2025

UK Fellows Overview





About UK Acumen Academy

Across the United Kingdom, persistent poverty and widening inequality continue to create daily barriers to education, healthcare and employment. Without urgent action, we risk a growing population that is undervalued and left behind - and a society that falls short of its full potential.

Across the country, we also see bold social entrepreneurs and leaders building innovative solutions to break down barriers and uplift communities. Yet, their determination alone is not enough. Solving our entrenched problems of poverty requires investing deeply in their leadership.

UK Acumen Academy identifies and supports extraordinary social entrepreneurs and leaders solving problems of poverty in the United Kingdom - and equips them with the transformative practices, skills and community needed to scale their impact.

Since 2020, through our **UK Fellows Programme** we have provided catalytic support to 65 Founders, CEOs, and senior leaders, whose innovations have positively impacted over 2.3 million lives.

This booklet offers a glimpse into the **Acumen Fellows in the United Kingdom** - a diverse community grounded in the moral imperative to reimagine the goals, structures, and rules of existing systems to build a world where everyone has an opportunity to live a life of dignity.

Our UK Fellows Community

Fellows come from all walks of life, with impact that spans regions, sectors and issues. They are united by a shared commitment to solving problems of poverty in the United Kingdom.

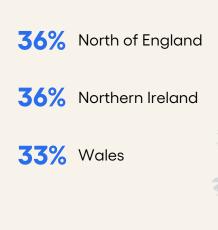
63%

35%

82%

Female

Black & with lived Global Majority experience





36% Scotland

38% Midlands

49% Greater London

38% South of England

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UK Fellows

Education & Vouna Poople

Acumen Fellows are building solutions that redefine the future of education, employment, healthcare, inclusion, and community in the United Kingdom; celebrating potential, fostering choice, and cultivating dignity for those trapped by systems of poverty.

Breaking down educational disparities so every child and young person can access the skills, role models, and opportunities they need to shape their own future.	4-14
Employment & Enterprise Tackling unemployment and underemployment to ensure everyone has access to fair, secure, and dignified work - creating pathways to social mobility and economic opportunity.	15-18
Health & Wellbeing Addressing health inequalities so that people facing illness or disability receive the care, connection, and support they need to thrive - not just survive.	19- 24
Inclusion & Justice Challenging discrimination and exclusion to ensure that everyone - regardless of ethnicity, gender, migration status, identity, or circumstance - can participate in society with safety, dignity, and belonging.	25 - 33
Community & Place Reducing regional inequalities so local communities have the tools, resources, and power to shape a fairer, greener, and more inclusive future.	34 - 42

Education & Young People

Breaking down educational disparities so every child and young person can access the skills, role models, and opportunities they need to shape their own future.



Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang

Lighthouse Pedagogy TrustFounder & Director

www.lptrust.org.uk

Personal overview

Emmanuel is the founder and director of Lighthouse Pedagogy Trust (LPT), a charity committed to improving the lives of young people who have experienced the care system. LPT addresses the common challenges faced by care experienced young people, such as homelessness and long-term unemployment, by changing their life trajectories.



Organisation overview

Improving life outcomes and opportunities for careexperienced young people.

Model: Social Enterprise Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2019

Focus: Social Care & Services

Lives Impacted: 64



The most amazing part was developing new perspectives and gaining a new set of leadership skills that I could immediately apply to my work. Acumen has also been fantastic in connecting me with opportunities, such as potential social investors.



Faith Johnson

Caramel Rock
Founder & CEO

www.caramelrock.com

Personal overview

Faith is the founder of Caramel Rock, an educational charity that empowers and supports young people in careers in fashion, creating a level playing field for all and addressing social and cultural diversity in the industry. She is a cultural consultant, social entrepreneur, and liveryman of the Haberdashers Livery Company. Faith also runs School College Fashion Week, Petra Fashion, and is a PhD fellow at the Royal College of Art.



Jacqueline Bircham

ASSET EducationDeputy CEO

www.asseteducation.co.uk

Personal overview

Jacqueline is the Deputy CEO for ASSET Education, delivering primary school education across the East of England. Previously, she was the Programme Director for the Ipswich and Opportunity Areas. Jacqueline has a background in education and is committed to challenging inequity in UK education.



Organisation overview

Enabling young people and bringing cultural diversity into the fashion industry.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2009

Focus: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Lives Impacted: 3,700



Organisation Overview

Seeking to equip and empower the next generation of children to create a more compassionate, equitable and sustainable world.

Model: Charity Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2015

Focus: Government Services or

Public Policy

Lives Impacted: 7,000



Jadwiga Leigh

New Beginnings FoundationFounder & CEO

www.newbeginnings.com

Personal overview

Jadwiga is the CEO of the New Beginnings Foundation, a community project that has been developed in partnership with families known to Children's Social Care. The aim of the New Beginnings project is to work closely with parents in the child protection process so that they can develop the strength, knowledge and power to become the parents they want to be and, in return, teach other parents how to do the same.



James Toop

Teach First CEO

- www.teachfirst.org.uk
- watch James in action

Personal overview

James is CEO of Teach First, a charity that places highperforming graduates into challenging schools. James was formerly the Founder and CEO of Bite Back, a youth activist movement focused on building healthier food systems. He is also the chair of the multi-academy trust, Orion Education.



Organisation overview

Working with parents who are involved with children's services to develop their strength, knowledge and power.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2018

Focus: Social Care & Services

Lives Impacted: 180



Organisation overview

Addressing educational disadvantage in England and Wales.

