

A young woman with long, wavy red hair is shown in profile, looking towards a man who is writing on a brick wall. The man is wearing a grey hoodie and a blue denim jacket, and is using a green marker to write. The wall is made of light-colored bricks with some peeling paint. The text on the wall reads "young people need MODELS, not CRITICS." in green, blue, and red markers. A white rounded rectangle in the top left corner contains the #iwill logo and the title of the strategic plan.

#iwill

# #iWill Scotland Strategic Plan

2021-2026

young people need  
MODELS, not CRITICS.

## Introduction

This is a critical time for young people and our society as a whole, as we seek to build forward better after the COVID-19 pandemic. This Strategic Plan outlines #iWill in Scotland's vision, strategic direction and key outcomes for 2021 – 2026.

It provides an overview of how we will achieve our vision of a culture in Scotland where participation in volunteering and youth social action is accessible and inclusive for all young people. A culture where young people, regardless of personal situations or background, can take action, make a difference and influence change.

This plan outlines the impact we will make with young people, cross-sector organisations and decision-makers across Scotland. It champions the Power of Youth and has young people at its core. The plan for growth of the #iWill movement in Scotland has been developed by the Scottish #iWill Advisory Group, Scotland's #iWill Ambassadors and diverse #iWill stakeholders.

Over the next five years we will continue to grow the Power of Youth movement which champions the social action and volunteering young people are undertaking and the difference they are making in communities across Scotland. Young people have the creativity, skills and drive to make the world a better place, it is our vision to see a Scotland where all young people have that opportunity and where social action is embedded within our culture.

## #IWILL SCOTLAND

### The Story so Far...

The #iWill campaign was launched in November 2013 by HRH The Prince of Wales and the leaders of the three main political parties in Westminster with the aim to make participation in social action - such as volunteering, fundraising, mentoring, campaigning and activism - the norm for young people aged 10 to 20. The charity, Step Up To Serve, was established to co-ordinate the #iWill campaign at a UK level by bringing together campaign partners; communicating evidence about the benefits of youth social action and challenging organisations to do more to champion the #PowerOfYouth. As was always intended, the time limited charity Step up to Serve will close their doors at the end of December 2020.

Since 2016 YouthLink Scotland have been the strategic and operational lead for the #iWill campaign in a Scottish context with lead strategic partners Young Scot, Education Scotland and Scottish Government. We have been collaborating with cross-sector organisations, supporting Scotland's 32 #iWill Ambassadors and championing the Power of Youth!

The campaign has had significant progress both across the UK and in Scotland:

- The establishment of the **Scottish #iWill Advisory Group**, involving strategic cross-sector partners, has supported the growth of the campaign in respective sectors and raised awareness of the benefits youth social action more broadly.





- **Effective communication campaigns** during #iWill Week and Volunteers Week have contributed to the broad reach and visibility of the Power of Youth vision, as an example #iWillWeek had 1,270 engagements (likes, comments, shares or retweets) in 2019 and a potential reach of 1,636,807.
- There has been a continued **growth in partnerships** with the number of pledging organisations now sitting at above 90 in Scotland and their contributions inspiring more organisations across Scotland to embed youth social action into their culture and practice.
- Each year new **#iWill ambassadors** have joined the Scotland team, sharing their social action stories and inspiring others to do the same. We now have a total of 32 young people as #iWill Ambassadors in Scotland.

We recognise and celebrate the achievements that the #iWill Campaign has already had but acknowledge the gaps that still exist and the work that still needs to be done in Scotland to achieve our vision.

## Evolving #iWill beyond 2020...

Although Step up to Serve will be closing their doors at the end of 2020, it doesn't mean the end of #iWill. Work is ongoing across the UK to ensure a legacy of #iWill beyond 2020 and on Power of Youth Day Tim Frew and Louise Macdonald, Co-Chairs of the Scottish #iWill Advisory Group, released a [joint statement](#) with the commitment to continuing to grow the Power of Youth in Scotland beyond 2020.

Despite the progress already made in Scotland there is a continued appetite and need for #iWill to continue to grow and evolve. Cross-sector partner engagement and #iWill Ambassador engagement has indicated that there is overwhelming support for #iWill to continue in Scotland beyond 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance and relevance of the role that young people play in society through their volunteering and social action. There are and will be significant opportunities for young people to become more actively involved in volunteering and social action to support a post COVID-19 recovery to help build forward better.

