



**YOUTHBANK INTERNATIONAL NETWORK: (A COMPANY LIMITED BY  
GUARANTEE)**

**DIRECTORS' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024.**

**Company Registration Number NI625358**  
**Charity Number NI101341**

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## **REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS DIRECTORS AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024.**

### **STATUS**

The company is limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its articles of association dated 25th June 2014 and as such does not have any share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 each to the company's assets if it should be wound up.

### **DIRECTORS**

Norman Leet (Chairperson)

Jawad Amin

Delina Haileab (appointed 9th December 2024)

Niamh Harkin

Thembekile Maseko (appointed 9th December 2024)

Libby Rau (appointed 9th December 2024)

Lisa Rose

Ollie Walsh

### **COMPANY SECRETARY**

Vernon Ringland

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### **BANKERS**

HSBC UK

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### **COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER**

NI625358

### **CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER**

NIC101341

### **YBI's IP and Trade Mark Attorneys**

Hanna-IP, 58 Howard Street, Belfast, BT1 6PJ

## **Foreword from the Chairperson**

### ***YouthBank International Annual Report 2024***

Ten years into YouthBank International's story, it's clear we're no longer a bold experiment. We're a movement—tested, evolving, and more relevant than ever. But with that comes a new challenge: outlasting the phase where goodwill and novelty carry the weight. Now, we're building for the longer term.

We marked the milestone with a gathering in Como, Italy, hosted in partnership with the Comasca Foundation. It was three days of energetic exchange, where YouthBanks from across Europe didn't just talk—they showed what youth-led decision-making looks like in real communities. We took the model out into the streets of Como, and what we saw as confirmation of what we've known all along: when young people are trusted to allocate resources, the decisions are grounded, thoughtful, and future-focused. The conference wasn't just a celebration. It was a mirror—and a challenge. We're here to scale impact, not stay comfortable.

That's where the tension lies. We've made the case for youth-led grant-making. But convincing funders and institutions to relinquish control remains a slow and uneven experience. Large parts of the philanthropic world still view young people as beneficiaries, not decision-makers. And while our Future Rising Project has proven the model's potential, the financial stability required to sustain and scale it is not yet guaranteed. The sobering truth is that YouthBank International alone doesn't yet have the reach—or backing—to move those systemic levers.

Add to that the operational strain on our host organisations. Many work in contexts where youth autonomy is not just unfamiliar—it's actively resisted. Navigating institutional inertia, cultural norms, and logistical barriers takes grit. But if anything, the pushback reinforces the point: shifting power is uncomfortable because it matters. If there were no resistance, we'd be asking the wrong questions.

Still, 2024 was not a year of retreat—it was a year of consolidation and steady, deliberate progress. A year spent pushing against the familiar cycle that restricts leadership opportunities for young people and to disrupt the cycle that says,

“Let's wait until they've got more experience.”

In the UK, we secured new funding with a pathway to a self-sustaining national network. In Ukraine, amid the kind of adversity that tests more than just institutions, the YouthBank model is expanding—31 YouthBanks and counting. And in Italy, 16 new sites are planned, meeting a growing appetite for local, youth-led action.

Globally, we're looking ahead to deepening our presence in India, Thailand, Nepal, and Southern Africa. These are not symbolic expansions. In each of these regions, there are young people ready to take financial activism into their own hands, often with more clarity and urgency than the institutions around them.

Our leadership has also evolved. We're proud to welcome Thembekile Maseko, Delina Haileab, and Libby Rau to our Board, ensuring we reflect the international character of the communities we support. And we're pleased to confirm Peter Little as our new CEO. Peter has already shaped much of YouthBank's recent trajectory; now he leads our strategy to scale globally with the same integrity and sharp focus that got us here.

Looking to 2025, our priorities are clear. We need to embed sustainability into every layer of the organisation's work—strengthening alumni networks, supporting our Associates, and ensuring that YouthBanks are not seen as external programmes but as integral to the civic and economic fabric of their communities. This is not a luxury. It's the foundation for long-term relevance.

We are under no illusion about the road ahead. But if there's one thing this past decade has shown, it's that young people, when given the trust and tools, will not only meet expectations—they will exceed them.

To everyone who's walked this path with us—our funders, partners, staff, volunteers—thank you. This report offers an honest account of our progress, our setbacks, and our ambitions. More importantly, it reflects the lives and decisions of young people who refuse to be sidelined.

Let's keep building the ecosystem they deserve.

Chairperson

Norman Leet  
YouthBank International

This report provides an overview of key activities in 2024 including progress toward outcomes, sustainability efforts, organisational capacity building and the challenges we faced. It also features case studies from the second year of the Future Rising initiative that illustrate the local impact of YouthBank work in Thailand, India and Nepal.

## **Our Mission**

YouthBank International's (YBI) mission remains clear and unchanged:

*All young people should have the opportunity to be part of a global YouthBank network.*

We are committed to developing young people for the future, advancing social mobility and upholding their rights.

We partner with organisations who empower young people to change and develop their communities through 'authentic' leadership and decision-making.

We also focus on building an agile, service-driven infrastructure to grow the global YouthBank network, while strengthening the capacity and capability of each individual YouthBank.

## **Progress in 2024**

This year we advanced our mission by:

- Expanding the YouthBank model to new regions across South and Southeast Asia.
- Enhancing our digital learning platforms with AI-driven tools to support skill-building.
- Strengthening Alumni networks to promote long-term leadership and sustainability.

This report outlines how our activities in 2024 advanced our mission by scaling the YouthBank model and delivering tangible educational and community development outcomes—aligned with our charitable Public Benefit objectives and achieved across a range of diverse contexts.

## **Youth Led Action, Delivering Public Benefit**

YouthBank International exists to advance education, citizenship, and community development. In 2024, we delivered on that charitable purpose with evidence-based outcomes across fourteen countries—six of them in the global south, including India, Nepal, Ghana, South Africa, Thailand, and Zimbabwe.

Our model is simple and powerful: trust young people to identify the changes they would like to see in their communities and support them to lead the response. In 125 communities, over 1,200 young people were trained using YouthBank's peer-led methodology. Their work resulted in more than 800 youth-led projects with decisions

taken in locations as diverse as railway settlements in Thailand, hospital youth forums in England and flood-hit districts in rural India. Each one delivered local impact through campaigns and organised activity on public safety, child marriage, climate resilience, environmental improvements and mental health as examples of each YouthBank's agendas for change.

