

Business Plan



YouToo Project

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1. INTRODUCTION

YouToo is a social inclusion project that will be operated, initially, across campuses of the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David – in Carmarthen, Swansea and Lampeter. The project will be supported by the Youth and Community Work department in partnership with Student Services, Widening Access, the SoCom Project and the Student Union, overseen by an advisory board including staff and students at UWTSD. Consistent with youth work values, the project will promote participation of young people in steering and reviewing the project. An existing small-scale pilot of the project will be incorporated into a social enterprise to deliver services across campuses, funded primarily by UWTSD, with the organisational flexibility to apply for additional grant funding from corporate sponsors and programmes such as Awards for All.

Project Demand

YouToo was established in response to reports from young people on the Carmarthen campus feeling isolated and socially excluded by existing social opportunities (or lack thereof). Community profiling and fieldwork (O'Grady, 2017) revealed a small number of students who were socially disengaged, some afraid to leave student accommodation in the evenings and/or lacking confidence to join groups or societies at the university. Others refrained from visiting the Student Union because they were intimidated by the atmosphere, did not drink, or they could not afford to engage in social activities revolving around alcohol. One young person said she had no friends at UWTSD. Temporary closure of the Student Union presented an opportunity to launch the project and offer students an alternative social space and range of activities to engage with, a place where they could access support, discuss issues and form relationships in a safe, controlled environment. The project has since developed further to outreach proactively to college students at risk of disengagement as they prepare to transition to university. This project strives to make everyone at UWTSD feel included, cared for, and know they matter. *'Even if you're the last person who feels alone, there's space for YouToo.'*

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aims of the Project

1. The first aim of YouToo is to engage students on campus who are socially excluded and/or looking for a less intense, alcohol-free social space to meet on key social nights each week. However all students on campus are welcome.
2. Secondly, the project aims to offer individual and small-group support that is needs-led, using an informal, youth work approach. This may involve issues-based work, mentoring, or simply befriending individuals and helping them connect with other students or groups on campus.
3. Thirdly, the project aims to support young people at risk of social exclusion to progress through the transition between further and higher education (FE-HE).

Type of Activities Involved

Students will be engaged through Freshers' Fayres, campus outreach and referral through Widening Access, Student Services and other groups at UWTSD. Because of the context, there will be no upper-age limit for access but provision will focus on young people aged 16-25. Those who sign up will be offered a mentor and/or can be accompanied to YouToo events, relevant services, campus groups and societies to help them settle in, meet new people and form relationships.

YouToo will meet twice weekly on each campus at key social times (Wednesday and Friday evenings) to provide an alternative social space and over 8 hours per-week of group contact time in addition to available one-to-one support throughout the week. One-to-one support will be offered by project staff or peer mentors depending on individual circumstances and following a basic needs assessment.

Volunteer mentors will be recruited to support peers and student transitions between local colleges and UWTSD. The aim is to help students at risk of isolation build supportive social networks ready to join the university and integrate effectively upon arrival. Mentors can also signpost and share their own experiences to help peers adjust to university life and access appropriate support where necessary. In the process, mentors will learn new, transferable skills, develop in confidence and reap the rewards of 'giving back' to the community in terms of their own mental health, self-esteem and wellbeing.