Model: Charity Revenue: Over £5m Established: 2002

Focus: Social Mobility; Equity,

Diversity & Inclusion **Lives Impacted:** 1.5 million



John Harrison

Solidarity Farm Founder

www.solidarityfarm.org.uk

Personal overview

John in the Founder of Solidarity Farm, a social enterprise providing a unique learning environment for children and young people to experience all the benefits of nature, cultivating social-emotional skills and building confidence. John started his career in farming, but left to explore new opportunities and ways of believing and thinking which ultimately led him to working in international development across Africa and then leading a homelessness charity.



Jon Yates

Youth Endowment Fund

www.youthendowmentfund

Personal overview

Jon has two decades of experience in the youth and community sector. He has founded and scaled a number of youth programmes, including the National Citizen Service – which became the fastest growing youth programme in Europe working with over half a million young people over the past decade. He is also an experienced policy maker, working as the Chief Policy Adviser to the Secretary of State for Education between 2018 and 2019 where he oversaw the Department for Education's policy and strategy on schools, colleges, children's services, nurseries, universities and apprenticeships.



Organisation overview

Working with vulnerable children and young people, utilising farming practices to create a psychologically safe learning environment.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** Less than £100k

Established: 2024

Focus: Education & Schools

Lives Impacted: 200



Organisation overview

Preventing children and young people becoming involved in violence.

Model: Government or Public **Revenue:** More than £5m

Established: 2019

Focus: Schools, Research Lives Impacted: 205,000



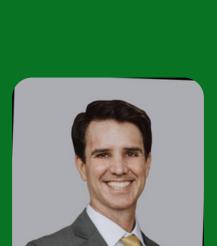
Kannan Ganga

YellowNest UKFounder & CEO

www.yellownest.co.uk

Personal overview

Kannan is the founder of YellowNest, a workplace benefit that works with employers to lower the cost of high-quality early years education. YellowNest supports positive social justice for children, families and commerce. Kannan is a former McKinsey Trained People Director, working in predominantly family office owned media environments, and holds an Executive MBA from the University of Oxford.



Kevin Martin

Digital Education Futures
Initiative (DEFI)
Managing Director

www.deficambridge.org

Personal overview

Kevin Martin is the managing director at DEFI, responsible for strategic planning, financial management, and day-to-day operations. His professional background lies at the intersection of social innovation and education, and he has spent much of the last 20 years working on related initiatives in East Africa. Kevin recently earned his PhD from the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, with research interests in dialogic education, EdTech, and international development.



Organisation overview

Improving access to quality early years education.

Model: For Profit

Revenue: Less than £100k

Established: 2021

Focus: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion,

Early Years, Inclusive Business

Lives Impacted: 450



Organisation overview

Working towards a global education system that is more inclusive and better serves collective human flourishing.

Model: Government or Public Entity

Established: 2021 **Focus:** Research



Kevin Munday

City Year CEO

- www.cityyear.org.uk
- watch Kevin in action

Personal overview

Kevin is the Chief Executive of City Year UK, an education and social action charity that supports 18 to 25 year-old volunteers to undertake a year of community service in schools. They act as mentors, role models and tutors, supporting students from disadvantaged communities to enjoy and succeed at school.



Marcellus Baz BEM

Switch Up Founder & CEO

- www.marcellusbaz.co.uk
- watch Marcellus in action

Personal overview

Marcellus is the founder and CEO of Switch Up CIC and Nottingham School of Boxing. The two organisations utilise sport, mentoring, and counselling to transform the lives of young people and transition them into employment, training, and further education. Marcellus was born in a deprived area of Nottingham, UK, and groomed into criminality before dedicating his life to supporting communities affected by crime and violence. In 2016, Marcellus was awarded the BBC Sports Personality of The Year Award and a British Empire medal.



Organisation overview

Tackling educational inequality in our schools by empowering young people to be the change they want to see.

Model: Charity Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2009

Focus: Education & Schools; Social

Mobility

Lives Impacted: 16,600



Organisation overview

Empowering Nottingham's young people, children and young adults to break the cycle of offending and reoffending.

Model: Social Enterprise Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2013 Focus: Social Mobility;

Community & Place; Training & Capacity Building; Criminal Justice & Prison Reform Lives Impacted: 7.000



Marsha Powell

BelEve UKFounder & CEO

www.beleveuk.org

Personal overview

Marsha is a dedicated and visionary leader in the realm of female empowerment, renowned as the founder of BelEve UK, a charity based in London. BelEve's mission is to empower young girls to become confident, resilient, and compassionate leaders who shape the future through mentoring and career opportunities. To date, she has helped transform the lives of over 20,000 girls aged 8-22.



Michaela Collins

PEEK (Possibilities for Each and Every Kid)

www.peekproject.org.uk

Personal overview

Michaela has been with PEEK for over 23 years, as a participant, volunteer, staff member, and now CEO. PEEK supports children, young people, and families in Glasgow by raising their hopes and aspirations through play, creative learning, improved well-being, and volunteering. She was awarded an MBE the 2022 Queen's New Years Honours for services to charity and communities during COVID-19.



Organisation overview

Empowering the next generation of female leaders.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2012

Focus: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; Gender, Social Mobility, Young

People & Children Lives Impacted: 22,000



Organisation overview

Using creativity and play as a tool for aspiration for children and families.

Model: Charity Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2007

Focus: Arts & Culture, Community & Place, Young People & Children

Lives Impacted: 23,000



Ricky Murray

YMCA Northumberland Senior Youth Worker

www.ymcanrt.org

Personal overview

Ricky is a Senior Youth Worker at YMCA Northumberland. Ricky is committed to developing engaging and innovative ways to meet the varying needs of young people in the North East of England. He has over 15 years of experience in Youth Work and the management of Youth Work services and holds a Masters degree in Youth and Community Work from Durham University.



