



YUAF PATHWAYS Year 1 – External Summary

Introduction

This monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) report summarises the programme outputs and outcomes and key learning points from the first year of the Pathways Service aftercare support programme for young people (YP). It is based on monitoring and evaluation data gathered by the Pathways Coordinator (PC), in line with an initial evaluation framework designed by A5cend, plus research conversations with the PC. It also includes some areas of development to support programme evolution, heading into Y2.

Pathways Service Outputs

Beneficiaries

Table 1 - User data for Pathways Service caseload 2021:

	Jan - Jun 2021	Jul - Dec 2021	Totals
No. caseload signups	21	14	37 YP total caseload (incl. 2 with no date data)
No. YP completed / exited Pathways	18	11	+ 1 undated = 30 YP (81%) total exits (Other 7: harder to reach and unresponsive, postponed or no data available)
No. pre/post web graphs completed	13 (+ 1 pre only)	11 (+ 3 pre only)	24 pre/post graphs completed
Dis/ability breakdown	2 SEN	1 SEN	3 (+ 7 unknown) out of 37
Locations of service users	14 London, 8 out of London	13 London	+ 1 undated London = 36 + 1 unknown

Diagram 1: ages of Pathways caseload YP, Y1

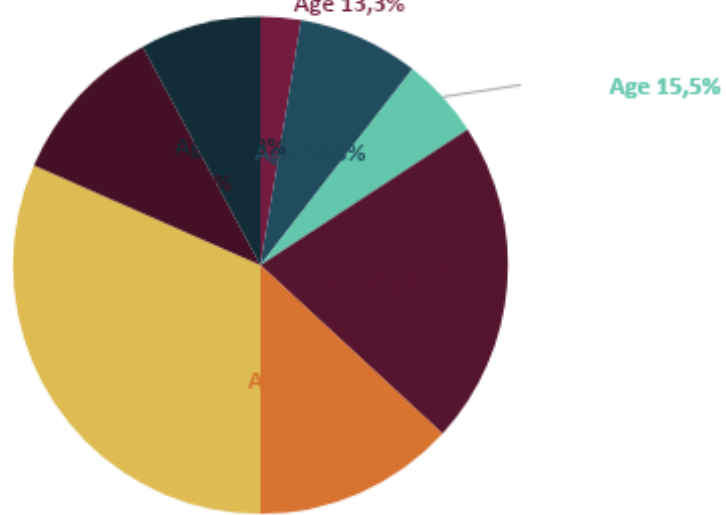


Diagram 2: genders of Pathways caseload YP, Y1

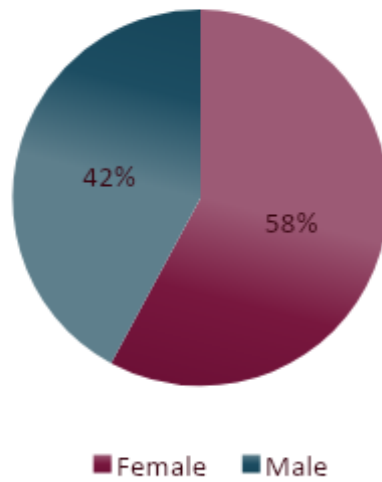
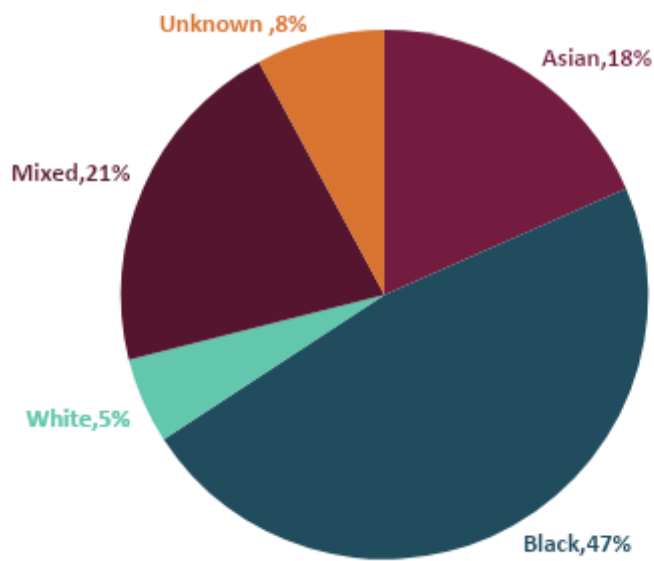