The national [Lockdown Lowdown](#) survey indicated that the pandemic has had a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of young people and there is a growing concern about the future prospects of young people with reduced opportunities for employment. There is a strong possibility that the current socio-economic participation gap in volunteering and attainment will further widen. There is also recognition that young people are the [second most at risk group of social isolation](#) which will have been further exacerbated during the pandemic.

Continued recognition and advocacy of the benefits of volunteering and youth social action under the #iWill banner will help to contribute to bridging the socio-economic gap, ensure young people across Scotland have access to high quality youth social action opportunities and contribute to their positive health and wellbeing.

Additionally, through ongoing engagement with over 1000 young people and youth work stakeholders for the next edition of the National Youth Work Strategy it has been highlighted that youth volunteering, youth voice and youth participation are key priorities to be included going forward.

The [Young People in Scotland Survey 2019](#) has highlighted that 48% of young people are currently involved in formal volunteering and although that figure is almost double that of the adult participation rate, it still leaves 52% of young people not accessing those opportunities. That is still too many young people, particularly from low-income backgrounds, not participating in youth social action.

With the upcoming [incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots Law](#) there is further opportunity for #iWill to support the vision of a Scotland where children and young people are at the heart of future ambitions and their rights a priority through continuing to champion the importance and benefits of youth social action.

And furthermore, in response to the [National Volunteering for All Framework](#) there is a valuable and opportune prospect in bringing together the strength of both the #iWill

movement and the [YouthVIP Recommendations](#) to support the vision of an inclusive volunteering landscape in Scotland that benefits young people, their communities and wider society.

Young people are not just the leaders of tomorrow, they are taking action, making a difference and building a better world today. A continued #iWill in Scotland provides the platform for more young people to experience the benefits of youth social action, have their voice heard on issues that matter to them and significantly contribute to the policy landscape that envisions Scotland as the [best place for children and young people to grow up](#).

### Link to UK #iWill 2.0

#iWill has been, and will continue to be, a UK wide movement encouraging organisations across all sectors to think meaningfully about the opportunities they are providing young people to take action and make a difference. Although Step up to Serve will close their doors as the current secretariat, there are plans in place to continue to evolve and grow the Power of Youth across the UK.

Moving forward #iWill Scotland will continue to work closely with fellow coordinators of networks and partnerships in key sectors and other devolved nations, as well as the new co-ordination hub which will facilitate connections and collaboration to join-up activity in support of the UK #iWill Impact Goals.

The co-chairs of the Scottish #iWill Advisory group will sit on the new UK wide Cross-sector partnership which will be responsible for shaping the collective strategy towards achieving the UK #iWill Impact Goals.

#iWill activity in Scotland will be distinct, but it will also align with the UK vision, allowing room and flexibility for devolved contexts, policy and frameworks.

This document sets out the intentions of #iWill in Scotland. There is more information on the UK strategy and campaign activities [here](#).





## Vision, Mission & Values

Our Vision is a culture in Scotland where participation in youth social action and volunteering is inclusive and accessible for all young people. A culture where young people, regardless of personal situations or background, can take action, make a difference & influence change.

Our Mission is to bring together cross-sector organisations under the #iWill banner with a shared ambition to support and provide young people with meaningful volunteering and social action opportunities and champion the Power of Youth in Scotland.

### Our Values

- **Inclusive:** We will role model and champion a volunteering and social action landscape that is inclusive for all young people in Scotland.
- **Collaborative:** Our approach will be collaborative with both partner organisations and young people across Scotland and we value strong partnerships as core to the movement.
- **Youth-Led:** Young people will be at the heart of all decision-making and strategy for #iWill in Scotland. Their voices will be included and valued in all aspects of #iWill Scotland's activity.
- **Bold:** Our activity to support our vision for young people in Scotland will be bold, brave and ambitious. We will be innovative in our approaches, challenge the status quo and influence positive and sustainable change.

## Strategic Outcomes

# Take Action Make a Difference Influence Change

This plan outlines #iWill in Scotland's three key strategic outcomes for the next five years. All of the #iWill activity will be focused on delivering these three priority areas:

1. An increase in the number of young people who are taking action and making a difference across Scotland through high quality formal and informal volunteering and social action.
2. An increase in the number of young people from under-represented groups, particularly those from low income and ethnic minority backgrounds, who are making a difference through high quality volunteering and social action across Scotland.
3. An increase in the number of organisations demonstrating their commitment to the Power of Youth by offering high quality opportunities for young people to volunteer in formal and informal settings, take social action, make a difference and influence change.



