Care Experienced Young People’s Champions Boards

Guidance on Life Changes Trust Open Call Funding 2015-2018

LOTTERY FUNDED

The Life Changes Trust was established by the Big Lottery Fund with a National Lottery grant of £50 million to drive transformational improvements in the quality of life, well-being, empowerment and inclusion of people affected by dementia and young people with experience of being in care.
May 2015

The Life Changes Trust

The Life Changes Trust is an independent charity, established in April 2013 with a £50 million endowment from the BIG Lottery Fund Scotland.

The Trust’s mission is to drive improvements in the quality of life, well-being, empowerment and inclusion of two key groups in Scotland:

- Care experienced young people who have lived at home and away from home
- People with dementia and their unpaid carers (‘people affected by dementia’)

Delivering through collaboration, strategic funding and influencing activities, the Life Changes Trust will work with others to ensure that care experienced young people and people affected by dementia are supported to achieve their full potential, as valued members of their communities, and that their individual physical, social and emotional needs are met.

For information, visit the Trust’s website [www.lifechangestrust.org.uk](http://www.lifechangestrust.org.uk) and sign up for our e-bulletin, which is also available in hard copy on request.
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Introduction

Following extensive consultation with care experienced young people, practitioners and a wide range of interested organisations during 2014, the Life Changes Trust has decided to invest in the development of “Champions Boards”, which will drive change and sustainable improvements in the quality of life and well-being of care experienced young people across Scotland. Champions Boards are the foundation of our funding strategy over the next eight years to 2023. This commitment is reflected in our Care Experienced Young People Strategy (available on our website).

This guidance provides information to prospective applicants who are interested in applying for Trust funding to support a new, emerging or established Champions Board approach, operating at a local/regional or national level. This will also include ‘Communities of Interest’ Champions Boards with a particular focus on equalities issues for care experienced young people (see Section B for further details).

The Trust will also be providing funding for other, complementary Champions Board activities, including:

- Support for the development of a national Champions Board approach involving the Scottish Government and key national agencies such as Children’s Hearings Scotland, Scottish Social Services Council, National Health Boards such as Health Improvement Scotland, and other relevant national improvement and regulatory bodies (linked to the Scottish Access All Areas initiative)

- Investment in a Champions Board National Learning and Improvement Network (with an online element) to support local and national Champions Boards and linked activities to learn from each other, develop good practice, accelerate progress and improve impact
The Trust envisages that the synergy of our overall investment in Champions Boards (see Figure 1) will support systemic, transformational and sustainable change leading to improvements for all care experienced young people over time.
The Trust has allocated £2.3 million of its budget to invest in all of the above Champions Board developments for an initial three-year period (2015-18). Depending on progress and impact, as evidenced through evaluation, the Trust expects to continue to invest in the Champions Board approach until 2023. We see this approach as a platform for change and anticipate that future funding will be directed towards new models of working as a result.

More information about the Trust’s overall investment plans for Champions Boards is available on our website.
Section A: Background

Improving outcomes for care experienced young people

There is no question that outcomes for care experienced young people, particularly those making their first tentative steps towards adulthood and independence, could be significantly improved. While a growing concern about poor outcomes has led to some major legislative and policy developments, there is considerable uncertainty around how increased support and care for young people making this important transition will be realised within the context of ever-shrinking budgets.

It is within this context that the Trust has considered how best to contribute to and invest in creating transformational and sustainable improvements to the lives of care experienced young people. By transformational and sustainable, we mean improvements that make a significant difference to short, medium and long-term outcomes for our care experienced young people that will endure beyond our investment.

Why Champions Boards?

Champions Boards can create a powerful space for care experienced young people to meet and work with key decision-makers, service leads and elected members to influence the design and delivery of local services that impact directly on them. They can also be a useful and productive vehicle for professional officers attending to demonstrate what progress has been made toward achieving improvement goals, articulated by the young people themselves.

The Trust firmly believes that taking this approach is not only the right thing to do but will also contribute significantly to better funding and commissioning decisions, as young people can draw on their lived experience and work in partnership with politicians, civil servants, planners and commissioners to co-design services which better meet their needs and aspirations. Champions Boards also provide young people the opportunity to engage with and share their understanding of what works well with senior managers and heads of services in addition to front-line staff and practitioners across all sectors.
It is with this in mind that the Trust has decided to put significant investment into supporting the development of Champions Board approaches, building on the approach developed by Dundee Champions Board and other good practice.