These are not symbolic efforts. They directly support the advancement of education, civic engagement and community wellbeing—core areas of public benefit under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

Young people volunteered over 60,000 hours of their time. They designed and delivered meaningful activity using tools like the Human Rights Card Game in Khon Kaen, Thailand - an initiative that improved civic literacy where it is often absent from any formal education or public discourse.

Youth-led teams took full ownership of planning, budgeting, and delivering community initiatives, with female leadership especially prominent. Through hands-on experience, participants cultivated vital skills in collaboration, decision-making, and communication. The qualitative feedback highlights increased self-esteem, stronger intergenerational bonds, and more open public conversations around difficult topics such as gender-based violence, child marriage and disability inclusion.

Yes, there are private benefits: young participants gain skills, confidence, and leadership experience. But these are aligned with our charitable purpose and fuel wider public value. There's no private profit. No exclusive gain. Just collective action with a measurable social return.

YouthBank puts resources and responsibility directly in young people's hands. And it works. It's not charity in the traditional sense. It's a smart, participatory investment in civic infrastructure, with lasting, intergenerational benefits.

## **Section 1: Operational Overview**

### **Youth Leadership in Practice**

In a year marked by social fractures and economic uncertainty, YouthBank's work didn't just persist—it became more urgent. Across 14 countries and more than 120 communities, young people stepped into leadership not as a symbolic gesture, but as a practical necessity. In places where traditional responses have stalled, YouthBanks offered something different: local knowledge, sharper priorities and a willingness to confront uncomfortable truths.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the words of Daniel, 15, from North Manchester:

*"Being part of YouthBank North Manchester has been eye-opening for me. With the recent rise in knife crime, we've made it our focus, but we've realised it's not the only issue. Poverty is a significant concern in our area*

*too... YouthBank has heightened my awareness of the challenges around me. I've lived here for years, but I wasn't fully aware of the circumstances until we delved into the research."*

His experience captures the core of the YouthBank model: when young people are trusted to look closely at the conditions in their communities, they don't just identify problems—they begin to organise around solutions. Daniel's shift—from observer to actor—mirrors a broader trend. YouthBank teams across Moldova, Thailand, Italy, and South Africa didn't wait for permission to lead. They assessed, prioritised, debated, and funded responses to everything from climate resilience and youth safety to addiction and civic participation.

This is not youth development as charity—it's civic infrastructure in action. The ability of young people to diagnose structural issues and manage the funds to address them reveals a truth many institutions have yet to fully grasp: change doesn't trickle down. It grows from the ground up.

As the operational challenges of 2024 revealed—whether in conflict zones, post-pandemic urban centres, or rural communities hit by disaster—what young people lacked was never commitment or insight. It was access. YouthBank, in every location, worked to change that. And where it succeeded, it wasn't just projects that flourished—it was the confidence, clarity, and leadership capacity of the next generation.

A core part of YBI's operational support in 2024 was the second year of *Future Rising*—a multi-country initiative implemented in South Africa, Zimbabwe, India, Nepal, and Thailand and challenged young people to design practical responses to issues such as identity, climate change, child marriage, addiction, and mental health.

Future Rising also pushed forward YBI's strategic goals—strengthening Alumni and Associate networks, and innovating through digital learning tools and governance models. It served as a practical example of YBI's support systems—training frameworks, webinars, and digital resources. The aim is simple: to make youth-led action the norm, not the exception.

While the initiative didn't rewrite the rulebook on youth-led development, it added compelling new chapters. In a year marked by economic uncertainty and deepening inequality, Future Rising stood as proof that investing in young people is not just necessary—it works.

The rest of this report tracks that growth—and the hard realities that come with it.

## **Insights from the Ground**

Case studies from India and Thailand bring this work to life. In Chhanua and Udala, India, YouthBanks have become centres of “positive disruption,” challenging social norms and giving young people space to imagine and build better futures. In Khon Kaen, Thailand, a locally designed Human Rights game sparked critical thinking and awareness among young participants, blending creativity with advocacy.



The reach of the project is striking. From rural villages in India to urban communities in Thailand, over 12,000 volunteer hours were logged by young people tackling issues like climate justice, addiction, gender rights, and environmental sustainability.

## **The Funding Challenge**

Despite its success, Future Rising also highlights a major hurdle: gaining trust and sustained investment for youth-led models. YouthBank's core principle—placing funding decisions directly into the hands of young people—is still met with scepticism in much of the philanthropic sector. But this isn't business-as-usual philanthropy. It's a shift in power that supports young people to set their own Agendas for Change and manage the resources to deliver on them.

Yet, systemic obstacles remain. Participants report both pride in their achievements and frustration with bureaucratic barriers, financial limitations, and resistance to the idea of young people as decision-makers.

Addressing these contradictions is essential for scaling and sustaining the YouthBank model. The lessons of 2024 make one thing clear: trusting young people isn't a gamble—it's a requirement for real, equitable, community-led development.

## **Section 2: Navigating Setbacks, Celebrating Impact**

### **Associates and Alumni network**

This year, YouthBank International expanded its network of Associates and Alumni, laying the foundation for a more dynamic and connected future. The recruitment of 11 Associates from eight countries exceeded expectations, highlighting the project's global appeal. Efforts to localise and translate training materials into native languages highlight a core principle of the YouthBank model: meaningful change must be rooted in context. By adapting resources to reflect local realities, our Associates ensure the model remains relevant, accessible, and impactful within each community it serves.

Alumni engagement, while falling short of ambitious targets, saw 40 former members sign up through a simplified sign-up process and targeted outreach using Monday.com. This simplified approach, coupled with targeted promotion via our website, social media, and staff networks, facilitated connections with alumni across diverse regions, including Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, England, Georgia, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Romania.

Watch Zura from Dedoplistskaro YouthBank, Georgia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jwOPciA9mgA>

And Andrei from Fagaras YouthBank, Romania

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O6YyQpQ12Jl&t=92s>

The primary goal of the YouthBank Alumni Network is to harness the resources of former YouthBank participants. We sought to leverage their experience for various

purposes, including:

- Recruitment of board members
- Engagement of Associates to deliver training
- Support for establishing and expanding YouthBanks in local communities
- Financial contributions or sponsorship
- Promoting and publicising YouthBank globally.