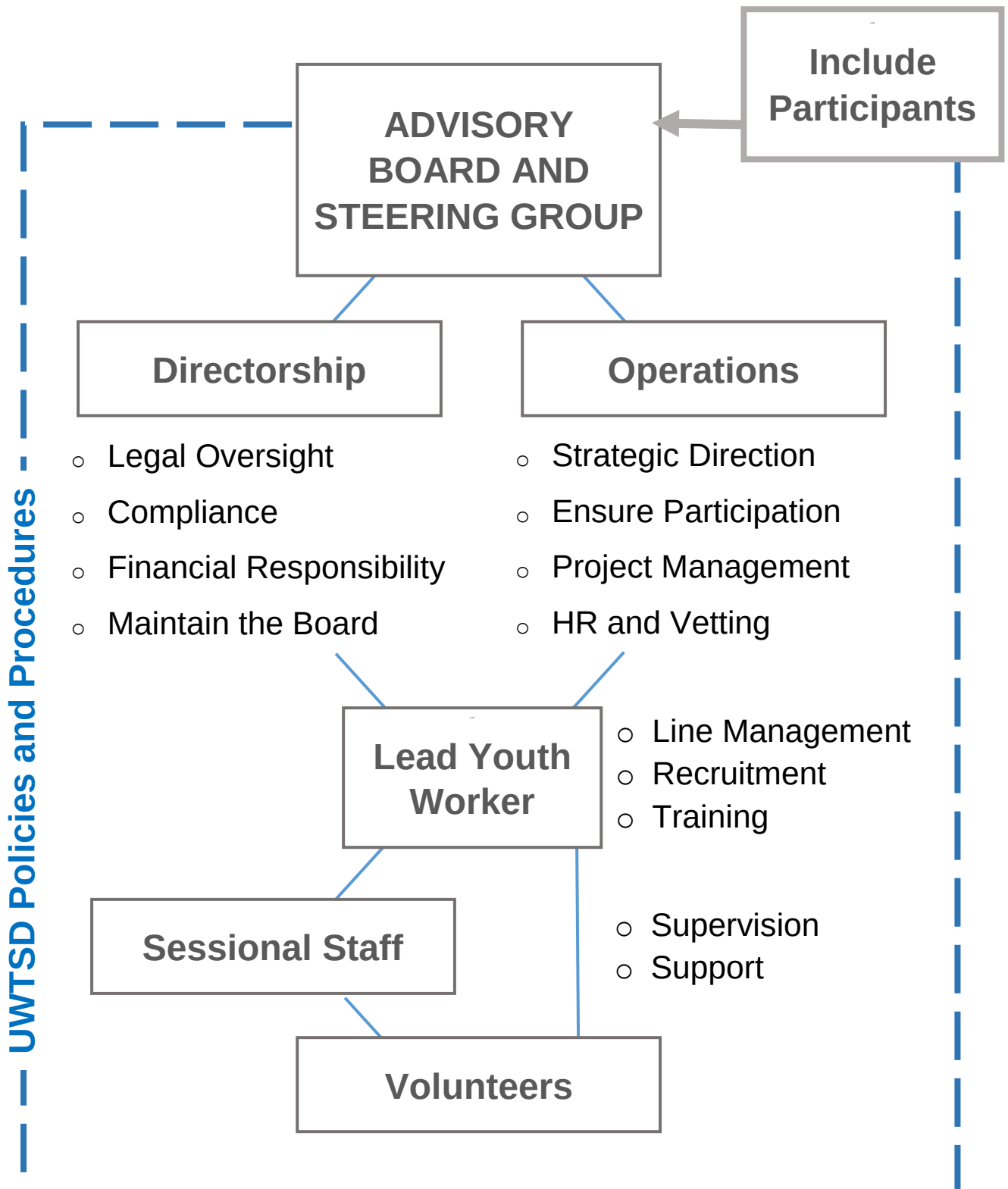
Following discussions with those engaging with the service, students will be invited to participate in YouToo curriculum planning and volunteer in supporting and leading sessions. Staff will facilitate off-campus trips such as bowling, walking and visits to local places of interest and plan a flexible programme of activities based on the needs and interests of young people.

Adopting a strengths-based approach, young people engaging with YouToo via social groups, activities or mentoring will also be invited to respond to emerging needs such as mental health and issues raised by participants, through actively planning and designing campus workshops and drop-ins to offer to peers. These events will be facilitated with the support of project staff, university services and external professionals where necessary.

The Operational Plan (Section 6) defines performance indicators, timings and quality assurance measures for the objectives discussed above.

3. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The following diagram represents the management structure of YouToo for operational and accountability purposes. The project will adopt UWTSD's own policies and procedures framework and develop policy guidance where necessary to clarify how procedures are to be applied across organisational boundaries.



4. MARKET

A university campus can be perceived as a micro-community, where students generally look to social opportunities and services within the community itself. Excluding external social venues (pubs, nightclubs, cinemas, etc.) and off-site service provision from NHS or third-sector groups such as MIND (mental health charity) available to students, the immediate 'market' for services offered can be limited to the campuses where the project operates. The project does not seek to compete with existing social opportunities and support services, but offers integrated support and an alternative social space compared to other options available to students. Simply put, the project actively seeks to 'fill the gaps' left by other groups and services whilst feeding back into some of these same groups and services the students who struggle to engage with them on their own. Therefore a competitor analysis cannot be offered.

Relevant services and opportunities available at UWTSD include:

- Campus Social Venue (Student Union Bar/Nightclub)
- Student Union (Representation, Advocacy)
- Various Clubs and Societies (Sports, Recreation and Common Interests)
- SoCom (weekly support group for students with social anxieties and communication difficulties)
- Personal Tutors
- UWTSD Student Services
 - Signposting Hub
 - Financial Advice and Support
 - Counselling Services
 - Mental Health Team
 - Accommodation Support
 - Learning Support

Target Audience

Target service-users are typically students who are disengaged from these groups and services, although the proposed service is open to all students at UWTSD. Hence the service is marketed to students more by default than it is a competitor to existing services.

The user profile may be summarised as follows:

Students at risk of social exclusion due to special educational needs, background (looked after children, young adult carers, black or minority ethnic background, low income background, LGBT+), social difficulties or emotional and behavioural issues.