Robert Posner

ThinkForward UKDeputy CEO

www.thinkforward.org.uk

Personal overview

Robert is the deputy CEO of ThinkForward, a charity providing long-term coaching to support young people and prepare them for the world of work, helping them develop the skills they need to overcome barriers and broaden their horizons. His focus is on helping young people who are furthest away from the job market recognize their skills, gain experience, and build social capital to secure meaningful, paid employment.



Organisation overview

Representing a thriving and active community that is transforming lives.

Model: Charity Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2009

Focus: Mental Health; Community

& Place

Lives Impacted: 35,000



Organisation overview

Breaking down barriers and broadening horizons for young people.

Model: Charity Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2012

Focus: Social Mobility, Young

People & Children Lives Impacted: 16,500



Rosie Moore

CelcisPolicy & Participation
Advisor

www.celcis.org

Personal overview

Rosie is the Policy & Participation Advisor for CELCIS, Centre for Excellence for Children's Care & Protection, where she helps to devise and implement a new participation strategy that puts the voices of children and young people at the heart. Rosie previously worked for the Independent Care Review where she championed the voice of the care experienced community and sought to ensure that all children growing up in care felt loved.



Shaninga Marasha

BIGKID Foundation Founder & CEO

www.bigkidfoundation.org

Personal overview

Shaninga is the founder and CEO of London based award winning youth charity, BIGKID Foundation. Through community engagement, mentoring, and leadership programs, BIGKID Foundation equips young people to take control of their lives and find, develop, and act on their own potential. Shaninga has over 20 years of experience working with young people, specialized in engaging with those deemed 'hard to reach,' and working in London and across the UK both in communities and schools.



Organisation overview

Improving children's lives by supporting people and organisations to drive long-lasting change in the services they need.

Model: Government or Public Entity

Established: 2011

Focus: Government Service; Social

Care & Services **Lives Impacted:** 13,000



Organisation overview

Working to end youth violence.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £500k to £1m Established: 2009

Focus: Young People & Children

Lives Impacted: 29,000



Talia Kensit

Youth Realities
Founder

- www.youthrealities.co.uk
- watch Talia in action

Personal overview

Talia is the Founder of Youth Realities, addressing teenage relationship abuse through creative education and support for young survivors. Talia set up Youth Realities when she was 19 years old, in response to relationship abuse she experienced aged 15. Talia supports young people to become more aware of relationship abuse and empowered to make healthy, informed choices. She is also Chair of the Voluntary Sector Forum for the Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership and as a Trustee for Respect UK.



Tom Harbour

Learning with Parents CEO

<u>www.learningwithparents.com</u>

Personal overview

Tom is CEO of Learning with Parents, a charity working to ensure that every child is supported at home to fulfil their academic potential. Learning with Parents is addressing the educational attainment gap by motivating and empowering parents in the most disadvantaged communities to engage in their children's learning. They do this through their online programmes and policy work.



Organisation overview

Addressing teenage relationship abuse through creative education and specialist, survivor-centred support.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2016

Focus: Relationship Abuse



Organisation overview

Driving inclusive parental engagement by partnering with schools and through leading the sector to learn what works.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £500k to £1m Established: 2019 Focus: Schools; Family

Relationships

Lives Impacted: 215,000

Employment & Enterprise

Tackling unemployment and underemployment to ensure everyone has access to fair, secure, and dignified work - creating pathways to social mobility and economic opportunity.



Abadesi Osunsade

Hustle CrewFounder & CEO

- www.hustlecrew.com
- watch Abadesi in action

Personal overview

Abadesi is included in Tech Nation's 50 most prominent and influential voices in Tech. She graduated from the London School of Economics in 2009 and wrote for the Financial Times before joining London's tech scene. Since 2016 she has delivered over 200 talks and workshops through her work at Hustle Crew, a careers community on a mission to make tech more inclusive. She teaches leaders how to apply a lens of bias and privilege to every decision they make and create more equitable cultures.



Adam Grodecki

Forward Institute Founder & CEO

www.forward.institute.co.uk

Personal overview

Adam is the Founder and CEO of the Forward Institute, a non-profit building a movement for responsible leadership. He set up the Institute with the support of the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), where he was a consultant for five years. He is a Governor of Ark Academy, a school doing amazing work for 1600 children in a challenging part of London. He's also an Advisory Board member of the Evidence Initiative (a project of the Economist) and advises the British Army on leadership and culture.



Organisation overview

Creating a world in which businesses are centred on inclusion, belonging and redistributing power.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** Less than £100k

Established: 2016

Focus: Equity, Diversity &

Inclusion; Technology; Training &

Capacity Building Lives Impacted: 30,000



Organisation overview

Working with powerful leaders and companies that are serious about becoming beacons of purpose and responsibility.

Model: Social Enterprise Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2015

Focus: Inclusive Business; Training & Capacity Building



Duro Oye

20/20 Levels Founder & CEO

- www.2020levels.org
- watch Duro in action



Personal overview

Duro is the Founder and CEO of 20/20 Levels, an awardwinning social enterprise that helps young Londoners from low socioeconomic backgrounds fulfil their true potential. 20/20 Levels aims to create long-standing change by delivering programmes on personal development, training and the social capital needed to thrive in the workplace. Their flagship 'I AM CHANGE' programme helps to develop the self-confidence that empowers each candidate to become the best version of themselves.



Organisation overview

Helping young people realise their true potential and cultivate the right mindset to engage with today's changing society.