## Making the Vision a Reality...

The below section outlines the six pillars of activity that will be undertaken to achieve the #iWill Scotland outcomes. Additionally, there will be annual delivery plans developed by YouthLink Scotland and its lead strategic partners, and approved by the #iWill Scottish Advisory group. These work plans will take the high level activities from the outline below and provide more detail on how we will action them, when they will be delivered, by whom, and how we will know we have made progress.

The following is a high level outline of how we will go about achieving the #iWill in Scotland vision and outcomes:

### 1. Youth Engagement & Leadership

For #iWill to continue to grow in Scotland, youth engagement and leadership opportunities must be at its core. It is our ambition in Scotland to build on the current #iWill Ambassador model to further develop opportunities for young people to enhance skills, take action and inspire others with their social action journey.

The Ambassador model will seek to recruit a group of 15 young people, aged 12 -25 and from diverse backgrounds, in Scotland each year to take on a leadership role within the movement. The role will be time limited for a two year period to allow other young people the opportunity. After that period young people will transition into a #iWill Ambassador Alumni group where they can continue to promote youth volunteering and social action through their own networks and take on a mentoring role for future #iWill ambassadors in a less time consuming capacity. The #iWill Ambassador Leadership role will include involvement in:

- **Campaign Communications**

#iWill Ambassadors will champion the Power of Youth through both their own communication channels and through social media takeovers on the #iWill Scotland channels. They will be involved in shaping decisions and co-designing joint communication campaign activity e.g. #iWill Week and will develop youth-led content to share with organisations and young people across Scotland that promotes volunteering and youth social action.

- **Peer Education and Mentoring**

#iWill Ambassadors will aim to inspire and motivate other young people to take in volunteering and social action by sharing their own volunteering and social

action journey through a peer education model in schools, youth groups and other youth engagement settings. The peer education training will be co-designed and shaped with the #iWill Ambassadors. #iWill Alumni can also take on a voluntary mentoring role to help support future #iWill Ambassadors in their leadership roles.

- **Strategic Development**

#iWill Ambassadors will be at the core of the strategic development of the movement in Scotland. The Scottish #iWill Advisory Group will be co-chaired by an #iWill Ambassadors. Decisions on #iWill Scotland activity will be shaped with #iWill Ambassadors involvement and they will play an integral role in the recruitment of the next cohort of #iWill Ambassadors.

All the above activities will be supported through a Youth Work approach led by #iWill National Development Officer at YouthLink Scotland in collaboration with Young Scot, who will provide core codesign support. An #iWill Ambassador training model will be developed and facilitated after recruitment to provide the adequate support and skills development needed to take on the leadership roles confidently. Ongoing support will be through regular gatherings, a combination of in-person and digital, and a digital platform e.g. Basecamp will be established and monitored for regular communications and opportunity sharing.

### 2. Connecting Young People to Volunteering and Social Action

Whilst growing the number of opportunities for young people to volunteer and take social action is key to #iWill in Scotland (see below) we also want to ensure that young people are inspired to take action and connected to opportunities.

Young Scot will further develop their #iWill Scotland Rewards programme, embedded as part of the Young Scot membership offer. This programme:

- Invites organisations who offer volunteering and social action activities to young people to sign up to be a Young Scot Rewards partner – offering “Young Scot Reward” points to young people who take part
- Encourages Young Scot members to sign up to volunteering and social activity incentivised in this way, allowing them to gain points to add to their Young Scot Rewards Account
- Promote these opportunities in schools, in partnership with Education Scotland

- Works with key partners to negotiate “Rewards and Entitlements” for young people to “claim” using their points – these Rewards and Entitlements would only be open to young people who have completed an “#IWill Scotland” activity and would be relevant to the programme – e.g. work experience opportunities.

The further development of this programme would require funding (it has been operating “in kind” until now) and offers huge potential for development.

### 3. Growth through Partnerships

A key strength of #IWill across the UK has been bringing together partners from across all sectors of society to act on a shared ambition that offers young people meaningful opportunities to take action and influence change and inspire others to do the same.