We have taken the time to develop our thinking and plans, discussing and exploring key issues in depth with stakeholders from all sectors and with care experienced young people to ensure our investment approach is appropriate and effective. We recognise that the timeframe for this funding opportunity (see Section B) may be a challenge for those who are at the beginning of their Champions Board journey. However, the Trust is keen to support those with a desire to set up new Champions Board initiatives as well as those who wish to make further progress with an established initiative.

In addition to investing in the development of individual Champions Boards initiatives, the Trust will also support a Champions Board National Learning and Improvement Network, where the initiatives we fund and others can learn from each other, facilitating more rapid progress. The Trust’s investment in Champions Boards will also underpin and guide the delivery of all of the Trust’s priorities and investments for our care experienced young people programme to 2023.

What is a Champions Board?

While there is a burgeoning interest in the establishment of Champions Boards across Scotland, these can take different forms and there is currently no single agreed approach.

The term Champions Board is generally used to describe a formal forum with a specific focus on improving outcomes for looked after children/young people and care leavers. Currently, Champions Boards are usually established within a Local Authority or Community Planning Partnership, and involve senior representatives from key organisations, such as Local Authority Heads of Service, Elected Members with strategic responsibilities, Third Sector leaders and College representatives.
Some Champions Boards include care experienced young people as members in their own right, seeing them as equal partners in the process of improving their lives. Other Champions Boards follow a model where the involvement and influence of young people is through consultation and contact rather than regular active, joint participation in the meeting and in progressing follow-up actions.

However, having spoken to practitioners, decision-makers and young people across Scotland who are interested in the approach, there appears to be general acceptance that the Dundee Champions Board is the most mature and best functioning model operating at present. A number of other regional areas have subsequently approached representatives of the Dundee Board to gain an insight into its development journey.

The Trust also believes this area-based approach can be expanded to support improvements at a national level, for example, in relation to key equality themes and national policy.

**Young people’s participation**

We understand that establishing a group of young people who are able to participate fully and develop as young leaders committed to creating change for all looked after children and young people takes time. It is for this reason that we are committed to investing in various stages of what we see as an important change journey. This journey involves more than the set-up of the Champions Board itself, although this is an important step. It relies on creating the right conditions for care experienced young people to participate.

The Trust currently funds Who Cares? Scotland to deliver engagement and empowerment support to care experienced young people in Scotland.
We expect all the Champions Boards developments we fund to show their commitment to empowering care experienced young people and to form relevant partnerships with organisations such as Who Cares? Scotland, who have a track record in successfully engaging young people to influence the design and development of processes to support this work.

When thinking about the participation of care experienced young people and their development as leaders, the Trust would also expect applicants to consider the wider question of leadership, and how this will be supported at a number of levels as part of the wider Champions Board approach. Please see the section on the application process for further details on this.

**How can Champions Boards achieve long-term transformational change?**

The Trust believes that, by building on good practice and investing in the further development of the Champions Board approach across Scotland, we can build capacity in a number of ways, including:

- individually, amongst care experienced young people, whose confidence and skills will develop
- collectively, linking care experienced young people together, providing a focus for engagement work and complementing the delivery of Who Cares? Scotland and other agencies and organisations that support collective advocacy and the participation of care experienced young people
- among service providers and Corporate Parents, whose insight into the lives of care experienced young people will strengthen and whose access to creative, young people-informed solutions will improve, driving more rapid and effective improvements to the support they provide
- among practitioners and carers, including foster and kinship carers, who will have improved opportunities to take a relationship-based approach to the support they provide
• at community level, by improving public understanding of care experienced young people and improving their visibility and inclusion

• across organisations, partnerships and communities so they are more able to work effectively together and with care experienced young people to ensure young people’s rights to wellbeing, quality of life and inclusion are fully supported on an ongoing basis

We believe this approach has the potential to create lasting, positive change for care experienced young people as outlined above. However, each Champions Board and its processes and activities must be able to deliver improved outcomes and demonstrate commitment to and capacity for continuing improvement.

The Champions Board approach will also support Corporate Parents to fully implement parts 10 & 11 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Scottish Access All Areas Agenda for Change Manifesto currently being developed and driven forward in Scotland. While it is important that care experienced young people are at the heart of setting the agenda, the responsibility for change and action must still lie with Corporate Parents and professional officers.
Section B: Funding Guidance

Funding for New or Emerging Champions Boards

1. Area-based Champions Board Approaches¹:

The Trust is keen to fund geographical areas committed to establishing new Champions Boards or further developing their existing approach where they are able to demonstrate that they are already working with a group of care experienced young people and have in place robust plans to support their development as young leaders.

Area-based approaches can cover a single local authority/Community Planning Partnership area or area clusters appropriate to the local context.