Model: Social Enterprise Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2012

Focus: Social Mobility; Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; Training &

Capacity Building Lives Impacted: 3,500



The Fellowship supported me to step back, look at things holistically and build my capacity to lead others. This Acumen community has enabled 20/20 Levels to access gamechanging grant capital and opportunities.



CIIr Leslie Ayoola

B Global Founder

www.bglobalnow.com

Personal overview

Leslie is the Founder of B-Global, a black-led business network that supports start-ups, established and scale-up businesses of African heritage and the wider ethnic minority business community, to reach their full potential and provide economic prosperity for local communities. With experience in the private, voluntary, and public sectors, Leslie believes the tools for community empowerment are through entrepreneurship and financial literacy.



Saba Ahmed

Kuumba ImaniBusiness connector

<u>Kuumba Imani</u>
Facebook Page

Personal overview

Saba is a Business Connector for Kuumba Imani Millennium Centre, committed to working with and building up a network of organisations, groups and individuals across Liverpool to enhance economic growth among Black and Global Majority-Led businesses. She encourages positive and creative social action within neighbourhoods and supports activists to realise their potential and ignite confidence in their ability to make change happen.



Organisation overview

Helping black and ethnic minority businesses by providing business support in Nottinghamshire and beyond.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** Less than £100k

Established: 2018

Focus: Inclusive Business; Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; Training &

Capacity Building **Lives Impacted:** 4,500



Organisation overview

Holding a variety of resources and welcomes all kinds of businesses, charities, educational groups & community organisations.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £500k to £1m

Established: 2002

Focus: Activism & Advocacy; Community & Place; Training &

Capacity Building **Lives Impacted:** 100

Health & Wellbeing

Addressing health inequalities so that people facing illness or disability receive the care, connection, and support they need to thrive - not just survive.



Eloise Nutbrown

Scottish Government Reform Programme Manager

www.gov.scot.co.uk

Personal overview

Eloise is working on mental health reform at the Scottish Government. She works to protect the rights of marginalised communities through the development of public policy and political leadership. She has a Masters degree in Childhood Studies and has previously led policy, advocacy and campaigns programmes to reduce UK child poverty.



Dr Erin Thompson

The Loss Foundation
Founder & CFO

www.thelossfoundation.org

Personal overview

Erin is the Founder and CEO of The Loss Foundation, a national charity providing support for people bereaved by cancer. She set up the charity after witnessing the lack of support available for her family when her father died from cancer and the consequences to mental health and wellbeing. Her hope is that The Loss Foundation is able to tackle the postcode lottery of support, and to provide UK-wide support to anyone who loses a loved one to cancer.



Organisation overview

Working on mental health reform in the Scottish Government.

Model: Government or Public Entity

Established: 1999

Focus: Mental Health; Government

Services & Public Policy Lives Impacted: 20,000



Organisation overview

Offering equitable support for those who have lost loved ones to cancer.

Model: Charity

Revenue: Less than £100k

Established: 2012 **Focus:** Mental Health **Lives Impacted:** 8,000



Fintan Connolly

Take Ten
Founder & CEO

- www.taketensolutions.com
- watch Fintan in action

Personal overview

Fintan is the Founder and CEO of TakeTen, a social enterprise which seeks to address the impact of stress and anxiety in society. Their mission is to upskill a generation to be better able to deal with the stress & anxiety encountered in life. TakeTen technology and programme has been delivered to over 150,000 children & young people in UK schools. TakeTen is also used as a stress management resource for children's cancer services. Previously, Fintan worked as a Community Pharmacist for 20 years.



Dr. Hinnah Rafique

Generation medicsFounder & CEO

- www.generationmedics.org.uk
- watch Hinnah in action

Personal overview

Hinnah is a clinical doctor, as well as the Founder of Generation Medics, a multi-award winning social enterprise. Generation Medics empowers people from all background to explore, strive towards and succeed in medical, healthcare and STEM sectors. They do this through evidence-based interventions (in-person and online). Programmes are tailored to career-stage with different programmes.



Organisation overview

Using technology to help young people understand stress and to manage their body's response to it.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** £100k to £500k

Established: 2011

Focus: Mental Health; Technology

Lives Impacted: 250,000



Organisation overview

Transforming healthcare by building an empowered and engaged community of talent.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** £100k to £500k

Established: 2015

Focus: Equity, Diversity &

Inclusion

Lives Impacted: 25,000



Jayne Jones

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde Assitant Director

- www.nhsggc.scot
- watch Jayne in action

Personal overview

Jayne is the Assistant Director at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, focused on providing the best quality food and facilities management services across the public sector to address inequality and enable access to good food for all. As National Chair of ASSIST FM, Jayne represents local authorities in Scotland, promoting the benefits of high-quality school meals for all children to tackle inequality and food poverty.



Dr. Lucy Loveday

Resilient Young Minds Founder & NHS Clinical Entrepreneur

www.hee.nhs.uk

Personal overview

Lucy is a qualified GP & experienced medical educationalist at Health Education England. Lucy is on a mission to empower and facilitate young people from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds to connect with nature in a transformative way within mainstream healthcare. Lucy is leading the launch of a 'Green Prescription' project in collaboration with The Woodland Trust.



Organisation overview

Protecting and improving population health and wellbeing while providing a safe, accessible, affordable and high quality health service.

Model: Government or Public Entity

Established: 1948

Focus: Sustainability & Climate; Food, Community & Place Lives Impacted: 350,000



Organisation overview

Supporting the delivery of excellent healthcare and ensuring today's workforce skills, values and behaviours.