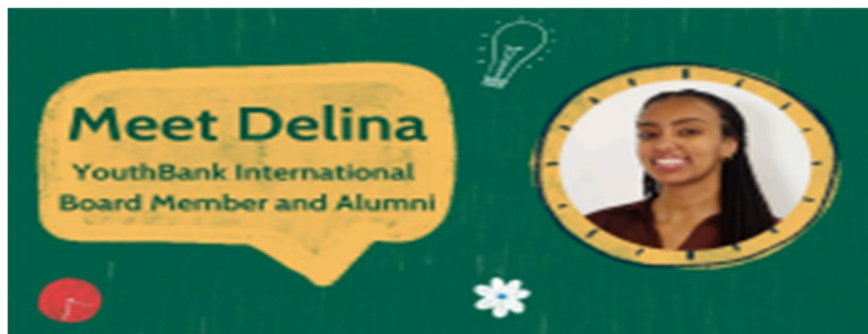
**Recruitment for Strategic Roles:** Alumni have been instrumental in filling critical roles, such as:

- An Italian Associate who translated training materials and currently provides support to the YouthBank Italy network.
- A UK Associate assisting with YouthBank initiatives across England.
- A Georgian Associate who translated materials into Georgian and facilitated an e-learning course for 60 young people.

**Board Member Engagement:** Alumni recruitment efforts brought younger voices to the YouthBank International board, with new members from the USA and South Africa who embody the values and experiences of former YouthBank participants.

<https://youtu.be/MvXuCjoplro>

*Link to hear Delina - new YouthBank International Board member recruited through alumni.*



[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqme9soYJ4TyjABFqYqs\\_B2DM7wzWm4B](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqme9soYJ4TyjABFqYqs_B2DM7wzWm4B)

*K Above link is a playlist of other alumni testimonial*

## **Network Development**

### **Standing in Solidarity with Our Partners in Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia**

YouthBank International stands in unwavering solidarity with our partners—the National Network of Local Philanthropy Development in Ukraine, Europe Foundation in Georgia, and East Europe Foundation in Moldova—as they navigate profound societal disruptions.

In Ukraine, the impact of war continued to devastate communities where 22 YouthBanks are based, disrupting education, livelihoods, and the mental well-being of an entire generation. In Moldova there are 10 YouthBanks, one of which is located in Transnistria. The war in Ukraine has exposed Moldovan political and domestic vulnerabilities towards Russia and the *de facto* autonomous region of Transnistria.

In Georgia there are 12 YouthBanks down from 19 last year. This is a consequence of Europe Foundation not acquiescing to the change in legislation where all organisations receiving more than 20% of its funding from outside the country have to register as a foreign agent. Young people in these regions are not only grappling with political and economic instability but also facing heightened stress, anxiety, and mental health struggles as they try to envision a stable future.

Despite these adversities, our partners remain steadfast in their commitment to young people, local philanthropy, and community resilience. Their courage and dedication inspire us, and we reaffirm our commitment to supporting their efforts, amplifying young voices, and advocating for a future where young people can thrive, free from fear and oppression. Now more than ever, solidarity and collective action are essential to safeguard the rights, well-being, and aspirations of the next generation.

### **Future Rising**

As the second year of YouthBank International's *Future Rising initiative* concludes, it presents a mix of hope and hard truths. The inspiration is undeniable: young people stepping forward to lead, making decisions, and driving change in communities grappling with crippling poverty, unsafe environments, and restricted access to services. Yet, the complexities of ensuring they receive the support they need remain stark with the possibilities of young people's inclusion in community wealth building remaining largely aspirational.

Practitioners on the ground work tirelessly within the realities of their locations, often operating in challenging environments that demand resourcefulness and resilience. They are the linchpins of the YouthBank model, finding innovative ways to maintain young people's access to opportunities despite significant

constraints. Their efforts are not glamorous; they are often unheralded acts of persistence, whether navigating bureaucratic barriers, adapting to limited resources, facilitating diverse youth experiences, or challenging societal norms that underestimate the young people they work with.

Shifting power to young changemakers is neither easy nor straightforward — but it is essential. At the heart of this work is the unwavering belief of participating organisations who remain committed, consistent, and persistent. Together with the young leaders they support, they demonstrate that meaningful change — however incremental — is possible. Their shared determination to see young people take the lead, even when progress is slow and gains are hard-won, means standing still is never an option. These efforts remind us why this work remains so vital — especially when a YouthBank with a promising future comes to a halt, as was the case in Indonesia at the beginning of the reporting year.

## **Indonesia**

In February 2024, the withdrawal of Indonesia Untuk Kemanusiaan (IKa) from the programme revealed a hard truth: the systems supporting youth-led initiatives are often precarious. Financial constraints, governance challenges, and the departure of key staff left IKa unable to sustain its commitment to *Future Rising*.

This was a painful but instructive moment for YouthBank. Supporting youth-driven funding models requires not only financial resources but staff and volunteering time, regular training and mentoring, community trust and relationship building as well as robust organisational capacities. The experience with IKa has prompted a renewed focus on helping partners build resilience, with a review set for the first quarter of 2025 to explore opportunities for possible re-engagement.

## **India: Progress Stalled, Progress Renewed**

Led by Yuva Vikas Foundation, Balasore, Orissa State, supporting 3 partner organisations: Bishol Youth Centre, Udala; Lok Shakti, Agarpada; and Sartha-Brajamohan, Chhanua.

The first half of 2024 saw momentum grind to a halt. Various humanitarian crises ranging from a devastating train crash to natural disasters, forced Yuva Vikas Foundation to delay YouthBank activities in Orissa State. Partner organisations, struggling with capacity gaps, compounded the challenges.

Yet, September brought a breakthrough: Yuva Vikas secured Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) certification, unlocking the potential for foreign funding. Reinvigorated, the Foundation re-engaged with its former partner NGOs —Lok Shakti, Agarpada, and Sartha-Brajamohan in Chhanua—and expanded its network to include the Bishol Youth Centre in Udala. Together, these partners recruited a leadership cohort of 60 young people, aged 16 to 29,

to advance Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). Their efforts, aimed at addressing inequalities and promoting sustainable communities, show that progress, while slow, is still progress.

### **Thailand and Nepal: Leadership in Action**

The work is hosted by VSO International country offices supporting delivery partner organisations, Voice of Youth in Khon Kaen, Thailand and Unnat Nepal in Dhanusha district of Janakpur, Nepal. Initial work began in each location in October

### **Thailand: Impact Focused**

The Khon Kaen YouthBank stands as a testament to the significance of young people as grassroots leaders. Despite initial struggles with awareness-building and navigating the complexities of conflicts of interest, participants rose to the challenge. A Saturday morning school for children in a vulnerable railway community became a flagship project, addressing educational inequities while galvanising support and credibility for future YouthBank activities. The Saturday morning school gave rise to leadership opportunities for the YouthBank team and helped them take the next step by focusing on the impact of flooding, drought and pollution. The YouthBank decided its modest resources should be used to address climate change, blending human rights education with practical community action. The fruits of these efforts would be seen in 2025.