The Trust wishes to fund initiatives where there is genuine commitment to supporting the development of an effective area-based Champions Board approach over the medium to long-term and which demonstrate that they either currently fulfil or are able and committed to fulfilling the following qualities:

- improving and sustaining the wellbeing and quality of life of care experienced young people, with a focus on 14-26 year olds
- a prevention and early intervention approach, and the protection and promotion of the human rights, equality and inclusion of care experienced young people
- respecting the needs and wishes of the looked after population, with the improvement agenda increasingly set by young people and focussed on priorities identified by them
- an innovation and improvement focussed approach, including service and system re-design, which is evidence-informed and based on current best practice and with mechanisms identified for supporting improvements at national and local levels

¹ Funding will be linked to a commitment towards implementation of parts 10 & 11 of The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the emerging Scottish Access All Areas Manifesto around ‘care proofing’.
• meaningful participation by young people in Champions Boards and related activities so they feel respected, listened to and empowered to participate in discussion, decision making, evaluation and learning

• support and engagement by local authority Senior Executives and Elected Members along with effective involvement by key local authority services such as Education Service, Social Work Service, Housing Service and Health services

• effective multi-sector and multi-agency partnership and collaboration including Local government, the health service, relevant third sector organisations, Further and Higher education

• sound working relationships between the lead professional(s) implementing the agreed actions and those in senior leadership roles (e.g. Chief Executives, Heads of Service, Senior Elected Members)

• a commitment to the journey, allowing young people time and support to build their own confidence and capability to contribute effectively, allowing other participants time to develop effective ways of working together and with young people, and allowing sufficient time for activities to be planned, implemented and evaluated

• an ongoing evaluation and learning approach to improve processes, activities and outcomes, including appropriate and effective evaluation by each initiative as well as participation in a Champions Board National Learning and Improvement Network

• a commitment to sustaining the Champions Board approach beyond Trust funding should evaluation demonstrate effectiveness
1.1 Stage of Development, Level and Duration of Funding

The Trust is offering three funding opportunities for area-based Champions Boards at this stage. All prospective applicants will compete a self-assessment questionnaire to establish their current position in relation to the Champions Board journey. The Trust will review these self-assessments to determine which level of funding is applicable.

- Up to £25k per annum for two years for new or emerging Champions Board approaches within local authorities or community planning partnerships (or other area-based configurations including clusters of neighbouring areas)

- Up to £50k per annum for two-to-three years for existing Champions Board approaches (as above) who have the foundations in place and wish to develop improvement plans

- Up to £75k per annum for two-to-three years for well-developed Champions Board approaches who are ready to implement their improvement plans

Applications can be for full or part funding from the Trust. Where part funding is applied for, applicants must show where additional funding has or will be secured from, which can be in cash, or kind. Total costs must be shown.

1.2 Who can apply?

We expect all area-based Champions Board applications to be from either an existing Champions Board or, where setting up a new Champions Board is proposed, from a lead organisation or existing partnership (such as a Community Planning Partnership) on behalf of the proposed Champions Board.

The geographical area covered by the current or planned partnership can be:
• A single local authority/community planning partnership area
• A cluster of neighbouring areas
• Other geographical configurations which suit local context

We welcome applications from areas which can already demonstrate a sound partnership ethos. At a minimum, partnerships must include representation from:

• Local Authorities (across services)
• Health Boards
• Third/Voluntary Sector
• Further/Higher Education
• Police Scotland

In addition, partnerships may wish to consider the inclusion of:

• relevant national public services
• the private sector
2. National Communities of Interest Champions Board Approaches:

The Trust will also fund the development of national Communities of Interest Champions Boards. These Boards will focus specifically on key equality themes where it is demonstrated that national level working could bring learning and benefits to care experienced young people who may be experiencing multiple levels of disadvantage and discrimination. This could be as a result of, for example, disability, race, sexuality and through extensive dealings with the criminal justice system.

This could include proposals that seek to improve outcomes for some of the harder to reach care experienced young people such as:

- care experienced young people with a disability
- care experienced young people who identify as LGBT
- care experienced young people from ethnic minority backgrounds

Given their track record of working on behalf of and championing the needs of these groups, we expect national Communities of Interest Champions Boards will most likely be led by a relevant third sector organisation. The approach proposed needs to effectively involve and empower care experienced young people. Applications should demonstrate how they will support effective involvement and contributions from national policy makers, national and local service providers and area-based Champions Boards as they develop.

Where organisations can demonstrate that they have already carried out significant engagement with care experienced young people to understand their views and priorities, the Champions Board proposal should set out proposed improvement priorities. Where such engagement has not yet taken place, the application should set out how care experienced young people will be involved in identifying and agreeing improvement priorities and then how these will be progressed.

