



CASE STUDY

Future Leaders, Future Leaders Programme

 Email

 Website

ABOUT

The Future Leaders Programme is a community-based youth leadership and anti-hate activism project working with young people (aged 16–18). The project mixes two cohorts of beneficiaries: aspiring youth activists dedicated to promoting social causes; and individuals with identified risk factors for extremism, some of whom are referred by local authorities, schools, social workers and Prevent teams. The project delivers six-month courses, covering a variety of topics, including guest sessions by various extremism experts. One stream of the project combines virtual and in-person delivery for groups of 150 students. The other stream is delivered entirely online but shares many of the same activities. In addition, beneficiaries also participate in a range of field trips to visit the UK's democratic and legal institutions. Through these activities, the project builds young people's resilience to hate and extremism while equipping them with the knowledge and skills to act as leaders in their communities. To this end, beneficiaries are also supported to launch their own anti-hate initiative promoting cohesion and tolerance in their schools.

BENEFICIARIES

600 young people (in-person)

1,004 young people (online)

16 boroughs and online



THEMES

Types of prejudice/discrimination: Racism; Religious intolerance; Anti-Muslim hate; Antisemitism; Extreme misogyny; Anti-LGBTQ+ hate; Anti-migrant hate.

Extremist ideologies: General; Far-right extremism; Islamist extremism; Misogynist extremism, incl. Incels; Mixed, unstable or unclear extremism.

Prevention topics: Understanding prejudice; Understanding extremism; Radicalisation/ radicalisation reporting; Counter-narratives; Media/ digital literacy; Hate crime/hate reporting; Bystander intervention; Anti-hate activism.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

In-Person Programme:

Leadership and Activism Course – This course consists of 20 weekly workshops delivered to groups of 150 beneficiaries, alternating between in-person and online delivery. The sessions explore a wide range of topics, including in-depth introductions to various extremist ideologies, narratives and counter-narratives; media and digital literacy; civic education; and presentations from former extremists, survivors and extremism experts. The course also includes practical skill-building workshops in conflict resolution, bystander intervention, incident reporting and public speaking.

Field Trips – Alongside the workshops, beneficiaries participate in at least one field trip, providing real-world exposure to the UK's democratic institutions and legal systems. Visits include Parliament, 10 Downing Street, Crown Courts and meetings with MPs, judges and civil servants, all focused on first-hand learning about democracy, civil liberties, the rule of law and the value of active citizenship.

Peer Mentoring – In addition to the core programme, 315 beneficiaries applied to receive a peer mentor who had taken part in the project in previous years. Through one-to-one catch ups, mentors worked with beneficiaries to provide support, advice and guidance

Online Programme:

Leadership and Activism Course – This course consists of 20 online workshops consisting of video lectures, virtual discussion groups and other interactive activities. The sessions explore the same topics as the in-person course and are completed weekly.



PROJECT RESULTS

In-Person Programme:

28%

increase in beneficiaries' awareness and concern about extremist ideologies and narratives, the radicalisation process and extremism's effects on individuals and society

25%

increase in beneficiaries' ability to critically engage with information on social media (i.e. digital literacy)

19%

increase in beneficiaries' sense of belonging in their communities

16%

increase in beneficiaries' tolerance for difference and diversity

26%

increase in beneficiaries' sense of community engagement and responsibility

29%

increase in beneficiaries' ability and intention to challenge prejudiced and hateful views

27%

increase in beneficiaries' ability and intention to conduct bystander interventions

'Very good'

quality of implementation (score of 0.80 out of 1.00) based on beneficiary ratings for the engagement, relevance and organisation of project activities

Online Programme:

26%

increase in beneficiaries' awareness and concern about extremist ideologies and narratives, the radicalisation process and extremism's effects on individuals and society

22%

increase in beneficiaries' ability to critically engage with information on social media (i.e. digital literacy)

21%

increase in beneficiaries' sense of community engagement and responsibility

25%

increase in beneficiaries' ability and intention to challenge prejudiced and hateful views

22%

increase in beneficiaries' ability and intention to conduct bystander interventions

'Good'

quality of implementation (score of 0.75 out of 1.00) based on beneficiary ratings for the engagement, relevance and organisation of project activities

TESTIMONIAL

One beneficiary, B, was referred to the project through Channel after being identified as engaging with extremist content online and showing signs of increasing social withdrawal. B struggled to form friendships and often sought connection in online spaces, many of which promoted extremist narratives as a substitute for real-world interaction. Through the Future Leaders Programme, B took part in workshops, was paired with a peer mentor, attended enrichment visits and gradually began engaging more confidently with others in the group. By the end of the project, B had formed positive relationships with some of their peers and was no longer relying on harmful online communities for all their social interaction. They described feeling 'part of something' for the first time and shared that Future Leaders had given them a new way to think about and trust people.