



Fair
Education
Alliance

Annual Report 2022-23





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A welcome from our chair of trustees

Dr Vanessa Ogden



We are in challenging times for children and young people from low-income backgrounds at school. Post-Covid education recovery is exposing the barriers that poverty creates to accessing education, most visibly in national key indicators such as attendance, progress gaps, child development in the early years, difficulties in mental health and the rise in the numbers of students identified with SEND. Schools and colleges need to do ever more to support children and families beyond the classroom, against a backdrop of the rising cost of living, public-sector funding challenges and decreasing multi-agency resources. In this context, which can feel noisy and disconnected, with competing funding priorities for public services, the continued unity, collaboration, clarity of purpose and focus on fairness for all children that the Fair Education Alliance brings has been a well-needed constant.

This year, our coalition's focus on mitigating the impact of socio-economic status from a policy and collective action perspective has been deeply powerful. We have brought actors from different sectors together on what needs to be done, and what should be prioritised, from a longlist of challenges and solutions. Starting with the 2022 Report Card and our Annual Summit, we concentrated the agenda on Poverty, Place and Power.

First, in relation to Poverty, we highlighted that what happens beyond the classroom matters: children and young people from low-income backgrounds need great teachers, but they also need to come to class ready to learn. This often requires multi-agency support from services currently under much pressure. Second, we showed that schools can be catalysts (many great schools already are) of effective, deep-rooted change for young people and generating social mobility. Where there are exemplars of good practice, interventions have been sensitively co-designed and co-led within communities, with a place-based, tailored lens.

Third, we argued that power dynamics must shift – those with lived experience need their seat at the table to drive the conversation, including young people experiencing disadvantage in our education system right now. The Fair Education Alliance is firmly committed to this, putting our Youth Steering Group at the heart of all our work. During this year, we also mobilised the collective views of more than 280 member organisations and set out four key priorities for next year's general election in our Fair Education Manifesto. We advocated and campaigned at party political conferences, on public platforms, in the media and in meetings with key decision-makers.

Yet advocacy on policy is not enough on its own. The Fair Education Alliance has continued its critical work in promoting action at the grassroots level. We celebrated a new cohort of six social innovations and seven scaling initiatives in the spring. Through this work, we are supporting new ideas dealing with disadvantage in schools, ranging from teacher training on SEND to a co-operative nursery model for children from all backgrounds to scaling existing impactful initiatives on breakfast provision, post-16 support and more. These organisations and all our other members have also been able to access our digital membership tools, launched last autumn, to help target and deliver work more impactfully and collaboratively. You will read about all these areas of our activity and more in this Annual Report.

We are proud of what has been achieved this year and the important impact it has had and will continue to have. This work is not just tackling symptoms of inequality in education but bringing together actors from across the system to co-ordinate top-down and bottom-up engagement to drive long-term system change. I would like to thank all those who have made this possible, including our funders (page 12) and our members (pages 12-13) and the small but powerful Secretariat team who make all this happen each day.

I look forward to continuing our work together in 2023-24 and beyond. Thank you for your support.

Dr Vanessa Ogden
Chair, Fair Education Alliance

An introduction from our CEOs

Gina Cicerone and Samantha Butters



In 2023, we've seen the gaps between lower-income and wealthier children widen, while the cost-of-living crisis has bitten deeper and driven up levels of child poverty. Rising costs have impacted schools too, with budgets tightening further and valuable interventions and services for pupils being cut. Meanwhile, schools and colleges – especially those in underserved areas – are finding it harder than ever to recruit and retain the staff they need to deliver a great education for every child.

Yet our members have refused to back down from these challenges. As daunting as the current situation is, our members remained focused on making a difference every day. Our members pulled together in service of the generation preparing for their adult lives, and those who will come through the future system we build. We are incredibly proud of our members' impact despite these circumstances. Over the past year, our 283 members directly supported more than four and a half million children and young people. They also served more than 700,000 individuals supporting children and young people, including parents, teachers, school leaders, and governors.