Model: Government or Public Entity

Established: 2012

Focus: Health; Environment & Climate; Young People & Children



Personal overview

Fellow.

Michelle Hill

TLC: Talk, Listen, Change CEO

www.talklistenchange.org

Organisation overview

Building a holistic approach to foster safe and healthy relationships.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £5m to £10m

Established: 2018

Focus: Domestic Abuse or Sexual Violence, Mental Health, Young

People & Children Lives Impacted: 30,000



Rachael **Hutchinson**

Able2B Co-Founder

www.able2b.co.uk



Organisation overview

Enriching the lives of people with disabilities.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2019 Focus: Disability

Lives Impacted: 2,400

Personal overview

Rachael has been a consultant orthopedic surgeon in Norwich for 17 years working with people with disabilities. She co-founded Able2B to solve the problems she was encountering while treating her patients in the NHS. Able2B are expert trainers and medical specialists collaborating to enrich the daily lives of children and adults with disabilities and special educational needs.

Michelle is the chief executive of TLC: Talk, Listen, Change

- a national relationships charity. The organization delivers

a range of integrated support, therapies, and

interventions in pursuit of safe, healthy, and happy relationships. She holds an MBA and is a Clore Social





Robert Dyer

South West London Health & Care PartnershipSenior Commissioner
& Programme Lead

www.southwestlondonics.org

Personal overview

Robert is the lead for Children's Mental Health Services for the NHS in Wandsworth and has recently designed and championed a new holistic approach to supporting children with autism and/or learning disabilities with mental health difficulties. A combination of resources are helping break cycles of crisis. This is consistent with the inclusive and innovative health and education transformation work Robert has led for 20 years, both in the UK and overseas, including working in Rwanda, Nigeria, Myanmar and Vanuatu.



Sam Palmer

Respect for All CEO

www.respectforall.org.uk

Personal overview

Sam is CEO of Respect For All, a Community Interest Organisation providing mental health and wellbeing services for the autistic and learning disabled community across Greater Manchester.



Organisation overview

Delivering services to improve access and quality and to reduce health inequalities.

Model: Government or Public Entity

Revenue: More than £25m

Established: 1948

Focus: Mental Health; Young

People & Children Lives Impacted: 35,000



Organisation overview

Counselling services for autistic and/or learning disabled people and their families and carers in Greater Manchester

Model: Social Enterprise Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2019

Focus: Mental Health; Disability

Lives Impacted: 600

Inclusion & Justice

Challenging discrimination and exclusion to ensure that everyone - regardless of ethnicity, gender, migration status, identity, or circumstance - can participate in society with safety, dignity, and belonging.



Andrew Wallis

UnseenCo-Founder & <u>CEO</u>

www.unseenuk.org

Personal overview

Andrew is the founder of Unseen, an anti-slavery organization providing safe housing and support to survivors. He runs the Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline, and works with businesses and governments to eliminate slavery. Andrew also co-chairs the Home Office's Modern Slavery Engagement Forum and helped develop the Modern Slavery Act of 2015. He is an advisor to Competent Boards and Tech-Against-Trafficking, and a media commentator on slavery and human rights.



Cecilia Brezmes Alonso

Amazor

Senior Program Manager, Sustainability & Social Responsibility

www.aboutamazon.co.uk

Personal overview

Cecilia is a senior program manager on Amazon's Worldwide Sustainability team. She works to accelerate Amazon's progress on social responsibility and environmental sustainability across Europe. Cecilia leads both external and internal engagements, including partnerships, policy advocacy efforts, and business initiatives that leverage Amazon's scale, speed, and innovation as a force for good.



Organisation overview

Working to eliminate modern slavery.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2009

Focus: Activism & Advocacy, Government Services or Public

Policy, Human Rights **Lives Impacted:** 1150



Organisation overview

Leveraging corporate innovation as a force for good.

Model: For Profit Revenue: £5m to £10m Established: 1994

Focus: Sustainability & Climate;

Human Rights



Charlotte Carson

Look Director

- www.look-uk.org
- watch Charlotte in action

Personal overview

Charlotte is the Director of LOOK, a charity supporting visually impaired children to thrive. LOOK offers a unique and pioneering peer mentoring programme linking visually impaired children with a blind mentor. Through mentoring, workshops and fun events, LOOK beats isolation and ensures that no one struggles alone. Charlotte began losing her sight at age seven and has a background in disability equality and journalism.



Jenny Sealey

GraeaeCEO & Artistic Director

- www.graeae.org
- watch Jenny in action

Personal overview

Jenny Sealey is the CEO and Artistic Director of Graeae Theatre, a company founded on injustice and discrimination using theatre as a radical tool to campaign for change. Jenny has pioneered new theatrical languages and aesthetics of artistic access. Productions and outreach work, nationally and internationally are used to challenge the perception of possibility and are a force for cultural shifts and equality. She co-directed the London 2012 Paralympic Opening Ceremony alongside Bradley Hemmings (Greenwich Docklands International Festival).



Organisation overview

Supporting young visually impaired people and their families to thrive.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 1991

Focus: Disability; Young People &

Children

Lives Impacted: 4,500



Organisation Overview

Placing Deaf, disabled & neurodivergent actors centre stage and challenging preconceptions.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 1980

Focus: Disability; Arts and Culture

Lives Impacted: 200



Jess Thompson

MigratefulFounder & co-CEO

- www.migrateful.org
- watch Jess in action

Personal overview

Jess is the Founder and CEO of Migrateful, an organisation that empowers and celebrates refugees and vulnerable migrants on their journey to integration, by supporting them to run their own cookery classes.