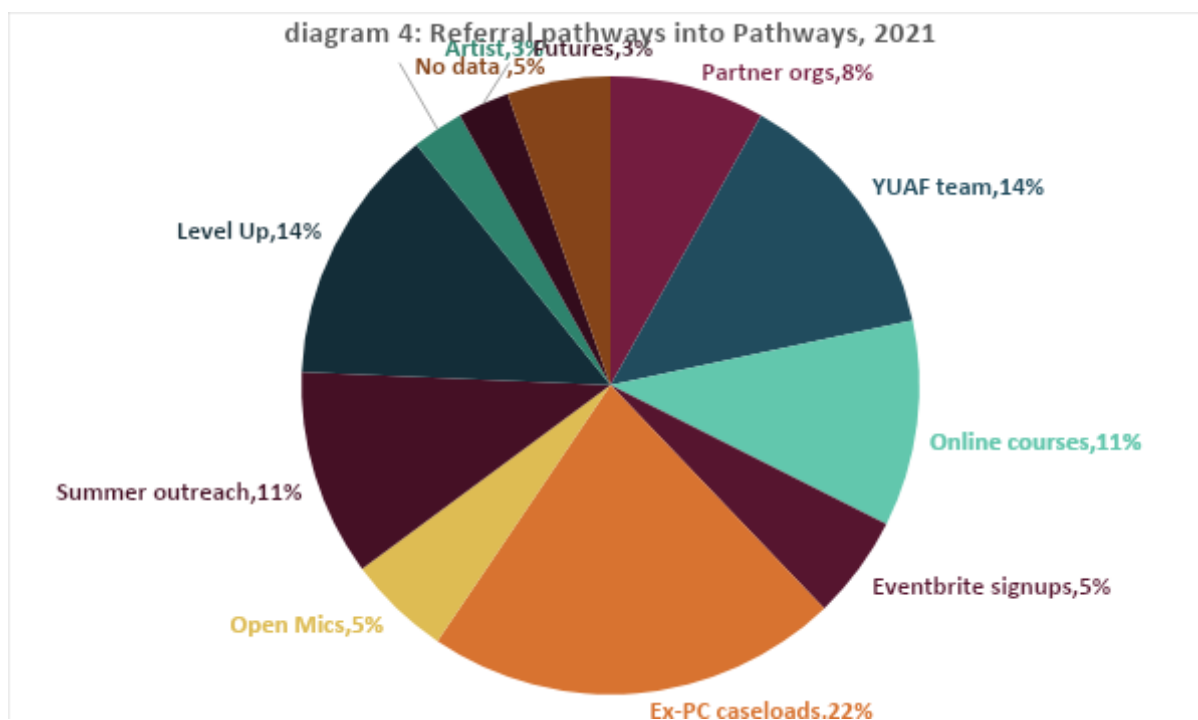


Diagram 3: ethnicities of Pathways caseload YP, Y1



Project delivery



- Total 1-1 Pathways support delivered this period: at least 300 one-to-one calls/zooms or WhatsApp check-ins, to support YP with goal-setting and progression towards goals, as well as celebrating ongoing achievements and via exit web graphs. Time on each check-in varied – could be 40 min to 1 hour, depending on need. Check-ins were agreed individually with YP, so could be weekly, fortnightly, or less frequently.
- Plus: many more regular extra WhatsApp chats with YP not on the caseload, for example YP who state that they require support when registering for courses on Eventbrite, or who are referred, but do not become caseload.
- Around 200 YP received notification of 294 unique opportunities via the YUAF Pathways WhatsApp Business Chat status update between February and December 2021. There were an average of 20 views (people) per opportunity posted on the WhatsApp status in August and October 2021– including caseload YP, non-caseload and some parents/carers of YP.

Opportunities were varied, ranging from YUAF's Futures and Level Up programmes, to BBC Tech mentoring, partner organisation training courses, workshops and masterclasses, open mics, casting calls, festivals, the Halley's Launchpad, music workshops, free tickets to concerts and industry academies e.g. Sony Music's A&R Academy etc.