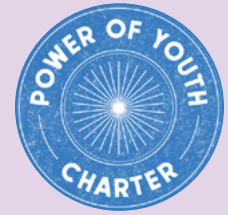
In order to maximise the impact of the #IWill movement and achieve the desired outcomes, cross-sector collaboration needs to remain a focus moving forward. The cross-sector approach will remain focussed on the following six sectors: Youth Work, Formal Education, Health & Social Care, Business, Environment and the Voluntary Sector. However, there will be flexibility within that approach for individual organisations and as the movement continues to develop there is potential to increase the scale beyond those six sectors.

The new model will build on the previous pledge system and will align with the UK cross-sector collaboration to enable organisations to be part of something bigger. The pledge model will evolve into a Power of Youth Charter that will be aligned across the UK but co-ordinated in Scotland for Scottish organisations.

The objective of the Power of Youth Charter would be to set a minimum baseline and greater clarity for organisations and policymakers on how to grow volunteering and social action within their organisation’s strategies and operations. It provides a framework for organisations to empower more young people to take action, make a difference and influence change and showcase their commitments to inspire and motivate others to get involved. The charter model will resemble a similar structure to the below but allow for flexibility to be adapted to context if required:

## #IWill Scotland

### Power of Youth Charter



All young people should be empowered to volunteer, take social action, make a difference and influence change. As part of our commitment to young people, we therefore commit to take action on the following areas:

#### 1. Prioritise empowering young people to volunteer and take social action

We will have an action plan outlining how we will support more young people with diverse lived-experiences, particularly those from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds, to volunteer and be involved in positive social action.

#### 2. Open up our decision-making structures

We will offer opportunities for young people, particularly from low income and ethnic minority backgrounds, to be part of our organisations decision-making.

#### 3. Work in partnership

We will work collaboratively with young people, organisations and policy-makers locally and nationally to create more high quality opportunities, reach young people from low income and ethnic minority backgrounds and realise the potential of the #IWill Scotland goals.

#### 4. Evidence the benefits of youth social action

We will capture and share insights, stories and data on how we are working with young people, and the positive impact this has on them, our organisation, their communities and wider society.

#### 5. Recognise and celebrate young people

We will use our communication channels to advocate for and celebrate young people as positive and powerful changemakers.



Beyond simply signing-up to the principles and areas of activity within the charter, organisations would then make commitments outlining how they intend to meet those principles and would be required to share updates annually on how they are making progress. There would not be an expectation to deliver all of the commitments from the outset. However, organisations should be able to demonstrate meaningful progress against each commitment by the end of 2025.

In addition to more active reporting of progress against the new Charter, accountability would also be driven through a new "Power of Youth Index" in Scotland - a benchmarking tool organisations can use to assess the extent to which they are empowering young people through volunteering and social action in comparison with other organisations.

Through #iWill Scotland communications, spotlights will also be placed on organisations across Scotland who are best supporting and empowering young people to be changemakers to inspire and motivate others to join the movement and create a culture across Scotland. Both #iWill Ambassadors and the Scottish #iWill Advisory Group would play a key role in helping to create accountability. Organisations across Scotland from different sectors will also be included in UK sector specific spotlights to assess the extent to which they are empowering young people in comparison with other organisations within their sector.

Organisations would sign up to the Power of Youth Charter in Scotland but would automatically be added to the UK List of organisations unless they opted out at the sign up stages. Scottish Organisations who sign up at a UK level would be redirected to the Scottish website and Power of Youth Charter.

Additionally organisations will be able to benefit from signing the Power of Youth charter by accessing new ideas and perspectives that enhance their organisation's work and impact; Strengthening their organisation's relationship with its younger stakeholders by showing them that they care about their views and impact; Setting an example to other organisations within and beyond the sector that encourages, inspires and motivates them to embrace and grow the power of youth and gaining access to networks, training and resources through the #iWill Partnership that support the delivery of the Charter commitments as well as receive quarterly newsletter containing #iWill Scotland updates and information.

## 4 Collaborative Communications

Effective and collaborative communications is key to building a successful #iWill movement in Scotland. We need young people and organisations to know the benefits of youth volunteering and social action and feel inspired and motivated to get involved. Communication plans will include:

### 4.1 Social Media

There will be the creation of specific #iWill Scotland social media channels on both Twitter and Instagram to provide organisations and young people with platforms to receive updates and hear about social action stories, research and data to feel inspired to get involved. These channels would be managed by the #iWill National Development Officer at YouthLink Scotland and content would be co-designed with our strategic partners and #iWill Ambassadors where appropriate.