Kajal Odedra

Change.org
Executive Director

- www.change.org.co.uk
- watch Kajal in action

Personal overview

Kajal is a writer and activist. As Executive Director for Change.org UK, she has grown the platform for people power to over 19 million users in the UK. She has supported some of the biggest people-powered campaigns in the UK - from Laura Coryton's campaign to end the tampon tax to Richard Ratcliffe's fight to free his wife Nazanin from prison in Iran. She is a trustee for Save The Children UK. Her first book, Do Something; activism for everyone, was published with Hodder and Stoughton.



Organisation overview

Supporting migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in their journey to integration.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £500k to £1m

Established: 2017

Focus: Migration & Integration;

Social Mobility, Food **Lives Impacted:** 11,000



Organisation Overview

Empowering millions of people to start, join, and win campaigns for social change in their community, city and country.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** More than £5m

Established: 2007

Focus: Activism & Advocacy;

Minority Voice

Lives Impacted: 240,000



Last Mafuba

Inlni InitiativeFounder & CEO

- www.inini.co.uk
- watch Last in action

Personal overview

Last is the founder and CEO of Inini Initiative, a social enterprise that promotes community cohesion by supporting asylum seekers, refugees and migrants understand and navigate their new social terrain. Her role is to design culturally sensitive strategies specific to this group that minimise barriers to integration. Last holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in International Development Law and Human Rights both from the University of Warwick.



Laura Nyahuye

MAOKWO
Founder & Creative
Director

- www.maokwo.com
- watch Laura in action

Personal overview

Laura is the Founder and Creative Director of MAOKWO, an organisation that addresses the issues of representation within the arts sector for minority artists, women, young people and migrant communities. Laura believes that art is a tool that helps us to see past race, class, age and create a better now and she is driven by the desire to see a better tomorrow.



Organisation overview

Working with BME communities to provide a space to groups to achieve cohesion with mainstream society.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** £100k to £500k

Established: 2016

Focus: Migration & Integration; Minority Voice; Community &

Place; Diversity **Lives Impacted:** 350



Organisation overview

Using the arts to support marginalised and minority groups, especially women, children, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant artists.

Model: Social Enterprise Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2016

Focus: Migration & Integration;

Arts and Culture **Lives Impacted:** 4,000



Marie Yates

Canine Perspective
Director

- www.canine-perspective.com
- watch Marie in action

Personal overview

Marie is the director of Canine Perspective CIC, a social enterprise dedicated to bringing a new approach to recovery and resilience building to survivors of rape and sexual violence. Marie works with rescue dog canine cotutors who are fundamental to the learning process. Over the years, the organisation has grown to support people who have experienced trauma in numerous different ways, as defined by them, and works to galvanise a movement of resilient leaders.



Natalie Creary

Liberating KnowledgeFounder

Liberating Knowledge LinkedIn

Personal overview

Natalie is the Director for Liberating Knowledge, the knowledge and design consultancy making sense of the world by centering untapped & overlooked knowledge systems. Her work and research explore how race, age, class, gender and sexuality interconnect and shape the health and wellbeing experiences of Black communities. She has also completed postgraduate studies in Health Psychology and lectures for Middlesex University's MSc in Public Health.



Organisation overview

Providing a future-focused, innovative programme for survivors of rape and sexual violence.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** Less than £100k

Established: 2014

Focus: Relationships & Domestic

Abuse; Sexual Violence **Lives Impacted:** 2,000



Organisation overview

Providing knowledge and design consultancy that makes sense of the world by centering untapped & overlooked knowledge systems.

Model: Self Employed **Revenue:** Less than £100k

Established: 2021 **Focus:** Mental Health **Lives Impacted:** 1,000



Orla Mckeating

Still I Rise Diversity Storytelling

Founder

- www.stillirisestories.org/
- watch Orla in action

Personal overview

Orla is the founder of Still I Rise Diversity Storytelling, an organisation celebrating diversity, tolerance, acceptance and encouraging open hearts through reading to create a more loving world. Orla is an entrepreneur, coach and motivational speaker from Belfast, Northern Ireland and is passionate about lessening stigma and encouraging inclusion and acceptance.



Reema Patel

Elgon Social Founder

www.elgon.social

Personal overview

Reema is a researcher, facilitator and convenor with expertise in deliberative and participatory approaches, and has founded Elgon Social. She currently works on the Digital Good Network, Public Voices in Al, and she directs the Global Citizens' Assembly. She is also an EDI associate to the Wellcome Trust, advising the trust on the development and implementation of their equity framework. Previously, Reema was a founder of the Ada Lovelace Institute, and leader of the Citizens Economy programme at the RSA.



Organisation overview

Empowering children and young people through inclusive storytelling, workshops and training.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** Less than £100k

Established: 2019

Focus: Inclusive Business; Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; Training &

Capacity Building



Organisation overview

Using data to produce accurate and relevant information and turn it into actionable truth.

Model: Self Employed Revenue: Less than £100k

Established: 2022

Focus: Research: Skills &

Capacity Building



Serrena Tanna

Crisis UKSenior Involvement Manager

www.crisis.org.uk



Personal overview

Serrena specializes in delivering programs to provide equitable access to financial empowerment for marginalized communities. Serrena has had the privilege of creating change with international human rights defenders, LGBTQ+ communities, and those experiencing homelessness. Co-production sits at the core of Serrena's ethos; she works alongside communities and businesses, collaborating to create innovative solutions to overcome barriers to inclusion at work.

Organisation overview

Advocating for financial inclusion with marginalized communities.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 1967

Focus: Homelessness, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; Minority Voice,

Workforce Development &

Employment

Lives Impacted: 3,600



The frameworks have been very powerful - helping me mobilise others into action. The peer-led sessions have been hugely valuable - offering diverse perspectives and supporting me to move beyond my comfort zone into growth.