Table 2: Number of Pathways caseload YP who accessed different aspects of Pathways support (from case monitoring spreadsheet):

Number of YP who:	Jan-Jun 2021	Jul-Dec 2021	Undated	Totals
Received calls from a PC	15	13	0	At least 28 (76%) YP received an estimated 300 calls/zooms/WhatsApp check-ins = average of 10.7 calls each
Received opps via WhatsApp Business chat*	21	14	2	37 – all caseloads on WhatsApp list. Plus a further 21 not on caseload June-November 2021.
Received Awesome Coaching		6		6 in total
Accessed YUAF / partner opportunities	16	17	2	35 (95%)
Went on to YUAF Futures	8	3	1	12 (32%) (1 later dropped out)
Received 1-1 support to access opps	8	4		12
Received high need support	4	2		6 (mainly referrals to counselling services)

*All YP on the caseload received opportunities. The Pathways Team were unable to see which caseload YP opened opportunities due to some YP's WhatsApp privacy settings.

A further 21 YP NOT on the Pathways caseload received and accessed opportunities via WhatsApp Business Chat between June and November 2021. There were 75 clicks on WhatsApp links from October 26th (when Daniella began to use Bitly to count them) to early December 2021.

Outcomes for service users

Table 3: Self-identified web graph positive outcomes for 24 YP who completed their Pathways journey (some gain = 1-2 points change, significant gain = 3+ points change):

	Jan-June 2021	Jul-Dec 2021	Totals
Knowing what opportunities available	100% 9 significant, 4 some	100% 11 significant, 2 some	100% 18 significant, 6 some
Direction and next steps	100% 7 significant, 6 some	64% 5 sig, 3 some	88% 12 sig, 9 some
Confidence in myself	77% 8 sig, 2 some	100% 1 sig, 10 some	88% 9 sig, 12 some
Skills – creative	92%	100%	96%

	6 sig, 6 some	3 sig, 8 some	9 sig, 14 some
Positivity about the future	85% 7 sig, 4 some	64% 3 sig, 4 some	75% 10 sig, 8 some
Happiness levels	85% 6 sig, 5 sig	82% 2 sig, 7 some	83% 8 sig, 12 some
Communication and work skills	85% 7 sig, 4 some	82% 3 sig, 6 some	83% 10 sig, 10 some
Feeling part of a creative community	100% 9 sig, 4 some	73% 4 sig, 4 some	86% 13 sig, 8 some

"I said 10 for communication last time because I was at school - but since leaving and being in a new working environment and applying for new opportunities, it's helped me realise I still have work to do. So now I am an 8 - as I feel like I can definitely improve, but I appreciate the support I've been given. I thought I could do it all independently." YP, exit chat web graph, 2021

Table 4: Total numbers of YP who achieved the key Pathways programme outcomes in Y1:

	Jan-Jun (21 total YP)	Jul-Dec (14 total YP)	Undated (2 total YP)	Totals
Improved wellbeing	14 (67%) 8 SIG 6 SOME	10 (71%) 4 SIG 6 SOME	1 (50%) SOME	25 (68%) (+ 5 hard to reach dropped out, 2 no change (red), 1 N/A (green), 3 no data, 1 postponed)
Increased confidence	13 (62%) 5 SIG 8 SOME	11 (79%) 10 SOME 1 SIG	1 SOME	25 (68%) (+ 5 dropped out, 2 no change (red), 2 no change (green), 2 no data, 1 postponed)
Increased access to opportunities	18 (86%) 9 SIG 9 SOME	13 (93%) 10 SIG 3 SOME	1 SIG	86% (+ 3 dropped out, 1 no data, 1 postponed)

"I found that these opportunities and being able to get back into music has been the most useful for my mental health. It's kept me occupied and I enjoy making music." MMN case study feedback, 2021

"Confidence has improved because I'm around more people who have the same interests, and now I feel more certain that it will turn out alright. Other people who understand my creativity." RR, exit chat with web graph, November 2021

"I wasn't very educated on where to find out where opportunities were available - but pathways has been eye-opening and helped me see what's out there." S, exit chat with web graph, November 2021

What makes the difference?

Looking across the case monitoring spreadsheet, the combination of the following key ingredients worked for many of the YP who made the most significant gains in wellbeing, confidence and pathways into opportunities:

- Regular supportive one-to-one calls / check-ins.