We are also proud of what our team has done to enable our members to break down silos, join voices and increase their impact. We co-created our Fair Education Manifesto, our collective vision for what the next government needs to prioritise in education and in the services supporting families. We increased member collaboration across 10 thematic areas including tutoring, early-years education, wellbeing and inclusion, and racial equality. We hosted our most impactful Summit yet, with over 360 diverse leaders gaining insights and connections to drive our work. Our digital tools took leaps forward in their power

– highlighting a national picture of the FEA members in 80% of schools nationwide, the areas for collaboration and the cold spots to target. We strengthened the movement for youth engagement in national policy and sector practice. To fill the gaps in provision, we selected a new cohort of Award Winners and were wowed by their bold innovations and scaling approaches.

This coming year will see a general election. While this brings hope for a laser-sharp focus on equality in education, it will likely pit members of society against each other. The FEA's role in the 'middle space' has never been more crucial. According to Collaboration for Impact, "The middle space means the spaces between – the spaces where there is potential for new patterns of behaviour to emerge". For us, this is a space between interventions – showing that to address one aspect of inequality in education we must look at how they intersect with others. A space between sectors – addressing underlying needs in health, transport and social care that will achieve our vision. A space between power – connecting bottom-up grassroots organisations and those with lived experience to national policy makers. And a space between dichotomies, building bridges, rather than divides - from local to national, and across parties.

Our sincere thanks to our funders, trustees, advisors, member organisations and Secretariat for never losing faith in the systems change we're pushing towards, and for knowing that faith alone is not enough – we must work together for the future we want to see.

Gina Cicerone and Samantha Butters
Co-Chief Executive Officers

Foreword from the Youth Steering Group

Over the past year, our nation has faced numerous challenges, from climate change to a cost-of-living crisis. Politicians from across the political spectrum are working on innovative solutions for a sustainable future. However, despite the potential role of the education system in the solutions, education has taken a back seat in political discussions. It's time to shift focus and prioritise much-needed reforms in education.

The rising cost of living has led to a sharp rise in child poverty. Consequently, we have witnessed poor school attendance, mental-health challenges and an overall decline in student performance from those from low socio-economic backgrounds.

This can be attributed to two main factors. The first is the fact that students can't afford the fundamentals crucial for academic success, such as school lunches, devices and internet access to do homework, uniforms or even personal hygiene and sanitary products. The second factor is the limited resources schools have to accommodate diverse needs. These issues are of equal importance, and must be tackled if we are to reform our system for the better.

This is why the Fair Education Alliance and the Youth Steering Group remain crucial in today's society. Together, we act as a wake-up call, advocating for educational equality irrespective of socio-economic status.

The Youth Steering Group is a team of young change makers representing diverse backgrounds and experiences. Our mission is to serve as a voice for all young people, ensuring that all students receive the high-quality education they deserve. For instance, because poor diet is a symptom of child poverty, the Youth Steering Group campaigned outside Downing Street and met with policy makers to advocate for free school meals for all.

Too frequently, policy makers do not directly engage with students regarding their education, the impact of poverty on their lives or how meaningful improvements can be implemented. Therefore, it is truly an inspiring and empowering feeling being a part of the Youth Steering Group, with the FEA as our microphone, amplifying our opinions loud and clear so that those in power have no choice but to be held accountable.

Thankfully, our hard work isn't stopping any time soon. The FEA aren't the only organisation passionate about educational reform, and we aren't the only young people demanding change. Initiatives like our first Fair Education Youth Summit, in partnership with Mission 44 and the Pears Foundation are evidence that our impact will only continue to increase.

Denise Vidal

Member of the Youth Steering Group



Members of the FEA Youth Steering Group

An overview of the Fair Education Alliance

We are an alliance of more than 280 members working in every region of England to make education fair for all children and young people.

Why the FEA exists

For several decades, successive governments, educators, businesses, charities, and social enterprises have tried to improve education for the lowest-income children and young people. Many people have the same vision for a fair education system but different views on how to get there, resulting in siloed work and competing voices rather than a joined-up approach. These individual efforts have an impact on some young people, but the sum of these efforts is not making an impact for all young people.

For the last decade, the Fair Education Alliance (FEA) has monitored gaps between poorer pupils and their wealthier peers across five measures: attainment at primary school, attainment at GCSE, socio-emotional competencies and skills, post-16 destinations and access to higher education. We know that the gaps between poorer pupils and their wealthier peers have mostly failed to shift over the past decade, and some groups have fallen even further behind.