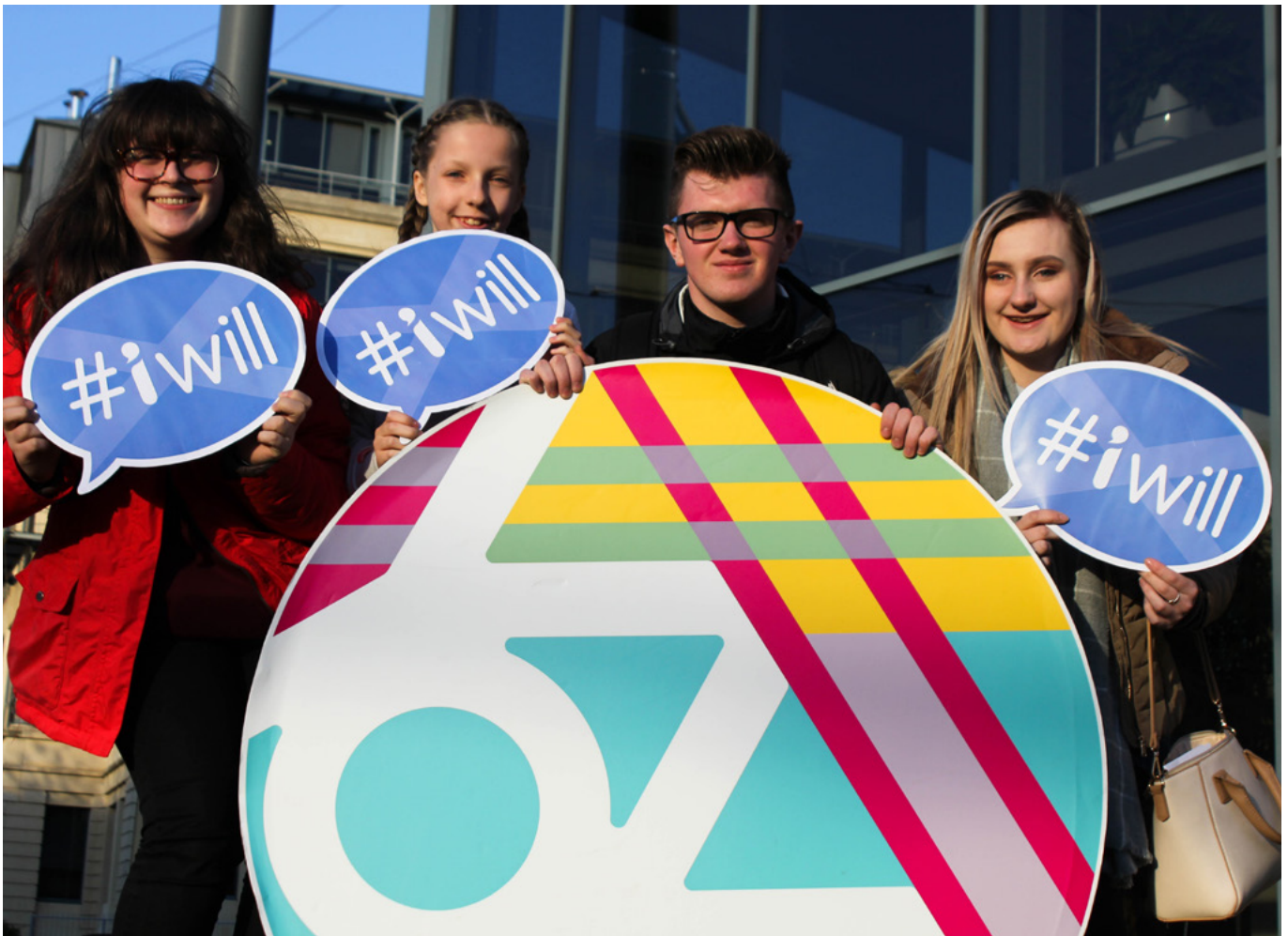
The purpose of the social media channels in Scotland would be to:

- Share upcoming opportunities to get involved in the movement in Scotland and signpost to Scottish partner events.
- Promote good practice through Scottish partner blogs, takeovers, etc.
- Communicate data and evidence about the benefits of youth volunteering and social action in Scotland.
- Challenge Scottish organisations to do more sign up to the Power of Youth Charter.
- Provide Scotland's iWill Ambassadors with a platform to inspire and motivate both young people and organisations through their youth social action.
- Share UK wide content that is relevant to a Scottish audience.