Sharon Pickup

Wise Group Equity & Diversity Lead

www.thewisegroup.co.uk

Personal overview

Sharon is the Equity and Diversity Lead at the Wise Group and creates formulas that inspire and enable individuals to achieve their highest potential regardless of background or experience. She has redesigned a work culture that focuses solely on equity, diversity and inclusion. Sharon utilises her own experiences in order to promote practices that ensure sustainable, positive and equitable futures for all involved. Her goal is to change the world by 'retraining historical beliefs and practices whilst encouraging positive change'.



Yasmin Khan

Staying Put CEO

www.stayingput.org.uk

Personal overview

Yasmin is the CEO of Staying Put, a domestic and sexual abuse charity, its mission is to listen to the voice of survivors, believe in them and act to protect them. She has over 20 years' experience of leading on women's rights/gender-based violence, services to young people aiming to raise aspiration, education training and working around mental health. She is passionate about equality of opportunity and human rights issues and regularly campaigns for change. She is educated to postgraduate level.



Organisation overview

Using mentoring, employment support and skills to lift people out of poverty.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** More than £5m

Established: 1983

Focus: Criminal Justice & Prison Reform; Workforce Development

& Employment

Lives Impacted: 23,000



Organisation overview

Providing service provisions to victims of abuse and violence and removing barriers that prevent people from seeking help.

Model: Charity Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2006 Focus: Domestic abuse

Lives Impacted: 70,000

Community & Place

Reducing regional inequalities so local communities have the tools, resources, and power to shape a fairer, greener, and more inclusive future.



Andy Simpson

Doncaster Refurnish CEO

www.refurnish.co.uk

Personal overview

Andy is the CEO of Doncaster Refurnish, a social enterprise that uses recycling furniture and household goods as a training and development tool to support vulnerable people and to divert much-needed resources away from landfills to provide community benefit. Andy also supports a number of community organizations that focus on and address poverty.



Becky Lythgoe

Social Enterprise Consultant

www.beckylythgoe.uk

Personal overview

and rooted in lived experience.

Becky Lythgoe is a facilitator, coach, and engagement specialist using participatory approaches. She works across communities, leadership, and social change, helping individuals and teams explore new ways of thinking, working, and collaborating. With a background in co-production, social enterprise and community-led innovation, Becky facilitates decision-making processes are inclusive, collaborative,



Organisation overview

Using the medium of recycling furniture and household goods to train and develop people.

Model: Social Enterprise Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2003

Focus: Sustainability & Climate; Criminal Justice & Prison Reform; Training & Capacity Building;

Circular Economy **Lives Impacted:** 19,000



Organisation overview

Creating a community of people who believe in the value of coproduction and citizen involvement.

Model: Self Employed **Revenue:** Less than £100k **Focus:** Community & Place



David Barclay

Good Faith Partnership Managing Partner

- www.goodfaith.org.uk
- watch David in action



Personal overview

David is the Managing Partner of the Good Faith Partnership, a social consultancy that specializes in helping different sectors work better together on common goals. David has led the organisation from a start-up and has managed projects related to homelessness, financial inclusion, refugee resettlement, and social connection. Previously, David was a community organizer working on money and debt issues in East London and was the President of the Oxford University Student Union.

Organisation Overview

Bridging some of the gaps between different sectors to find innovative solutions for society's more difficult problems.

Model: Social Enterprise Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2016

Focus: Government Services or Public Policy; Migration, Refugees

& Integration

Lives Impacted: 300,000



An encouraging cohort gave me the confidence to think I'm someone who could run the Warm Welcome Campaign - we can't overestimate those words of encouragement.



Fatima Iftikhar

People's Economy Director



www.weare.ecnmy.org

Personal overview

Fatima is a Director at People's Economy. In addition, she is also the co-founder of #POCIMPACT, a community recognising, connecting and supporting People of Colour in the social impact sector. She coordinates the Workforce Integration Network at the GLA, a programme striving to create an equitable labour market for all Londoners. She is an Aziz Foundation Scholar, WCMT Fellow and Non-Executive Director of Doing Social.



Graham Whitham

Resolve Poverty CEO

www.resolvepoverty.org

Personal overview

Graham is the founder and CEO of Resolve Poverty, a non-profit organization strengthening the role localities and regions play in resolving poverty in the UK, supporting low-income households to maximize their financial resources, and strengthening the voice and role of those with lived experience of poverty in decision-making processes.



Organisation overview

Working with individuals, communities and organisations across the UK to better understand how they can build economies that everyone can shape.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2019

Focus: Activism & Advocacy; Training & Capacity Building Lives Impacted: 250,000



Organisation overview

Empowering localities to tackle poverty across the UK.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2017

Focus: Activism & Advocacy, Income & Wealth Inequality

Lives Impacted: 1000



Jess Mead Silvester

People's Economy
Wales Program Manager

www.weare.ecnmy.org

Personal overview

Jess is the Wales Program Manager at People's Economy. Previously, Jess spent five years as a community development worker for a resident-led group in Marchog, working with residents to bring their visions for their community to life. She also worked in climate and polar research, has a doctorate in ocean physics.



Kat Agar

Oasis Community
Partnerships
CEO

www.oasisuk.org

Personal overview

Kat is the CEO of Oasis Community Partnerships, a charity embedding programs into communities based on local level need, tackling issues such as youth work and violence reduction, food insecurity, community movement building, family support, adult education, and volunteering opportunities.