The Trust wishes to fund initiatives where there is genuine commitment to supporting the development of effective national Champions Board approaches over the medium to long term.
Applicant organisations will need to show they have significant expertise on the community of interest group or theme which is the focus of their application.

In addition, applicants should show how implementation of their Communities of Interest Champions Board proposal will apply the following commitments in collaboration with young people and partners:

- improving and sustaining the wellbeing and quality of life of care experienced young people with a focus on ages 14-26

- a prevention and early intervention approach, and promotion and protection of the human rights, equality and inclusion of all care experienced young people

- respecting the needs and wishes of the looked after population, with the improvement agenda increasingly set by young people and focussed on priorities identified by them

- an innovation and improvement focussed approach, including service and system re-design, which is evidence-informed and based on current best practice and with mechanisms identified for supporting improvements at national and local levels

- meaningful participation by young people in the Champions Board and related activities so they feel respected, listened to and empowered to participate in discussion, decision making, evaluation and learning

- a commitment to the ‘journey’, allowing young people time and support to build their own confidence and capability to contribute effectively, to allow other participants time to develop effective ways of working together and with young people and to allow sufficient time for activities to be planned, implemented and evaluated.
• an ongoing evaluation and learning approach to improve processes, activities and outcomes - this would include appropriate and effective evaluation by each initiative as well as participation in a Champions Board National Learning and Improvement Network

• a commitment to sustaining the Champions Board approach beyond Trust funding should evaluation demonstrate effectiveness

2.1 Funding Level and Duration
The Trust is offering up to £40,000 per year for three years for new Communities of Interest Champions Board developments. All prospective applicants will complete a self-assessment questionnaire to establish their readiness to develop a new Champions Board.

Applications can be for full or part funding. Where part funding is applied for, applicants must show where additional funding has or will be secured from, which can be in cash or kind. Total costs must be shown.

2.2 Who Can Apply
We expect national Communities of Interest applications to be led by an appropriate third sector organisation, but all proposals must show evidence of wider, multi-agency involvement and plans to develop this further through the Champions Board. Eligible applicants are:

• Registered Charities (which may also be limited companies) who can demonstrate an ability to influence at national level
• Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations, who can demonstrate an ability to influence at national level

3. Outcomes for Care Experienced Young People
Like all young people moving into adulthood, young people moving out of the care system want to be able to say:
• I live in a place that suits my needs
• I am able to be as independent as possible
• I get the help I need when I need it
• I feel safe, listened to, valued and respected
• I am empowered to do the things that are important to me

Applicants for both area and national Champions Board initiatives will be expected to work with care experienced young people to agree the outcomes that they anticipate they will achieve as part of their final application submitted in October 2015. These can be reviewed and developed as the initiative develops if this is appropriate.

4. Evaluation

The Life Changes Trust is committed to effective evaluation and to working with the organisations and initiatives it funds so they are able to support appropriate evaluation. The Trust wishes its funded organisations/initiatives to undertake ongoing, self-evaluation as it believes that this supports continuous learning and improvement.

In addition to capturing reliable information on outcomes, the Trust wishes evaluation to be framed by relevant “theories of change” (that is how applicants expect the outcomes to be achieved) and to capture relevant information on context, “inputs” and “processes” so evaluation analysis can show the relationship between context, activity and outcomes. This “logic model” approach to evaluation supports measurement of outcomes and impact while showing how these outcomes were achieved and in what circumstances – that is “what works”.

The Trust believes that this type of evaluation not only captures evidence of what works, but also makes it easier to share and transfer learning to others, helping to support wider progress.
This is why the Trust is also funding a complementary Champions Board National Learning and Improvement Network.

The Trust expects applicants to include their initial evaluation plans in their final application submitted in October 2015. The Trust will provide further guidance to applicants on evaluation design during summer 2015. The Trust will also provide further evaluation support to funded organisations as appropriate.

5. Future Trust Funding for Champions Boards

While the Trust’s first phase of funding for Champions Boards as outlined above is for an initial two-to-three year funding period, the Trust anticipates that it will provide further funding and support for Champions Boards beyond this period. Further funding will be conditional on the evaluation of the initial funding showing commitment to the approach, effective practice and the achievement of positive outcomes or good progress towards these.

The Trust will also consider funding additional initiatives which did not apply for or secure funding in the first funding phase.

Trust funding and effective evaluation is also likely to help initiatives secure additional funding from other sources.