### **Nepal: Local Solutions**

In the final 10 weeks of 2024, the Appan Dhanusha YouthBank in Nepal laid critical groundwork in one of the country's most vulnerable districts. With targeted support, the newly formed YouthBank team led an intensive mobilisation effort across Janakpurdham, Nagrain, Mukhiyapati and Musharniya municipalities — engaging local communities, surfacing pressing issues, and building trust in their peer-led grant-making process. By December, nine funding applications had been received from grassroots youth groups proposing interventions to address child marriage and drug abuse — issues identified by the YouthBank team.

Though no projects were funded in 2024 — with implementation scheduled for the following quarter — the outcomes of this early phase were already significant. The YouthBank team established five transparent selection criteria, introduced an interview-based vetting system, and built relationships with stakeholders including local government, police, educators, and civil society groups. These actions signal more than administrative readiness: they represent an emerging culture of accountable youth leadership.

Despite language barriers, team withdrawals, and coordination challenges, the YouthBank began to take shape in the reporting period. Workshops equipped

participants with vital skills, while tailored strategies, such as translating materials into Maithili, ensured cultural relevance.

For funders and institutional partners, this phase reflects the value of early investment — not in programmes alone, but in the infrastructure of youth-led decision-making. What unfolded in late 2024 was not project delivery, but the assembly of a leadership team capable of delivering impact in 2025.

### **South Africa and Zimbabwe: Seeds for Change**

**South Africa**, led by The Initiative for Community Advancement coordinate a network with Community Foundations in South Africa - Uthungulu Foundation, Richards Bay, Kwazulu Natal; Community Development Foundation Western Cape, Cape Town; West Coast Community Foundation, Malmesbury, Western Cape and The Initiative for Community Advancement (ICA) Goedverwacht, Wittewater, Western Cape and across the border in **Zimbabwe** with Uluntu Community Foundation in Bulawayo.

The YouthBank initiative in South Africa and Zimbabwe, seeks to support young people to address pressing community challenges by equipping them with leadership tools, mentorship, and a platform to drive locally led change. In regions marked by economic hardships, substance abuse, limited infrastructure, and systemic inequities, the *Future Rising* initiative is planting seeds for transformation through grassroots action.

When young people are trusted to lead, they exhibit resourcefulness and resilience. For example, the Wittewater YouthBank team successfully secured additional sponsorships when faced with budgeting challenges, reinforcing their confidence and problem-solving skills. Fundraising events like rugby games in Wittewater or family days in Goedverwacht not only raised funds but also revitalised community spirit and highlighted the potential of collective action.

Training on grant-making, financial literacy, and leadership has laid a strong foundation for impactful decision-making. However, there is a need for continuous learning opportunities and mentorship to sustain this progress.

In July 2024, YBI Associate Jeremy Maarman facilitated a convening of CEOs and frontline practitioners from across the South Africa and Zimbabwe networks in Cape Town. The gathering brought together 12 participants for a series of coordinated sessions that provided space for shared reflection, peer exchange, and joint problem-solving, as the region continues to build momentum around youth-led grant-making. A key feature of the convening was an online introduction to the YBI Learning Platform, designed to deepen participants' understanding of the digital tools now available to support training, project tracking, and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange. In addition, strategic and operational discussions enabled leadership teams to explore both local and regional challenges, assess progress and align on shared priorities for growth.

This meeting reaffirmed the value of cross-border learning and regional collaboration, laying important groundwork for more connected and resilient YouthBank initiatives in southern Africa.

This work is unfolding within the broader context of YouthBank partners hosted by ICA in South Africa and Zimbabwe, where a diverse range of leadership and decision-making challenges continue to shape how young people are mobilised. These efforts are focused on enabling young people to play a more active role in creating inclusive, safer, and healthier communities — a vision made more tangible by the leadership and commitment demonstrated during the Cape Town convening.

### **Sustainability: Aspirational or Achievable?**

The Future Rising experience highlights a critical tension: building sustainable youth-led funding mechanisms in contexts where local economies and institutions are fragile. The reliance on annual funding cycles creates uncertainty, making it difficult for YouthBanks to plan for the long term. Without a structural shift in how funding is allocated and sustained, the risk is clear: YouthBank's potential impact could remain confined to the few, rather than becoming a transformative force for the many.

Embedding sustainable participatory funding practices as the engine for this mobilisation remains particularly challenging. The current global funding climate is difficult, and scepticism about young people managing their own funds continues to limit broader support. These challenges highlight the need for further shifts in local philanthropic practices towards fully supported youth-led initiatives as the *Future Rising* progresses toward its third year.

### **New Developments in the United Kingdom**

YouthBank International made key progress in strengthening its organisational infrastructure in 2024. New funding from the Kristian Gerhard Jebsen Foundation enabled targeted work in England, while support from the EU Peace Plus Programme will help establish 10 new YouthBanks in Northern Ireland in 2025. These initiatives—alongside updated training materials, a refreshed website, and a redesigned learning platform—represent critical investments in long-term capacity building.

### **YouthBank in England: Building Momentum Through Strategic Investment**

In mid-2024, with support from the Kristian Gerhard Jebsen Foundation, YouthBank International laid the foundation to expand the YouthBank model across England's North-West region. This included hiring a part-time specialist to lead strategy development. One of their key roles is to work with high net worth individuals and businesses to secure long-term investment in the emergent YouthBanks.

By September, conversations began with potential partners and the identification of Business Champions to support youth-led grantmaking in the region. At the same time, core materials and processes were refined to support future growth.

Looking ahead, the focus will shift to sustainability and scale. A key priority is delivering a *Fundraising Training and Toolkit* to strengthen the ability of YouthBank teams, organisations, and young people to raise local funds. A *Business and Support Network* will also be developed to connect YouthBanks with businesses, community organisations, and other supporters.

These strategic efforts aim to ensure the long-term sustainability of YouthBanks in the North-West and beyond—building a replicable model for other regions in England. Long after initial funding ends, the goal remains the same: for local organisations to continue thriving and for young people to stay at the centre of community-led change.

### **Section 3: Other YouthBank International activity**

#### **Fito 10th Anniversary: A Decade of YouthBank in Action**

In September, YouthBank International worked with our partner Comasca Community Foundation from Como, Italy to celebrate our 10th Anniversary as an organisation. The celebration brought together young leaders, practitioners and stakeholders - 110 people from 12 countries. The term 'Fito,' (fee-toh) derived from the Sesothu language of South Africa, meaning 'joining diverse pieces to make one powerful effort,' succinctly encapsulated our collective challenge.