### 4.2 Joint Communications Activities

Sharing ownership of the #iWill movement with Scottish strategic lead partners and #iWill Ambassadors through key collaborative communication activities is important in highlighting the strength of cross-sector partnership; demonstrating the impact of the Power of Youth and inspiring organisations and young people in Scotland to get involved. This sort





of activity will be co-designed with young people and include key moments in the year such as:

- #iWillWeek in November
- Power of Youth Day in Volunteers Week
- Other anchor Days e.g. International Youth Day
- Spotlights on Sectors e.g. #iWill4Nature, Health & Social Care, Business etc.

Although a focus will be on digital and social media communications, there will also be joint activity around media and public affairs; influencing policy on volunteering and youth social action plus events, workshops and networks. For UK moments such as #iWillWeek, the #iWill Scotland will align as much as possible with activity across the UK to enable partners to be part of something bigger whilst tailoring the content to a Scottish context.

#### 4.3 #iWill Partner Newsletter

A new #iWill Scotland newsletter will be circulated to partners who are signed up to the Charter on a quarterly basis but can be more frequent depending on demand. The purpose of the newsletter will be to:

- Share #iWill Scotland updates, information and news.
- Share training and events that support youth volunteering and social action.
- Shine a light on good practice from organisations across Scotland.

Partners will be able to submit content to the newsletter in advance and the #iWill Ambassadors will have a key role in the design and content. Each newsletter will include a note/reflection from an #iWill Ambassador.

#### 4.4 #iWill Scotland Website

We will seek to resource and develop a dedicated platform for #iWill in Scotland to share #iWill Scotland updates; collect resources; promote good practice through blogs and case studies.

## 5. Evidence & Impact

Demonstrating the impact and benefits of youth volunteering and social action is core to the understanding progress on the #iWill Scotland impact goals. In addition to the Power of Youth Index that will gather progress from partners, other evidence gathering activities will include:

- Representation on the UK wide Data, Quality and Assurance group and input to the UK National Youth Social Action Survey.
- Strong Partnership with Volunteer Scotland on the Young People in Scotland Survey design and any other relevant research opportunities.
- Strong partnership with Edinburgh University to support a student placement to undertake research on a relevant topic to youth volunteering and social action.

Impact will be demonstrated throughout the year on social media channels as well as in an annual impact report produced with our national strategic lead partners.



## 6. Sustainable Investment

Scotland has funding secured until 2022, the evolution of the UK movement is five years. In order to continue to grow the #iWill movement in Scotland, additional funding will need to be secured for a further four years to support the infrastructure required to deliver the key activity by YouthLink Scotland and Young Scot as core delivery partners. The Scottish #iWill Advisory Group will have a key role in securing further investment to support the infrastructure of the movement beyond 2022.

In addition to securing funding to support infrastructure there will also be collaboration with funding partners across Scotland, and the UK, to secure and strengthen funding opportunities that will enable cross-sector organisations to provide new, and build on existing, opportunities for young people to take part in high quality youth social action and volunteering. This could take a variety of formats such as an #iWill small grants fund that can support organisations to grow the Power of Youth in both their strategy and operations. Any new funds will be mindful of, and work in partnership with, other volunteering programmes and frameworks in Scotland to ensure alignment and avoid duplication.

As well as seeking new funding opportunities, #iWill strategic partners will work collaboratively with funders to build and strengthen existing funding streams in Scotland. Work will be undertaken to ensure that high quality youth social action and volunteering opportunities, specifically for young people from low income and ethnic minority backgrounds, are considered key interest areas for funders and are embedded within funding requirements, strategies and processes.

Furthermore, #iWill strategic partners and #iWill Ambassadors will seek to ensure that young people's voices are at centre of decision-making on where funding is allocated in Scotland by challenging funders to sign up to the Power of Youth charter outlining how they will commit to growing the Power of Youth e.g. through youth representation on funding panels.

Seeking out investment opportunities and income generation will be key in securing the sustainability of the movement and its activities beyond 2022 and to further grow the Power of Youth in Scotland. Sponsorship from corporate partners for specific events or activities will also be explored.





## Next Steps...

We will now:

- Formally launch the strategic plan during #IWill Week 2020.
- Develop an action plan for year 1 of #IWill Scotland with strategic partners.
- Work with devolved nation partners and the new UK #IWill partnership to connect activity and demonstrate progress towards the shared impact goals.

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#iwill

#Power  
Of Youth



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