Finance

Corporately, clients and beneficiaries of services offered include UWTSD and partner FE colleges. Besides social gains and capacity building in campus communities, the university stands to gain financially from the services offered, assuming the project will impact recruitment and retention. In terms of widening access and student engagement, every student recruited by the university represents a gross gain of £9000 per-year in tuition fees whilst failed retention and dropout figures represent equal losses. Therefore the proposed project will be marketed directly to UWTSD as the client on behalf of students as service-users. Subsequently, the project will be promoted to UWTSD students and potential students at FE colleges in the region through outreach events and engagement with the project.

Marketing and Development Strategy

The premise of the marketing strategy is that the project offers clear social benefits with a likelihood of full cost recovery. In the current climate for third sector services, full cost recovery is essential – competitively and from a subjective viewpoint of

sustainability and economic viability (Big Lottery Fund, 2006: 05). Furthermore, financial impact can be readily quantified. Although the effect on retention may be difficult to evidence, recruitment of FE students involved in the project will be possible to track. Meanwhile, socially, UWTSD corporate advertising promotes a strong ethos of personalised support, pointing to the impact of personal tutors and small lecture groups on learning and student experience. A transitional project concerned with social inclusion is not only consistent with this focus but actively promotes the same culture at FE to the students most likely to consider joining UWTSD for the level of additional support available. Through engagement with the project, students at FE will build relationships with existing students involved with the project at HE. High success marketing relies on personal connections and relationships with service-users (Abraham, 2015: 116). Positioning the project 'in the market' for service-users before they advance to HE allows them to benefit from the service and realise value – investing personally before they invest financially (Abraham, 2015: 126-133). Indirectly, having the choice of where to invest their education loan also makes young people financial clients of the project.

Marketing the project financially to UWTSD (or any other university) can be regarded as ethically neutral. However, the implications of using youth work practice in the 'market' of higher education and building relationships with young people that may translate to financial gain does skirt ethical boundaries (Welsh Government, 2012: 08-09) even in a non-profit situation. The counter-argument is that the young people involved are in receipt of services before recruitment, they stand to benefit directly from resulting services once they invest and they engage at an age where they are fit to make informed choices about their destination at HE. The fact that young people indirectly fund the project actually empowers them practically to determine the continuation of the project in a way that cannot be said of politically-driven public services. Furthermore, if the project proves effective and sustainable, the 'purchase-power' of young people engaging with the project at HE may impact the practice of youth work itself by drawing further practice into this area of the field (see below).

In terms of strategic development, the following table summarises development focus in the short to long-term:

Project Stage	Development Focus
Short Term (Years 1-3)	- Start-up investment / staff recruitment. - Research and development of resources / core curricula. - Service promotion (students). - Wider service promotion (academic journals, youthworkwales.org.uk, education conferences).
Medium Term (Years 3-5)	- Performance data from the 3-year pilot can be used to market the project to other universities in the region. - Offer to pilot scheme in additional universities/locations supported by UWTSD Youth and Community fieldwork placements.
Long Term (Years 5-10)	- Develop in-house training scheme via UWTSD Youth and Community fieldwork and recruit full-time managers for projects facilitated at other universities. Create a direct study-employment route for successful interns. - Integrate youth and adolescent mentoring into the current Youth and Community Work course at UWTSD as a practice module. - Establish FE-HE transitions as a standard area for youth work practice in Wales and the UK.

5. PROJECT COSTS

The project has an operating budget of £50,000 pa. A cost summary is presented below based on project delivery to all 3 campuses of UWTSD in South Wales.

Item	Cost (£)
Ongoing Salary Costs	
Youth Worker (Part-Time) <i>42 weeks pa</i> <i>3 days (total 22.5hrs) @ £13 p/hr</i>	12,285
Sessional Staff x2 (Trainee Youth Workers) <i>38 weeks pa</i> <i>2 evenings, 1 afternoon (total 16hrs ea) @ £9.00 p/hr</i>	10,944
Holidays and Sickness (5.6wks +10%)	5573.70
Accountant	3,000
Additional Costs (NICs, pension contributions, etc.) @ 15%	3934.35
Subtotal (A)	35,737.05

Recurring Operating Costs	
Insurance (employment and public liability)	2,000
Recruitment (staff and volunteers)	300
DBS Checks	600
Training and Staff Development	1,200
Publicity and Social Media	2,000
Travel	3,000
Mobile Phone x3	900
Stationary and Postage	500
Miscellaneous/Contingency	1500
Subtotal (B)	12,000

Total Recurring Costs (A+B) Year (1)	47,737.05
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Start-up Costs	
Mobile Sound System x3	1,200
Extension Leads and Peripherals	100
Storage Containers (heavy duty to transport resources)	150
Miscellaneous Activity Resources	1,500
Games and Sports Equipment	500
Basic Catering Equipment (kettle/flasks/cups/containers, etc)	100
Mobile Signage/Banners	1000
Laptop (notebook) x 3	750
Subtotal (C)	5,300

Recurring Costs (A+B)	47,737.05
Start-up Costs (C)	5,300
Total Costs, Year (1)	53,037.05
*Shortfall	-3,037.05

* Shortfall to be met through 3 fundraising launch events (1 per-campus) to raise project awareness and create a sense of ownership of the project and resources among young people and staff.