The FEA's approach

The FEA unites more than 280 member organisations to tackle educational inequality together. Our members represent the voices of young people, charities and social enterprises, research organisations and think tanks, businesses and foundations, unions, universities, and schools. Together, our members provide direct support to more than four and half million young people annually across every region of England, as well as indirect support such as funding, training and campaigning.

Our members chose four collective priorities to create a fair, inclusive education system:



Our 283 FEA members...

Represent diverse organisations:

Most of our members are delivery organisations, working directly with young people, teachers, parents or other stakeholders in the education system. We welcomed 55 new members this year, most of which were multi-academy trusts¹.

177 members (63%) are delivery organisations.

52 members (18%) are schools and multi-academy trusts.

24 members (8%) are membership bodies or unions.

18 members (6%) are businesses, foundations, or charitable trusts.

8 members (3%) are universities.

4 members (1%) are research organisations or think-tanks.

Range from large national organisations to small, grassroots initiatives across England²:

Some members are big businesses with thousands of staff and a team dedicated to education programmes, while others are small charities with deep local relationships with children and families.

Roughly half our members have fewer than 20 employees and one-fifth have more than 100.

The network of FEA members works in all Local Authorities across England.

Tackle different facets of educational inequality, both inside and outside the school gates:

Of our members delivering direct interventions, they most commonly focused on: 1) skills development (58%), 2) attainment (52%) and 3) mental health and wellbeing (52%).

Support millions of people:

Together, our delivery members directly supported **more than four and a half million children and young people** across every region of England.

They also served more than **700,000 individuals supporting children and young people**, including parents, teachers, school leaders and governors.

¹This information about our 283 members is as of the end of the year, August 2023.

²Unless otherwise noted, the rest of the information presented in this section of the Annual Report is from our Annual Member Survey. For this survey, we received responses from 70% of the 262 members who were part of the FEA when the survey was distributed in June 2023. When we refer to proportions of members in this section, we are referring to the proportion of member survey respondents who provided information in this survey.

Partner with young people as leaders in their work:



78 %

of members involved young people in their work in some way.



54 %

of members involved young people in decision-making through a youth board/council and/or as young trustees.

Have diverse leadership:



25 %

of member CEOs were eligible for free school meals and/or were first generation in their family to attend higher education.



13 %

of member CEOs are from a Black, Asian or minority-ethnic background.

“FEA membership allows us to easily build collaborative partnerships with other sector partners to work on joint projects and tap into other expertise to further develop the work that we do.”

(Governors for Schools – Member)

Our members value being part of the FEA:



80 %

of members took part in at least one FEA activity this year³.



85 %

of members shared that the FEA's strategy is clear to them.



75 %

of members rated their overall experience of FEA membership as 'good' or 'excellent'.



59 %

of members felt a sense of belonging as a member of the FEA.

“This is something that stands out in our time working with the FEA – we are all working towards a common goal of closing the disadvantage gap – even if we are coming at it from different ways (eg, some tutoring, some therapy). We learn from other organisations, and this helps us increase our impact.”

(Khulisa – Member)

³Of the 262 members who were part of the FEA at the start of our last quarter (June 2023), 210 engaged in an activity this year.

Executive summary: Highlights from 2022-23

We shared a unified collective message about what we want for education in England and how we can achieve it.