Watch a short video of the YouthBank Fito to capture the event.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SF3Uj8jixm4>

Over three days, participants engaged in dynamic discussions, hands-on activities, and strategic planning sessions, reinforcing YouthBank's role as a driver of youth-led participatory grant-making.

The event focused on three key areas: sharing best practices, strengthening leadership, and generating immediate impact. Young leaders and practitioners from across different YouthBank networks showcased their work, sharing powerful stories of how grassroots initiatives have shaped their communities. The **YouthBank Assembly** was a highlight, with participants debating key challenges and opportunities, ultimately shaping the vision for the next decade of YouthBank.

One of the most engaging moments was the **Hackathon** bringing together teams to design innovative solutions to community challenges, culminating in practical proposals that could be implemented in their home countries.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssO-Uum-v5s>



The **Money Game**, an interactive afternoon session challenged participants to think critically about their own relationship to money, financial activism and ethical decision-making. The "**100 Euros of Change**" initiative was another standout, with groups tasked to create impactful micro-projects, demonstrating how even modest resources can catalyse real-world transformation.

Beyond the structured sessions, the event fostered cross-border collaborations and deeper connections between YouthBank networks. The presence of Italian community foundations, including Comasca Community Foundation, underscored the potential for expanding YouthBank in Italy, strengthening local partnerships and embedding participatory grant-making further into regional philanthropy.

Reflecting on the 10-year journey, Fito 2024 was not just a celebration but a launchpad for the future. As participants departed, they carried with them a renewed commitment to youth-led social change, equipped with new skills, connections, and a shared sense of purpose. The event reaffirmed that YouthBank is more than a funding model—it is a movement, a mindset, and a powerful tool for young people to shape their own futures.

### **Video for Change: Elevating Youth Voices at Fito 2024**

The initiative invited YouthBank teams to create one-minute videos highlighting their funding priorities, enabling them to share their vision in a format that is engaging, accessible, and widely shareable. These videos were not just presentations—they were declarations of intent, showcasing the urgency, insight, and creativity young people bring to local challenges.

*Video for Change* aligns closely with YouthBank's core values: participation, agency, and storytelling as a tool for impact. By offering a digital platform for young leaders to express their priorities, the initiative ensures that youth-led change is not only happening—but also seen and heard. These videos became a form of advocacy, offering space to challenge outdated narratives, share lived experience, and highlight the practical solutions already in motion. For many, it was their first experience using multimedia to raise awareness and build support—an essential skill today.

Beyond the creative aspect, the challenge had a deeper function: to build collaboration, digital literacy, and strategic thinking. Teams had to craft compelling narratives, distill messages into tight formats, and make their storytelling persuasive and actionable. Videos were not judged on production value alone, but on their ability to communicate urgent issues, spark emotional response, and inspire real-world action. The process reflected the heart of participatory grant-making—focusing on clarity, purpose, and collective problem-solving over polished perfection.

As these videos continue to circulate beyond Fito, they stand as lasting testimonies to the power of youth-led change. More than a showcase, *Video for Change* is now a core part of how YouthBanks communicate impact, advocate for resources, and shape the broader conversation around youth development. In a funding environment where visibility and narrative matter, these videos ensure young people's priorities remain on the agenda—locally and globally.

View Videos for Change that were awarded funding by their peers at the Fito event:

YouthBank Stefan Voda: <https://youtu.be/yYfRMxEu30I>

YouthBank Bender: <https://youtu.be/BRgeGZ-Dnfg>

YouthBank Balti and Singerei: <https://youtu.be/vwcGRNZf8yU>

### **Know- Now Booster Series**

As in previous years, the “Know Now Booster” webinar series remained a cornerstone of YouthBank’s 2024 calendar, launching in January with a session led by Kakhi Gigauri. His message encouraged participants to tap into their inner drive—setting a tone that was deeply personal, grounded, and ambitious.

As the year unfolded, the series confronted the practical challenges of leading change. Each session built upon the last, with Helena Habdija emphasising the power of storytelling and high impact programme design, while Jeremy Maarman introduced the concept of intentional leadership. His message hit home: leadership isn’t about having a fancy title, it’s much more challenging to lead in a way that reflects a clear purpose and a deep commitment to building trust, inspiring action, and creating lasting impact from the inside out.

Then in October, Viktoriia Zablotska used her YouthBank experience —showing how you can raise funds right in your own town to make things happen. The big takeaway? You don’t have to wait for someone else to save the day. Change can start with you, right where you are.

### **New Materials and Resources**

As young people increasingly step up to tackle local challenges, aligning their work with global frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is an option to consider. In partnership with the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and Neota Logic, YouthBank International developed the *SDG Compliance Checker*—an AI-powered tool that helps YouthBank teams assess how their grant proposals align with the SDGs. More than a compliance tool, it serves as an interactive learning platform that encourages strategic reflection, strengthens decision-making, and amplifies impact.

Designed to be accessible and intuitive, the tool allows users to input key project details and receive real-time feedback on SDG alignment. This reinforces critical thinking and enhances advocacy by connecting local projects with global goals.

A key feature is its ability to generate short, insightful reports on proposal alignment with specific SDGs. By analysing proposals across regions, YBI can identify priority issues for young people and how their grassroots efforts correspond with international agendas. These insights will inform training, funding decisions, and advocacy strategies—while also offering donors and partners clear evidence of youth-driven impact and SDG alignment.

The tool is currently in pilot testing with selected YouthBanks, with plans for full integration across the global network by 2025–2026. This blend of AI insights and human judgment aims to embed smart technology into grassroots funding, increasing both the efficiency and impact of YouthBank initiatives.

We're also redesigning a section of the YouthBank Learning Programme into a modular training series specifically for young grant-makers. To boost engagement, we're producing scripted video content that provides clear context before guiding users through tasks or new concepts. Following feedback from participants in Georgia, all videos are kept under two minutes to maintain attention and completion. To enhance relatability, we're including a diverse range of speakers, with more representation from younger male and female voices.

We created a promotional film, "**What is a YouthBank?**", to introduce the concept to interested organisations, featuring insights and contributions from young people in Croatia.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Biodlw4VKO4>

## **Contracted work**

### **Leitrim Comhairle na nÓg, Ireland**

In July 2024, two members of the YouthBank International executive team delivered a bespoke hackathon for **Leitrim Comhairle na nÓg in Ireland**, focused on strengthening youth participation in evidence-based decision-making. Designed in close collaboration with local stakeholders, the intensive workshop introduced young people to foundational research skills — from identifying community issues and framing research questions to conducting peer interviews and interpreting qualitative data. The hackathon not only upskilled participants to think and act like young researchers but also positioned them to become more effective advocates for youth-led change in their local areas. This tailored intervention highlights YBI's growing capacity to adapt its participatory learning methods to diverse national contexts and specific thematic goals, in this case equipping young people with tools to generate knowledge from their own lived experience.

