



For the year ended  
5 April 2021

Annual Report  
**20/21**

## **At The Heart**

Report of the trustees for the year ended 5 April 2021

Charity No: 1189831

The Trustees of At The Heart present their annual report and audited accounts for the year ended 5 April 2021 and confirm they comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the charity constitution and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

## Objectives and activities

### The object of the CIO is:

To advance in life, relieve needs of and help young people between the ages of 18 - 25 living in London and its surrounding areas, with a particular focus on young people from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community, by developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals, and in particular by:

1. advancing education through the provision of information, advice and guidance in areas relating to life, employability and social skills, progression into higher education, career development, citizenship, financial literacy and physical and mental health and well-being;
2. relieving unemployment through the provision of grants to beneficiaries hoping to start a social enterprise or business, providing volunteering and internship opportunities, hosting networking events, providing mentorship programmes, offering practical support and guidance with graduate role applications and hosting mock interviews.

In planning our activities for the year, we kept in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit at our trustee meetings. The main activities for this year are as follows:

- At The Heart of Fresher's
- Virtual Outreach
- Mentorship Programme
- Community Awards

Although our primary focus is to support young adults aged 18 – 25 from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, we are open to support all young adults regardless of personal background, faith, gender or personal circumstances.

We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aim and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

## **A review of our achievements and performance:**

### **a) At The Heart of Fresher's**

At the Heart of Fresher's was the first planned project for the charity upon registration with the Charity Commission. Due to lockdown restrictions in place at the time, young adults preparing to start university had limited access to open day events and resources usually available. Trustees of the charity had planned to host a series of virtual workshops to support these young adults with preparing for the start of university. The series of workshops aimed to cover topics such as: networking, wellbeing, money management and employment-study balance.

Although the workshops were advertised through university society groups, social media and other online platforms, there was limited engagement and trustees had felt it was in the charity's best interest to cancel the workshops and reflect on ways to improve engagement with the charity before revisiting this idea.

### **b) Virtual Outreach**

#### **i. Social Media Engagement**

In line with the charity objectives, we have been using social media platforms to provide our beneficiaries with information, advice and guidance in areas relating to life, employability and social skills, progression into higher education, career development, citizenship, financial literacy and physical and mental health and well-being.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the charity social media platforms allowed for outreach work to take place, where the charity was able to engage with beneficiaries, communicate with them so as to better understand their needs and provide services virtually.

We have invited beneficiaries to share peer advice on our Instagram platform, and have encouraged reflective discussions in the comments sections of our posts. Our top post by year's end amassed 1,503 views.

#### **ii. At The Heart Website**

In line with the charity objectives, the At The Heart website ([www.attheheartuk.org](http://www.attheheartuk.org)) also serves as a platform to provide our beneficiaries with information, advice and guidance. The website is home to free resources (booklets, audios) that beneficiaries can download, as well as a list of relevant services that beneficiaries can be signposted.

The website not only increases visibility for the charity, so that our services reach more of our target group, but it is also essential for showcasing reliability and improving accessibility.

### **c) At The Heart Mentorship Scheme**

This year we launched a mentorship scheme for our beneficiaries.

Our peer, educational and professional mentorship programmes are a key part of At The Heart's mission. Young adults from black and other ethnic minority groups need mentors who can offer advice, challenge, motivate and encourage them to lead happy and successful lives.



The 'At The Heart' Mentorship Scheme was developed with the main objectives of wanting to:

- Provide young adults with an opportunity to tap into a direct source of experience and knowledge
- Empower young adults to make better academic, career and/or personal life choices Support young adults to approach new opportunities and challenges with self-confidence and drive
- Support young adults to be able to formulate a clear sense of personal direction

By year's end, trustees were pleased to have received 23 applications from individuals volunteering to be mentors and 13 applications from beneficiaries looking for mentors using our scheme.

All mentors who have applied to the scheme are expected to complete an online training session curated by the trustees to ensure that they understand their role as a mentor, understand what is expected from them as a mentor and highlight the skills and attitudes needed to perform well in their role as a mentor. By year's end, 11 (48%) of the mentors had completed the training and had been matched to a mentee or were waiting to be matched.

#### Monitoring Achievement:

We expect to analyse the success of the programme at the middle (3 months) and the end (six months) of each mentoring relationship. Feedback from mentors and mentees will be collected through progress reviews and feedback forms.

We aim to continue running the mentorship scheme as an on-going project to support our beneficiaries with building meaningful connections for their personal, academic and/or professional development.

#### **d) Community Awards**

We awarded one financial award, of £100, to a beneficiary who was nominated by others within the charity's online community for being a source of inspiration and light within their community in 2020. The charity aims to develop the skills, capacities and capabilities of our beneficiaries to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals, and so trustees of the charity agreed the importance of acknowledging beneficiaries who were demonstrating these skills.

In order to qualify for the award, the charity's online community were asked to nominate a young adult from a black or other ethnic minority background who they felt demonstrated the aforementioned skills and along with a brief description of how.

Eligible nominations were then entered into a random name picker, and the winner of the award was chosen at random.

We aim to be able to fund more financial awards in the future, with the expectation that the charity will have more funds available in order to do so.

## Financial Review

The charity's principal source of funds is individual donations through public funding.

At The Heart ends the financial year in an account surplus thanks to donations made by the public. The charity was registered in June 2020, with the aims of supporting young people from black and ethnic minority groups living in London and its surrounding areas. At The Heart envisions to provide these young people with practical, financial and social opportunities which can help them build a better future for themselves.

We expect that our funding streams will come mostly from funding schemes, local councils and donations made by the general public.

At the end of this financial year, the charity will not have reached its first anniversary yet. The current pandemic coupled with the fact we are still very new has meant we have not made much financial progress. Our focus right now is on reaching as many young people as possible by providing them with free resources on a variety of relevant topics (mental & physical health, money management, etc) and more recently we have been developing a mentorship scheme. These activities can be run effectively without great financial costs as they are mostly reliant on volunteering time from mentors and trustees.

## Reserves Policy

Due to the aforementioned reasons, for the time being, we believe we do not yet need a structured reserves policy, therefore the amount of reserves held by At The Heart is £0.00. This decision will be reviewed periodically and adjusted accordingly should the trustees feel there is a need for this to change.

The charity has no funds materially in deficit and there are no uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern. The trustees are positive we will be able to grow financially over the next year by securing more funding as well as donations so we can continue to work on initiatives which will help young people.