"Pathways would check-in regularly, and encouraged me to perform. I wouldn't of done so otherwise." YP with huge confidence gain during the Pathways support period, 2021

"Your words sat with me today and really helped me get through today." One-to-one chat, Bus, August 2021

- Receiving WhatsApp status updates with opportunities:

"Before you called me in August I didn't know any websites, or find opportunities for my age group. The status has been great because it's encouraged me to sign-up to new opportunities that I wouldn't of known about." YP, exit chat, 2021

"Pathways helped, the little connections helped me get bigger connections. Then, those connections were sharing my Instagram and now The Voice Kids has seen my Instagram and scouted me." Phone call check-in with YP, November 2021

- Direct referrals to YUAF and industry partner opportunities, and the impact of the experiences themselves has been huge for YP:

"Best opportunity of my life, felt like a pop star." YP's WhatsApp message, Pathways, July 2021 (the YP had her Song remastered with help from Aidan Gleenon, who delivered a Ditto Masterclass earlier in 2021.)

"I just finished my session @ undeniable record studio, thank you so much! Koder and Tenashe were lovely company, we appreciate you thank you so much!" YP WhatsApp message, September 2021.

"I must say it [Ditto Masterclasses] was the most useful information I have received in my whole year of doing music. It made me realise my thinking at the time was wrong, my mindset needed to be changed and it let me know what I needed to do to improve on my journey. Being exposed to all that valuable information allowed me to be catapulted 10 steps ahead. From the advice Matt gave - preparing 5 to 6 singles every few weeks and then an EP is great for building momentum. So now I have been working and have a catalogue of music that's ready to go, and my mixtape also so I can start planning my releases." MMN, case study form feedback, 2021

In regards to JA's happiness levels, the Girl Rising opportunity; *"...was the best thing to ever happen to me, and what's now happening as a result of this, has definitely increased my happiness. Because of YUAF, I have been presented with opportunities I never thought existed."* JA journey feedback, 2021

- The extra support with accessing opportunities proved to be instrumental in YP stepping up into unique new opportunities – e.g. CV, research skills, brainstorming, support with applications and mentoring with developing questions/responses for zooms etc.

“Thank you for giving me the idea 💡 - it resulted in me writing and recording one of the most meaningful songs I’ve written.” WhatsApp message feedback, March 2021 – in response to the brainstorming session the PC offered to help the YP apply for a Ditto Industry Access opportunity which he was later accepted into. The YP recorded a rap as part of his application, writing an original piece. The PC spent an hour each with 6 YP applying to a Ditto industry access opportunity, all of whom were then able to attend.

“Prepared me for the call by having someone mentor me and teach me how to network and ask important questions. That was really helpful because it meant I got the most out of the call. Daniella helped me set up a zoom account, and gmail account so I could be more professional.” YP, exit chat, 2021

- At least 5 YP who received Awesome Coaching accessed further opportunities and 4/5 gained confidence and 3/5 experienced improved wellbeing.

Case Study - GK

GK is a 19-year-old black female from Croydon, in her first year of university. GK began attending YUAF’s Thrive & Connect drama courses. She was initially introduced to Pathways through a previous YUAF staff member.

During a Pathways one-to-one session, GK said she was only seeking opportunities as hobbies to work on in her spare time and did not need further support. Thus, she was highlighted as a Green on our RAG system (Red-Amber-Green assessments allow us to determine levels of support needs).

GK had access to the WhatsApp Business chat group which is regularly updated with creative industries opportunities. She was pleased to be introduced to a wide range of opportunities and mentioned that it was helpful for her to know which companies were offering them.

For example, Pathways alerted the chat group about a Media Trust Masterclass and as a result, GK attended and gained great insight. After another one-to-one session with Pathways, GK accessed more opportunities from YUAF partners: Total Insight Theatre (Online) drama course, Fully Focused Masterclass, Livity Network session, and a Creative Studios London presentation. Based on her creative interests and personal drive to achieve her goals, GK was referred to YUAF Futures.

After several phone one-to-one sessions and a face-to-face meeting with Pathways, GK reached out for help, stating that she now felt more comfortable to share what was happening in her life and admitted that she was struggling with her mental health. She explained that a particular challenge was causing her anxiety and stress and she would like support but didn’t know who to go to. At this stage, she was moved to Amber on the RAG system.

GK also mentioned that both herself and her family are private and rarely reach out for help and she felt uncomfortable sharing personal information with others. Pathways supported GK through her particular challenge by liaising with professionals on her behalf, to get the correct information to her, and then helped her form relevant questions to ask the appropriate services.

The one-to-one sessions with Pathways also allowed deeper conversations to help GK understand, in more detail, the challenge she was facing. This gave her the confidence and ability to communicate more effectively with her older sibling to ensure that they could work towards resolving their particular challenge. As a result, GK was able to find a reasonable solution and now feels less anxious.