## **Europe Foundation, Georgia**

The 2024 YouthBank Immersion Training in Georgia brought together 60 young people from 12 regions through a hybrid programme of live online sessions and a five-week e-learning course. This format marked a new direction for YouthBank International, shaped in part by the need to adapt to Georgia's complex and evolving geopolitical landscape. With regional tensions and internal uncertainty affecting daily life in some areas, the hybrid approach was not only a practical response but also a strategic one—ensuring that young people could still access leadership and grant-making training regardless of local disruptions. It also allowed YouthBank to test a more resilient, flexible delivery model, capable of reaching communities navigating instability.

### **Training Structure and Content**

The programme blended interactive Zoom sessions with structured e-learning modules, each covering specific phases of the YouthBank model—from identity-building and issue mapping to fundraising, project evaluation, and storytelling. A total of 26 training videos (with Georgian subtitles) supported the curriculum, alongside Padlets that served as team noticeboards for assignments, reflections, and creative outputs. Quizzes, group work, and energisers kept participants engaged, while flexible self-paced elements helped balance screen fatigue.

### **Platform and Participation**

Participants worked in 12 YouthBank teams, each with its own Padlet workspace to upload content, collaborate, and receive feedback. Achievement badges marked their milestones, and all training materials were translated into Georgian for accessibility. Trainers and co-trainers adapted content based on ongoing feedback, ensuring a responsive and inclusive learning experience. Notably, 35 out of 58 active participants had earned their completion certificates at the time of reporting, with others still finalising their remaining assignments.

### **Evaluation and Outcomes**

Feedback from two evaluations—one by YouthBank International (e-learning experience) and one by Europe Foundation (overall impact)—revealed high satisfaction: over 90% of respondents found the course useful and relevant, with strong intentions to apply the skills learned. Participants especially valued the videos, group discussions, and storytelling elements. Challenges included time management, uneven teamwork, and varying levels of engagement, which will inform future improvements, such as dedicating more time for onboarding and structured team-building.

### **Lessons Learned and Future Improvements**

Key lessons from the training programme include the need for better onboarding, clearer time expectations, stronger support for teamwork and strategies to engage quieter participants. Despite these hurdles, the training succeeded in sparking motivation, leadership, and critical thinking among Georgia's young changemakers. The blended training model, supported by local facilitators and

digital tools like Padlet, proved a successful formula that will continue to evolve in future YouthBank programmes.

## Section 4: Case Studies

What drives a group of young people to gather, dedicate countless hours, and pour their energy into imagining, planning, and organising around ideas that might never see the light of day? We would argue that it is an intricate mix of curiosity, determination, excitement, frustration, and even anger—an entire spectrum of emotions—that propels them forward. This emotional breadth is what anchors this work. Yet the question remains: where do young people find the reserves of energy to persist, to overcome the obstacles, and to keep pursuing these alternative visions for change, even when the path ahead feels daunting? The following Case Studies reflect the challenges of addressing structural inequities in resource-poor settings and the importance of capacity-building through localised, innovative methods.

### Case study 1: Positive Disruption in Rural India.



#### YouthBank in Udala and Chhanua: Youth-Led Change in Rural India

The Udala YouthBank aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10: Reduced Inequalities. One of its first initiatives was advocating for clean water pumps, a critical intervention in a region with unreliable water access. Another project

helped young women selling handwoven sarees access fair markets, cutting out exploitative middlemen. These projects show that youth-led decision-making can challenge deep-rooted economic barriers while respecting local traditions.

Meanwhile, in Chhanua, two hours away, the YouthBank responded to climate-driven challenges affecting agriculture, supporting farmers by pooling resources and mobilising volunteers. This effort aligns with SDG 11: Sustainable Communities, demonstrating how youth-led initiatives address both immediate needs and long-term resilience. However, these grassroots efforts also highlight a critical issue—relying on short-term grants is not sustainable.

## **Funding Challenges and the Push for Sustainability**

While the YouthBank leadership teams are proving their ability to mobilise resources and implement change, financial sustainability remains a major challenge. Most of their funding comes from small, project-specific grants, with no dedicated budget for core costs. The team recognises the need for long-term solutions, exploring local resource generation in a region with limited income opportunities. This shift towards financial self-sufficiency is daunting, but essential for long-term impact.

## **Expanding Tradition, Not Uprooting It**

The introduction of a YouthBank in Udala has sparked debate. Some community leaders question whether young people should have financial decision-making power. However, as Gobinda, chairperson of Yuva Vikas Foundation, explains, *“We’re not here to uproot tradition but to expand it.”* YouthBank members are proving that young people can be both stewards of tradition and drivers of innovation—balancing respect for cultural heritage with the urgency of addressing today’s challenges.

Yet, scaling and sustaining these initiatives requires ongoing support. Youth-led change cannot happen in isolation. The YouthBanks in Udala and Chhanua are early models of what’s possible, proving that when youth are trusted with power, they transform their communities from the ground up.

## Case Study 2: Initial Steps in Establishing Youth-Led Decision-Making at Lok Shakti Centre, Agarpada, Orissa State, India.



### YouthBank in Agarpada: A Bold Experiment in Financial Activism

In Orissa's Agarpada region, the Lok Shakti Centre has long been a trusted community hub, stretching limited resources to deliver essential services. In 2023, its attempt to launch a YouthBank did not go as planned, exposing deep-seated challenges around youth leadership and financial control.

### Mapping the Terrain: Learning from the Community

Determined to get it right, the Lok Shakti Centre started afresh with a mapping exercise. Twenty young people were tasked with defining YouthBank's scope, identifying key stakeholders, and understanding the barriers to success. The findings were revealing: while schools and community radio embraced the idea, local politicians and service providers feared YouthBank would compete for resources. Some questioned whether young people should be entrusted with financial decision-making at all.

At a community meeting, these tensions surfaced. A social worker voiced concerns: *"We're already struggling for funding. How will this help?"* An elder cut to the heart of the matter: *"Who controls the money? Until that's clear, this is just talk."* The room erupted when YouthBank members explained that young people would raise their own funds and decide how grants would be awarded. Amid the noise, one voice rose above: *"Then let's figure this out together—because we're not just talking about money, we're talking about trust."*



## **Breaking Barriers and Building Trust**

Despite resistance, the YouthBank persisted, challenging entrenched power structures. They framed their initiative as an opportunity, not a threat, and sought to complement existing community efforts. Over time, attitudes began to shift. The mapping exercise itself became a moment of disruption, introducing new voices into decision-making and sparking conversations about financial control and opportunity.