Refreshments/consumables, additional activities and ad-hoc projects can also be resourced through a voluntary subs charge to participants (£1.00 per-session).

6. OPERATIONAL PLAN

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure delivery of high quality youth work, activities must be planned (see Section 2), monitored (also see Section 3) and evaluated effectively, involving young people in these processes (Youth Work Wales Review Group, 2013: 07).

In order to evaluate their work, youth workers must develop tools/methods to:

- (a) Identify positive benefits for young people**
- (b) Evaluate quality of service**
- (c) Reflect on and develop personal practice through self-assessment**

(Learning and Skills Improvement Service, 2012: 13; YWWRG, 2013: 07)

This will be achieved in each of the areas above as follows:

Outcomes for young people

Benefits to young people will be monitored and measured using a distance-travelled measurement tool (O'Grady, 2017) applied 2-3 times across a young person's involvement in the project. Self-completed by participants to measure self-efficacy, the tool is based on the expected outcomes for young people (11-25 year-olds) involved in youth work, found in the National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014-18 (Welsh Government 2014, page 07-08). Although the tool is youth-specific, it will also be used to measure outcomes for participants outside the age-range for youth work.

Service Quality

Quality of practice will be evaluated by young people discussing their experiences and relating these back to the Pillars of Youth Work: Educative, Expressive, Participative, Inclusive and Empowering (YWWRG, 2013: 06). Since youth work is a values-driven

profession, service quality can be measured by how well practice embodies, promotes and adheres to these values (O'Grady, 2017). This evaluation exercise, developed through previous fieldwork (O'Grady, 2017), includes participants' personal reflection, group discussion, and individual video or written interviews at the end of the academic year. Staff are also line-managed and supervised through the project, overseen by the steering group (see Section 3).

Self-Assessment (Staff)

Reflection and self-assessment will be facilitated through weekly team meetings including sessional staff and key volunteers at each campus respectively. Led by the lead worker, team members will review the previous week's activity sessions and reflect on critical incidents through Action Learning Sets. Where staff are unable to perceive issues on their own, the group will use a JoHarri tool (Sapin, 2013: 69) to utilise peer support in recognising challenges and develop solutions as a team. Alternatively staff can follow up issues individually during supervision. Applying the reflective cycle to their work allows workers to develop and improve practice as a result.

[(d) Stakeholder Performance Measures]

Recognising the context of this youth and community project is a formal education setting where stakeholders apply their own performance measures, see Appendix (i) for UWTSD Widening Access performance indicators related to the WACE Strategy. Key monitoring data includes the following items:

- Number of wider access participants engaged in one or more sessions.
- Number of FE students engaged in Stage 2 Transition continuing to HE Recruitment.

Each successful recruitment represents a financial gain for UWTSD (just 6 students recruited at HE recovers the full annual costs of the project). Widening access also develops the public profile of UWTSD as an inclusive institution.

Operations Timeline

Although developmental targets will add operations in years 3 onwards, key operations annually are summarised below.

[illegible]

February	Prepare mentors to support FE students to complete Personal Statements/UCAS applications. Steering Group Meeting (2) Response Workshop (b) Off-site activity/event/visit.
Spring March-April	FE Project (eg. Dragons' Den Challenge). FE Taster Days at UWTSD. Off-site activity (weekly walks). Volunteering Drive. Schedule Steering Group Meeting (Jun). Brief mentors on exit/transitions strategy.
Spring-Summer May-July (Many students leave campus/lectures are less frequent)	Response Workshop (c) Off-site activity (weekly walks, beach trips, BBQs). Steering Group Meeting (3). Begin annual project review: > Participant evaluation of project. > Participant self-efficacy tool (final assessment). > Review stakeholder measures. Prepare mentors to support students for the transition to employment/further study. Summer/Leavers Party.
Summer Beginning July End August	Complete annual project review for evaluation. Design and proof publicity materials for next year. Outreach to wider access groups for Clearing. > Strategic outreach to external groups/services. > SW Reaching Wider Partnership contacts. Broker new funding/partnerships. Submit evaluation report to stakeholders/partners. Consolidate relationships with above. Receive publicity materials from printers. Social media engagement with coming students.

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