While GK's issue was resolved, Pathways suggested, and it was agreed, that counselling would benefit her and she recognised the importance of talking things through and gaining understanding of the emotions she was feeling. At this stage, she was moved from Amber to Green.

While GK continues to struggle with confidence when reaching out to people and working with industry professionals, she is working with Pathways to develop different ways to overcome that barrier. Her self-belief has increased and she recognises that her skills have definitely improved with the tools that YUAF has been able to provide through the Futures programme, which she otherwise would not have had access to.

To date, GK is working with Futures to build her portfolio and has successfully:

- Received paid photography work for the Sony Level Up x YUAF August Bus Workshops
- Created a showreel/demo to promote herself as a freelance artist
- Worked as a runner for an award-winning television drama series based in London
- Created video content for actor, Ashley Chin's Acting Masterclass
- Created social media video content for The Halley
- Applied for new job opportunities within areas that are new to her
- Was selected to work with Films for All to create a film around YUAF. She then connected with other YUAF Alumni to get their input/music played and created on the film.

With the help of Pathways and YUAF Futures, she continues to work on branding herself and gaining an understanding of what is needed to succeed as an independent artist.

"I love this experience. I've gained so much motivation and I now understand you have to have a strong work ethic [to work in a creative industry] and I now feel like I can achieve my goals." - GK

Learning from Y1

What worked well in practical programme delivery in Y1?

- 100% of 9 YUAF staff team respondents (Sony evaluation surveys 2021) agreed that the Pathways Service worked well to support YP who need it in 2021.

- Pathways is a very YP-centred service, led by the YP and their needs and aspirations. Time is taken to source opportunities that are the most local and relevant for young artists.

“Pathways support has been great because I have been offered a wide range of opportunities and it’s been tailored to support my interests. I also appreciate that Daniella doesn’t push opportunities onto me and I get freedom to choose what’s right for me.” MMN, case study feedback, 2021

- The specific formula of support produced significant benefits for YP who were able to engage fully with the service.
- The RAG system works in practice for defining levels of need amongst the caseload, and tailoring intensity of support in response.
- Working with LICs to devise support strategies within course sessions, e.g. YP with Dyslexia, worked to some extent.
- The in-person Awesome Coaching methodology produced some good outcomes for the YP who engaged.
- The work is trauma-informed to some extent and moves gently with YP facing issues. For example not setting big targets and goals with the most vulnerable YP, but celebrating the small stuff.
- Safeguarding is streamlined throughout the service by YUAF’s Safeguarding database and four Safeguarding Leads, with a clear process of reporting and accountability in place.
- The PC’s community outreach work during the second summer (media outreach bus) phase of the Sony programme worked to bring several YP into Pathways.

What hasn’t worked well about practical programme delivery in Y1?

- The original plan was for 2 PCs to work with new cohorts of 10 YP every 6 weeks. This didn’t work in practice as one of the two new PCs recruited in Spring 2021 subsequently left. The remaining PC was overwhelmed by picking up the extra cases and building rapport before starting to work with these YP, and some of the less vulnerable cases went on hold while vulnerable YP received extra input. This led to varying timescales of involvement for different service users.
- Scheduling Awesome Coaching proved challenging due to the limited number of adults trained in the methodology, and their limited capacity, combined with YP’s limited availability due to school/college etc. There were also some issues around the PC finding the capacity to manage the programme when the original person was unavailable.
- The hardest to reach YP – including those with diagnosed/undiagnosed learning disabilities / SEN - tended not to be in a position to be able to access many of the opportunities. These YP have found it difficult to progress in Y1, even with Pathways support, as their issues require more in-depth work and closer support. LICs were not necessarily best placed to support these YP during courses either. Wherever possible, the PC referred YP facing challenging life / mental health issues to an external counselling partner.

A smoother process is needed when the hardest to reach young people are referred both to Pathways from course facilitators/LICs, and also to external mental health and other more specialist services - both in terms of referring those YP on successfully and ensuring they do in fact receive the support they need, and also ensuring this is followed up from an administrative point of view, to ensure exit data is collected once YP have experienced that intervention service (as 'an opportunity').