Organisation overview

Working with individuals, communities and organisations across the UK to better understand how they can build economies that everyone can shape.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £100k to £500k

Established: 2019

Focus: Activism & Advocacy **Lives Impacted:** 6,000



Organisation overview

Strengthening communities based on local-level need.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2007

Focus: Education & Schools, Young People & Children **Lives Impacted:** 135,000



Louise McVey

Inverclyde Council
Team Leader Communities & Poverty

www.inverclyde.gov.uk

Personal overview

Louise is a Team Leader at Inverclyde Council and is responsible for and passionate about mitigating poverty, particularly child poverty, in her local authority area. Louise has been in public service for more than 30 years with specific interests in systems change and public sector reform to improve outcomes for people requiring public sector support and services.



Lucy Bearn

FareShare South West

www.faresharesouthwest

Personal overview

Lucy is the CEO of FareShare South West, the UK's largest charity fighting hunger and food waste by saving surplus food and redistributing to frontline charities. Over the last four years, Lucy has been leading the organization through an intense period of growth throughout the pandemic and currently into the cost of living crisis.



Organisation overview

Mitigating poverty through a local authority lens.

Model: Government Entity **Revenue:** £100k to £500k

Established:

Focus: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; Government Services or Public

Policy

Lives Impacted: 220



Organisation overview

Addressing the double dilemma of food waste and food insecurity.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2007

Focus: Sustainability & Climate;

Food

Lives Impacted: 47,500



Peter Griffiths

BABLE Smart CitiesGlobal Urban Futurist

www.bable-smartcities.eu



Personal overview

Peter helps people see and imagine cities differently. He is working with the BABLE's smart cities team to support more places in the transition to net-zero and increased productivity. An investigative journalist with an MSc in City Design and Social Science, Peter was previously City Strategist at ING, a World Bank Global Platform for Sustainable Cities consultant, and Managing Editor at LSE Cities.



Accelerating change for a better urban life with knowledge and market access for public and private sector.

Model: For profit **Established:** 2017

Focus: Sustainability & Climate;

Inclusive Business



Peter Laing

The Renewal Programme
Director

www.renewalprogramme.org



Personal overview

Peter is CEO of The Renewal Programme, an East London charity working to support vulnerable residents facing isolation, homelessness, food poverty, skills deficits, immigration challenges and digital as well as language exclusions. In one of the poorest and most ethnically diverse communities in the UK, we seek not to "fix" people, but to provide appropriate encouragement and support, enabling individuals to re-group and pursue self directed change.

Organisation overview

Working with the community, local council, businesses and other local charities to transform and empower individuals.

Model: Charity

Revenue: £1m to £5m

Established: 1971

Focus: Migration, Refugees & Integration, Community, Education & Young People Lives Impacted: 105,000



Rachel Gegeshidze

Tempo CEO

www.wearetempo.org



Personal overview

Rachel is the CEO of Tempo, leading the UK's national Time Credit network, working with 1000+ organizations, services, public bodies and businesses to create lasting social impact. Known for her leadership in social justice and inclusion, Rachel plays an instrumental role in Tempo's mission to foster widespread community engagement and empowerment, driving positive change across the UK through innovative participation and volunteer initiatives.

Organisation overview

Uniting public, private, and community sectors to uplift communities.

Model: Social Enterprise Revenue: £1m to £5m Established: 2008

Focus: Circular Economy, Skills &

Capacity Building Lives Impacted: 50,000



The Fellowship has enhanced my approach to achieving Tempo's goals, encouraging adaptive strategies and collaboration. The community support allows me to draw on diverse insights, fostering solutions and shared momentum toward our mission.





Sam Holt

EggSeeds
Community Development
& Education Consultant

- EggSeeds Facebook Page
- watch Sam in action

Personal overview

Sam is the Community Development and Education Consultant for EggSeeds. He is a mentor and project developer, finding inspirational ways to engage communities and individuals to move towards lasting change in their communities to reduce the effects of poverty and enhance wellbeing. Sam has specialist experience in food growing and redistribution provisions and is the co-designer and creator with disengaged youth to install Wales first Solar USB charging bench that doubled-up as an emergency shelter for rough sleepers.



Sara Jones

Social Finance
Director

www.socialfinance.org.uk

Personal overview

Sara is a Director within the Impact Incubator at Social Finance and is using participatory approaches to address social issues. Over the past two years, Sara has co-produced place-based pilots that respond to rising school exclusions, published analysis that creates the local case for early intervention and kick-started a national conversation around who is at risk of exclusion. Prior to Social Finance, Sara was Head of Commissioning for a police force and is a proud trustee of Survivors Network.



Organisation overview

Offering sustainable education solutions and educational experiences to schools and groups.

Model: Self Employed **Revenue:** Less than £100k

Established: 2013

Focus: Education & Schools **Lives Impacted:** 60,000



Organisation overview

Helping partners design, fund and scale solutions to complex and enduring social issues.

Model: Social Enterprise **Revenue:** More than £5m

Established: 2007

Focus: Grant & Investment Making; Minority Voice; Young People &

Children

Partner with us to drive lasting impact for the causes and communities you care about

We're seeking mission-aligned partners to help extraordinary social entrepreneurs and leaders access transformative support that scales their impact in the United Kingdom. Interested in exploring? Reach out at uk@acumenacademy.org.

Our impact

UK Acumen Academy is focused on building the capacity and relationships to address long-standing issues of poverty. Learn more about how we measure impact.

UK Partners

Thank you to our funding partners for believing in this team and enabling us to do our work. None of this would have been possible without the generous support from our UK funding partners and friends.













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