it!



You've done it! At this point you should be extremely proud of what you've achieved! You've planned and launched a Social Action Project to create positive change for the people around you!

How do you feel?

When we reach this point, we have to ask; **how do you celebrate success?**

First of all, celebrate with joy and happiness! Well done for making it to the end of your project! You've done something wonderful and you should be so very proud of yourself and your team of collaborators!

Secondly, take some time to **reflect** on what you have done and think about how you might measure the success of your work. We call this **evaluation** – understanding the success and the impact of what you have done.

When evaluating your project, think about these questions...



- Have you succeeded in your goal?
- Have you achieved change around the issue you are passionate about?
- Have you changed people's minds?
- If you are working with a community or group of people, how does everyone else feel?
- Do people around you feel inspired? Have you created a movement?

If you have applied for funding from a body, they might have things you need to share from your evaluation as part of your funding, so make sure you know what these are before you start.

You've created something beautiful!



It's not just the project you need to reflect on, **it's the changes in you too!**

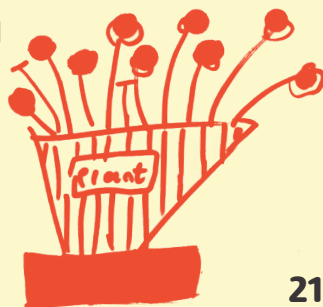
Being part of something new can create small changes inside ourselves. Creating something that inspires others, creates positive changes for your community, and brings you together with a likeminded collective of people can create even bigger changes inside ourselves!

- How much have you grown throughout this process?
- Have you learnt any new skills?
- Do you feel like you have gained confidence in your abilities?

Don't underestimate the importance of evaluation. Taking what you've learned and developed with you into the future, whether that's personally or professionally, is so important.

You can take the skills and lessons you've learned into your next project and continue to build something big and bold and inspiring!

You've taken a Stand for Change and that's incredible!



Thank you!

We would like to thank all those who made this toolkit possible. The brilliant young members of Stand for Change, the wonderful Mimi and Bella from Get It Done, our funders at BBC Children in Need, and our colleagues at the Trussell Trust.

For more information on the project, contact the Trussell Trust Participation Team at participation@trusselltrust.org or look online at www.trusselltrust.org/youth-participation

The Trussell Trust supports a network of over 1200 food banks across the UK. The charity provides emergency food and support to people locked in poverty, and campaigns for change to end the need for food banks in the UK.

www.trusselltrust.org @trusselltrust

Get It Done is a community arts organisation based in Manchester and London. Get It Done works directly with communities to facilitate creative campaigns delivering measurable social change, and upskills young people with the tools to lead impactful projects themselves and professionalise their creative practices.

www.getitdoneart.com @we.getitdone

BBC Children In Need is a national charity ensuring every child in the UK is safe, happy, secure and has the opportunities they need to reach their potential.

www.bbcchildreninneed.co.uk @bbccin





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**This toolkit is designed by young people,
for young people.**



**Using this guide, we encourage young people
to design and carry out projects and activities
of their own; projects which have the power
to create positive social change in their local
communities and wider.**

**Young people have the knowledge, skills, and
power to create real change. You've taken the
first step by picking up this guide...so let's go!**