## **Lessons from the Ground**

- **Competition for Resources:** Local service providers feared losing funding, requiring YouthBank to clearly position itself as a complementary initiative, not a competitor.
- **Power Structures:** Decision-making was concentrated among a few influential figures, making it difficult for young people to assert their independence.
- **Cultural Barriers:** Scepticism toward youth leadership remained, rooted in norms that equate authority with age and experience.
- **Administrative Challenges:** Opening a bank account proved a hurdle, with banks initially rejecting their application due to complex documentation requirements.

## **Sunshine YouthBank: A Small Start with Big Aspirations**

The breakthrough came when young people took matters into their own hands—literally. Each participant contributed 200 rupees to open a YouthBank fund, mirroring the principles of a giving circle. More than just a financial act, this was a statement of intent: they were not waiting for permission or external funding; they were taking ownership of their futures.

This initiative is more than just a fund—it is financial activism in action. By pooling resources, young people in Agarpada are not only creating opportunities but challenging the notion that financial control should remain in the hands of a few, demonstrating that localised, youth-led decision-making is not just possible but necessary.



### Case Study 3: A Human Rights Game to boost Knowledge and Critical Thinking in Khon Kaen YouthBank, Thailand.



**Voice of Youth, Khon Kaen, Human Rights Leadership.** In the heart of Khon Kaen's railway community, 20 young people gathered for an unconventional workshop—a Human Rights Card Game designed to challenge assumptions and sharpen decision-making skills. This was not a lecture but a hands-on experience, helping participants

explore fairness, justice, and power dynamics in everyday life.

#### Game Dynamics: Power, Fairness, and Choices

In the first round, participants made decisions about rights and responsibilities, revealing personal biases and social dynamics. Arjun, outspoken and confident, quickly took control of discussions, while Priya hesitated, unsure of her choices. The session mirrored real-world inequalities, showing how power structures privilege some voices over others.

Next, the group was asked to distribute their "rights" among peers. Rohan, feeling sidelined, subtly retaliated by excluding Arjun from his choices, while Anaya aimed for balance, addressing the unfairness of the first round. This phase exposed how personal experiences shape ideas of justice and the tension between individual bias and collective fairness.

#### Negotiation and Real-World Reflection

As open discussion was encouraged, the game became a lesson in leadership. Some players fought for fairness, others for personal gain. The energy in the room mirrored the daily struggles of Khon Kaen's railway community—where young people navigate complex choices about power, resources, and justice.

## **From Game to Action: Human Rights in Leadership**

The final phase connected the game to real-world human rights issues. Participants reflected on questions like:

- Where do these big Human Rights show up in our community?
- How important is money to each of us?
- How do we balance individual rights with collective responsibilities?
- In what way do the “No-Go” areas violate our rights?

This discussion laid the foundation for applying human rights principles in YouthBank decision-making.

## **Shaping the Future of YouthBank Leadership**

By linking human rights to leadership, decision-making, and resource allocation, the game transformed abstract principles into lived experiences. Participants saw how YouthBank’s funding decisions could either reinforce or challenge inequality. Priya summed it up best:

*"I didn't realise how often I hesitate to act. This made me think about all the times I've stayed quiet when I should have spoken up."*

The Human Rights Card Game in Khon Kaen offers a practical and engaging way to teach young people about their rights as outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). By linking the principles of human rights to real-world decision-making, the workshop challenged participants to navigate complex scenarios with empathy and critical thinking.

As these young people step into leadership roles within the YouthBank, they bring with them a deeper understanding of what it means to lead with fairness, challenge injustice, and create opportunities that uphold the rights and dignity of all. Human rights cannot remain as abstract principles—they must be tested, amplified, and brought to life through practical action; something a local YouthBank is well placed to provide.

#### **Case Study 4: From the Ground Up - ‘Vegetables by the Gutter’ - a funded project on climate change in Khon Kaen, Thailand.**



The story of climate change is often told from the top down—leaders making pledges, institutions setting distant targets. But in Khon Kaen, Thailand, a YouthBank team has shown that real change happens at the grassroots.

Faced with rising temperatures, unpredictable weather, and food insecurity, the Khon Kaen YouthBank funded a group of their

peers who didn't wait for policymakers. They organised, built solutions, and used their YouthBank fund to back their own ideas. With support from VSO International and local NGO Voice of Youth, one initiative—‘Vegetables by the Gutter’—turned urban waste spaces into small-scale food gardens. This wasn't just about growing vegetables; it was about proving that food security is within their control.

The project sparked important conversations about sustainability, land use, and access to fresh food. It bridged the gap between climate action and daily life, demonstrating that young people's leadership can create tangible, practical change.

#### **Section 5: Final Summary - Holding the Line, Shifting the Frame**

If 2023 was a year of positioning, 2024 was about staying the course while the terrain shifted beneath us. YouthBank International enters its second decade not as a startup looking for attention, but as a tested model pressing for its rightful place in the civic infrastructure of communities across the globe.

The story of this year isn't linear. It's a mix of breakthroughs and barriers—expansions in South Asia, setbacks in Indonesia, slow recovery in war-affected Ukraine, and persistent, quiet resilience across local YouthBanks from England to Zimbabwe. That mix tells us something deeper: youth-led giving isn't riding a

wave of hype—it's pushing against structural resistance. And that's precisely why it matters.

Future Rising has shown that when young people are trusted with decision-making power, the returns are real: sharper civic awareness, more inclusive public conversations, and practical projects that tackle issues where other interventions stall—whether it's food insecurity in Khon Kaen or youth safety in North Manchester. But it also revealed the fragility of the systems meant to support that work. This model doesn't collapse under pressure—it adapts. The problem is not with the young people. It's with the scaffolding around them.

Heading into 2025, the participatory grant-making ecosystem faces three pressure points:

1. **The Legitimacy Gap:** Philanthropic institutions still hesitate to see young people as full partners. Until youth-led models like YouthBank are understood not as exceptions but as norms, the system will continue to underperform in equity and impact.
2. **The Infrastructure Test:** We've learned that passion without structure burns out. If YouthBank is to scale, it needs more than belief—it needs long-term investment in training, tools, and leadership development. The promise of digital tools like the SDG Compliance Checker or modular e-learning must be met with real uptake and integration.
3. **The Sustainability Pivot:** YouthBank's future cannot rest on short-term grants and well-intentioned pilots. What's required now is embedded, multi-year investment strategies—locally anchored, globally informed—that treat youth-led grant-making as essential public infrastructure, not an extracurricular experiment.