Notes on MEL:

Table 5 – MEL data collection for Pathways in 2021

Stakeholder type	Data collection method	Theme / content of enquiry	Number of respondents
Programme Coordinator (Daniella)	Research conversation	Programme management and delivery	1
Programme Coordinators/YP	Case Monitoring Spreadsheet (CMS)	YP Journeys: demographics and engagement data, RAG system, plus outcome summaries for all caseload YP.	37 YP
Service users	Web graph (google sheets)	Pre/post intervention outcomes data	24 YP
Service users	Case studies	Experience and outcomes	6
Programme Coordinators	Spreadsheet	Programme management notes (ongoing)	Not used Y1
Service users	Spreadsheet	Quotes database including informal feedback from YP	20 YP
YUAF delivery team, CEO, Coordinators	End of phase 2 group debrief	Phase 2 – discussion and analysis re what worked well and challenges, plus next steps	10
Staff – Sony facilitators and YUAF LICs	Surveys	Reflections at end of Sony phases	9

- The web graph (online journey web tool for YP to track their own pre/post development) worked well as a participatory evaluation tool. This also provided a confidence boost to many YP as they discussed their own development.

"Thank you so much for the opportunities and your calls. I will definitely save this graph and use this as a motivational source and a reminder of what I've achieved through August-November. Thank you so much :) :)" WhatsApp message from YP, November 2021

- Brilliant case studies were collected with YP describing strong outcomes from Pathways.
- It was difficult to monitor how many of the over 150 YP who have the PC's number and receive posts about opportunities, but who don't respond to messages or become cases, actually accessed opportunities.
- MEL – manual data collection and collation has proven labour-intensive within the time available.
- There was a tension between using the CMS as an organisational tool during delivery, and using it to collate simple data for end of cohort/year evaluation:
 - Data recorded for evaluation purposes could be further simplified – for example transferring web graph results (some/significant increase) to the CMS so as to more easily count up outcomes.
 - Meanwhile, it remained important for all 'types of support' columns to be consistently filled in meticulously (even with ticks) so as to show YP's journey and to be able to analyse what helped YP achieve outcomes.
- Monitoring engagement with opportunities sent via WhatsApp developed in the second half of the year, and could be developed for Y2.

Areas for development, moving into Y2

The following areas for discussion and / or development emerged from the data as well as through conversations between the A5cend consultant and Pathways Coordinator.

1. Incoming YUAF Logistics Manager to continue to develop clear referral/communication pathways between different YUAF services, and further clarity around roles. For example, the PC doesn't have capacity to call every new signup (nor should every enquiry be given PC's number), but ideally will be passed contact details for those YP who have specifically indicated that they have need and would like a call from the Pathways Service (whether during signup, or during courses).
2. Return to and trial a more a structured and capped caseload for Pathways Service case work – particularly for greens – with clear and boundaries 6-week intervention periods with an entry/exit process (and with waiting lists) - so as to make the caseload more manageable, high quality, and to be able to clearly also evidence the impact of the work.

"For quality we need to decrease the no. cases in one period to get results we want and the data we need." Pathways Coordinator, January 2022
3. Further develop ways that Pathways can best support the most hard-to-reach and vulnerable YP, including those with mental health issues, major life challenges and both diagnosed and undiagnosed special educational needs/learning disabilities that form barriers to their progression.

This could potentially involve YUAF developing closer strategic and working partnerships with local agencies, multi-agency partnerships and services that are experts in supporting YP with more intense need, plus a smoother referral system and communication between services, so as to ensure YP access and receive those services, and also complete the Pathways exit process once they have received interventions.

4. Continue to develop and refine the monitoring, evaluation and learning process for Pathways in Y2. Moving data collection and collation to Upshot CRM will more clearly delineate between casework and evaluation data, and should make analysis and reporting easier. Daniella and Charlotte to liaise on how we can use Upshot to perform the key analyses needed for six monthly / yearly evaluations.
5. Consider setting six monthly or annual targets – both for outputs and outcomes – to help support evaluation and assessment of value for money over time.
6. Explore further ways to monitor digital engagements for all YP receiving notifications about opportunities, e.g. developing the monthly bitly click counts for opportunities. Could it be useful to work with partner organisations around this?
7. Explore ways for YP to comment on service quality from Y2 onwards. Could a Youth Advisory Group be involved in this – for example consulting existing service users?
8. Consider a longitudinal study – reaching out to YP who moved through Pathways /YUAF a couple of years or so later, to explore the ongoing impact of having engaged in their creative and professional development, as well as in other areas of their life. Factor the results into social impact measurements.
9. Pathways Service to be involved in selection of the most engaged YP for artist development courses that require full commitment, as Pathways tends to have the most in-depth take on where YP are at. PC job description to reflect additional role here.

Reporting period: January – December 2021

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