6. Application Process

The application process in itself will form an important part of what we hope will be a journey towards significantly improving outcomes for our care experienced young people through the vehicle of Champions Boards. We recognise that this will take time and commitment. Key elements such as establishing a group of young people who are fully supported to participate, securing buy-in and commitment from senior leaders and partnership working across sectors need to be in place to achieve this.
The Trust anticipates that the application process will take place over a six month period (May – October 2015) and will include three key stages, as follows.

**Stage 1: Self-assessment of Champions Board readiness and short outline of prospective proposal**

- Applicants complete the relevant self-assessment tool
- **Deadline for submission to the Life Changes Trust – 5pm on 11 June 2015**
- Self-assessment forms reviewed by the Trust, short-listed applicants invited to progress to Stage 2 and feedback provided to unsuccessful applicants

**Stage 2: Participation in developmental and planning residential course**

- One young person and one lead officer from each short-listed applicant will be expected to attend a 6-day residential course at Columba 1400 on the island of Skye, week commencing 16 August 2015
- The Trust will meet all costs
- The course will support short-listed applicants to explore different approaches to empowering young people and supporting transformational and sustainable change, build joint leadership and develop their plans for their final application
- Short-listed applicants will also be expected to attend two half-day information and planning events during July, location to be confirmed. These events provide an opportunity to work with Columba 1400 to prepare for the residential course in August 2015 and for the Trust to provide further guidance on the final application
Stage 3: Submission of final Champions Board proposal

- Additional application guidance will be available from August 2015
- **Deadline for submission to the Life Changes Trust – 5pm on 30th October 2015**
- Assessment of full proposals and due diligence checks
- Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by January 2016
- Funding for approved awards will be issued by March 2016, subject to satisfactory due diligence

**May**
- Open call announced (1 May)
- Champions Board Guidance and Self-assessment tool made available

**June**
- 1st deadline - submission of self-assessment form to Life Changes Trust (11 June)
- Applicants notified by 30 June if they have reached next stage and invited to attend Columba 1400 residential course week beginning 16 August

**July**
- Life Changes Trust & Columba 1400 information sessions and residential preparatory work

**16th - 20th Aug**
- Columba 1400 residential to develop vision, actions and next steps towards establishing a Champions Board network

**Sept**
- Follow up from Columba 1400 including a review of progress and next steps

**Oct**
- 2nd deadline - submission of full funding applications to the Trust (30 Oct)

**Nov/Dec**
- Assessment process including due diligence

**Jan 2016**
- Funding decisions
8. Contact

If you have any queries, please contact Heather Coady, Programme Director, Care Experienced Young People Programme at the Life Changes Trust:

heather.coady@lifechangestrust.org.uk

Direct dial: 0141 212 9612
Appendix 1

The Dundee approach

Dundee Champions Board has been operating for around five years, and has prioritised the full participation of care experienced young people as members of the Board from the outset. Key to their success has been buy-in from their champions who have understood the need for consistency in attendance over time and crucially demonstrated their commitment to the young people involved, building meaningful relationships as a result.

Dundee stakeholders recognised that to make participation genuine and meaningful, it would be necessary to invest in young people. They also agreed to invest the time which is needed for the Champions Board journey, in which the Board itself is only one element in a longer-term programme of change. This approach has led to policy and practice changes which more effectively meet the needs and support the aspirations of looked after children/young people and care leavers.

The approach in Dundee is for the agenda and key priorities to be set by the young people and often further developed by sub-working groups made up of Champions Board members, young people and support workers. This approach attempts to create a regular exchange between looked after children and young people and key strategic decision-makers involved in the delivery of services to them. In this way their views directly influence and shape how current and future services are designed and delivered in a way which is rooted in their own lived experiences.

Over time, the investment in a dedicated young person’s group has supported the development of collective advocacy as individual issues, concerns and solutions are elevated into a bigger discussion about how to improve things for the current and future looked after population.
This discussion is then carried forward to the forum of the Champions Board meetings, where decisions can be made and follow-up actions agreed. An additional forum, made up of practitioners and operational leads, supports the implementation of the agreed actions.

Therefore, the Champions Board itself, which meets three-to-four times per year, is one element of an overall approach. The success of this approach can be attributed to 3 key factors, namely:

- an active participation group of young people (facilitated and supported to undertake fun/creative activities as a route to developing its voice) which selects its own representatives for the Champions Board

- commitment to the Champions Board approach from local public and voluntary sector champions (particularly where there is strong endorsement from Chief Executives, Heads of Service and Senior Elected Leaders) and attendance at the Board by representatives who have the authority to make decisions

- a support group of staff working at practitioner/operational manager level to implement agreed actions

These three elements are interlinked and support one another. It is this type of Champions Board approach that the Trust is most interested in funding.