Despite the odds, the signal from the ground is clear: young people are not waiting for permission. From grassroots initiatives in Chhanua to climate justice projects in Khon Kaen, they are leading with clarity and conviction. The institutions around them—funders, community partners, policymakers—must now catch up.

The path ahead isn't simple. But then again, shifting power never is.

## Looking Ahead to 2025 and Beyond

As we prepare for the next phase of YouthBank International's growth, our focus will be on:

- **Scaling the YouthBank Model:** Expansion in regions where civil society space is narrowing—but local demand for youth leadership is growing.

- **AI-Powered Learning & Capacity Building:** Leveraging technology to enhance training resources and create digital tools that bridge global goals with young people's local action.
- **Strengthening Donor & Stakeholder Engagement:** Securing multi-year unrestricted funding to provide stability and growth for YouthBanks worldwide.
- **Deepening Community & Business Networks:** Developing partnerships that align with YouthBank's mission to ensure young people's financial activism continues to be supported and resourced effectively.
- **Alumni :** A stronger Alumni Network stepping into governance, advocacy, and mentorship roles.

This year's report doesn't promise an easy road. It outlines one that's necessary.

## Directors' Report

The Directors of the company, who are also Trustees for the purpose of charity law, present their report and the unaudited accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 3 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

The Trustees are pleased to present the results for 2024. There was a surplus for the year of £116,821 (£110,247 attributable to Restricted Reserves and £6,574 attributable to Unrestricted Reserves). Reserves at the year-end were £133,597 comprising restricted funds of £123,198 and unrestricted funds of £10,399.

The Trustees are responsible for safeguarding the assets of YouthBank International, for keeping proper accounting records and producing relevant financial statements. This was the second year of the restructured business model, allowing income to be sustainably generated as we look to expand the YouthBank network in line with our mission.

Trustees meet to agree strategic direction, receive reports, approve budgets and finance reports and endorse and review policies. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the Company Secretary.

All newly appointed Trustees receive instruction on the activities of the charity and their responsibilities as a Trustee. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the Company Secretary.

## **Public Benefit Statement**

Trustees have complied with their duty under Charity Law with regard to the Charity Commission Northern Ireland's Public Benefit Guidance when exercising any powers and duties to which the guidance is relevant. The public benefits are:

- The enhanced personal development of young people who participate in YouthBank initiatives, building their self esteem and confidence and providing them with an opportunity to learn new skills in leadership, teamwork, decision-making, problem-solving, communication, negotiation, event management and many other skill sets
- The articulation and consideration of issues and concerns relevant to young people and the communities they live in
- The provision of grants to improve the quality of young people's lives.

These benefits can be evidenced in records kept by country host organisations who coordinate their local YouthBank sites. Survey reports, feedback, networking events and training are organised by YouthBank International to build the capacity and capability of stakeholders to advance youth-led grant-making and decision-making.

The public benefit requirement has informed the activities of YouthBank International in this reporting year and no harm or potential for harm has resulted from our purposes. Trustees review their public benefit and charitable status on an annual basis.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

In the reporting period three new trustees joined the Board, Libby Rau and Delina Haileab from the United States and Thembekile Maseko from Zimbabwe. The joining process included several meetings with the chairperson of YBI, discussions with a number of the executive team and attendance at a trustee meeting before formal appointment on 9th December. Upon appointment, trustees are provided with the latest trustee papers containing the relevant information to familiarise themselves with their responsibility as a trustee, the work of the charity, operating procedures, the business plan and financial performance.

The board of trustees met online on February 22nd, June 20th (AGM), August 15th and December 5th and held a face-to-face residential with members of the Executive team over the period 13th-15th September in Como, Italy.

The Board of Directors, who are the charity's trustees give of their time freely and no director received remuneration in the year.

A risk register covering key strategic risks is maintained and updated at least twice a year and more frequently where risks are known to be volatile.

Organisations in the YouthBank network support between 1 and 50 community based YouthBanks to address issues that matter to them in their communities.

The Charity's objects ("Objects") are to create learning and participation opportunities for young people to be grant makers, decision makers and leaders in their own communities and in wider society by:

- assisting the setting up and development of new local YouthBank initiatives and YouthBank Networks.
- providing and coordinating the provision of technical support, training, advice, information, materials and resources and generally enhancing the capacity, effectiveness and sustainability of existing local YouthBank initiatives, YouthBank Networks and YouthBank Host organisations.
- providing and maintaining an international forum where members of the Charity can find mutual support, engage in training, exchange views, share common issues and information and create a collective voice.

YouthBank International Network is a company limited by guarantee, registration number NI625358 and it complies with corporate law, files annual returns and notifications of changes to board members/trustees, people with significant control, articles of association, name changes and other salient corporate information.

The company is registered with the Northern Ireland Charities Commission (CCNI), registration number NIC101341 and complies fully with all CCNI law and guidance, including the provision of an annual report on its finances and activities.

Trustee liability insurance, travel and professional indemnity insurance are provided through Marsh Ltd Insurance Intermediaries, Belfast.

YouthBank International Network's conduct is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The minutes of Trustees' meetings clearly record all decisions taken and financial income and expenditure reviewed at each meeting.

## **Risk Register**

Trustees have a risk register in place which addresses the major governance,

operational, financial, reputational, legal and regulatory risks that might impact upon the core purposes and key objectives of the organisation. These risks are reviewed on two occasions per year and designed to minimise any potential impact on YBI should those risks materialise.

Financial controls and procedures are a shared responsibility between a trustee and a designated executive team member. Trustees agreed to retain the services of Slade & Cooper Limited as Independent Examiners.

## **Reserves Policy**

Trustees began preparing a reserves policy statement to ensure the organisation's financial stability and sustainability. At the time of reporting the statement hadn't been approved. This policy will outline the necessary reserve levels to safeguard against future uncertainties and support ongoing operations.

## **Statement of responsibilities of the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees (who are also directors of YouthBank International Network for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Board of Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the



prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and recognise that attention to governance issues is critical for the maintenance of an accountable and respected organisation.

Additionally YBI trustees have agreed to:

- Setting the strategic direction of the charity and ensuring the direction is in keeping with the objects and principles
- Being responsible in law for the charity
- Acting with integrity and in the best interest of the charity
- Confidently promoting the work of the charity and young people
- Contributing skills, knowledge, expertise and support to the work of the charity.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime of the Companies Act 2006. Approved by the Board of Trustees on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

Signed on its behalf.

Chairperson, Norman Leet