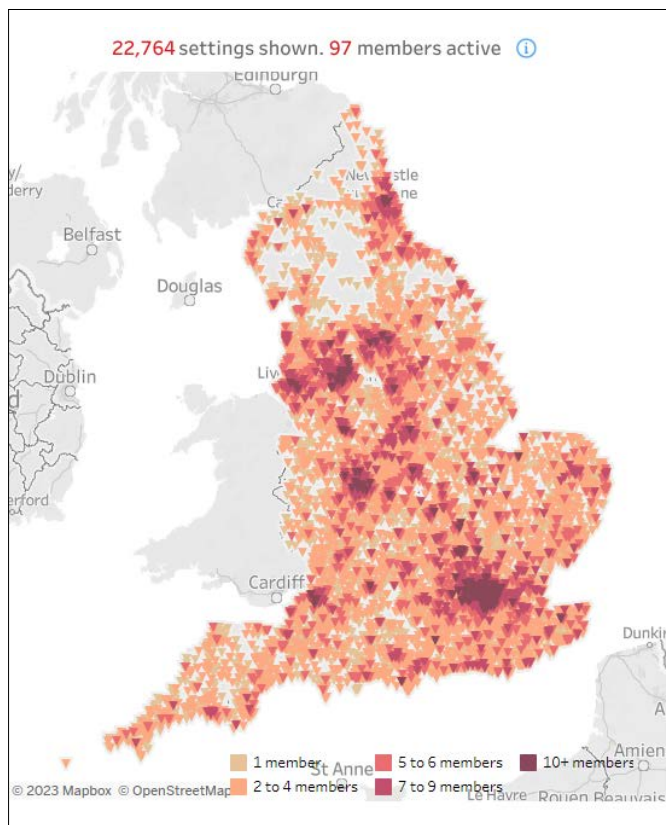
- We convened **Collective Action meetings** for members to debate policy, discuss emerging evidence and align on campaigns, which more than half of all members participated in. These discussions provided rich insights on members' policy priorities and advocacy activity to make education fairer.
- Our members **built consensus around specific policy issues** which they then led action on, such as supporting tuition for low-income students and expanding free school meals.
- We represented the interests of low-income young people in front of government leaders and decision-makers, including at the **2022 Conservative Party Conference, on All-Party Parliamentary Groups and in our letter to influence the Spring Budget**.
- We captured the unified message of the Alliance in our **Fair Education Manifesto**, which included four specific and ambitious policy asks to influence policy priorities ahead of the general election.

We increased connectivity and coordination across the education system.

- We hosted over **360 education leaders** including FEA members, sector stakeholders and early-stage innovators at our Annual Summit at the Battersea Arts Centre.
- We launched our new cohort of **13 Award Winners at our Awards Announcement** with over 170 attendees, including funders, members, and youth leaders.
- We convened **regular online Working Groups** for sharing best practice, discussing sector updates, and building capacity, involving over half the organisations in the Alliance.
- We **launched our membership tools (an ecosystem map and membership directory)** which provided members with in-depth information about pupil outcomes and service delivery nationally, and highlighted valuable insights for policymakers and funders about the cold spots to target.



Opening of the Annual Summit by FEA chair Dr Vanessa Ogden



Ecosystem Map shows the educational settings where delivery members work

We increased leadership diversity in education by investing in young people as co-leaders of our movement, and ensuring that underrepresented groups are given platforms to lead change.

- The 25 members of the **FEA Youth Steering Group** shared **their expertise and leadership** in all areas of FEA work and led their own advocacy work, including:
 - Speaking at the 2022 Conservative Party Conference on the issue of mental health
 - Judging our Awards selection process
 - Presenting at FEA Trustee meetings
 - Submitting evidence to the Education Select Committee’s Ofsted inquiry
 - Calling for the expansion of free school meals
- We provided **1-1 bespoke support to 28 organisations to build their capacity** for how they engage young people in their work.
- Our **Award judges and Award Winners were diverse leaders** from across the education sector.

We scaled initiatives systemically to tackle entrenched issues.

- 67 education leaders from outside the Alliance attended the **Innovation and Scale Booster** at the Annual Summit, joined by many members. The Booster provided 1-1 clinics and group skill-building workshops to the individuals from the public and our membership with ideas for tackling educational inequality.
- **We selected six Innovation Award Winners and seven Scaling Award Winners** through a competitive process from 79 total applications.
- We supported **Innovation Award Winners to prepare for their pilots** by aiding them to establish their Theory of Change and essential organisation components including their legal structures, financial models and safeguarding practices.
- We launched **bespoke support for Scaling Award Winners**, establishing personalised plans for each Award Winner. We also launched a small grants programme that distributed over £40,000 through six capacity building grants. These grants were paired with funding from the Award Winners to generate over £70,000 of investment in their initiatives.



The Fair Education Alliance's work is made possible thanks to the generous support of...



...and our members





There is a unified collective message about what we want for education in England and how we can achieve it

To improve the education system for low-income young people, we need to harness the collective power of our membership and coalesce around a unified message about the change we want to see.

This year we created and amplified this unified message by:

- 1) **Gathering input** from diverse members, young people, and sector stakeholders. Our Collective Action meetings enabled members to debate policy, discuss evidence and align on campaigns.
- 2) **Influencing and advocating on policy**, using the strength of our platform to share our collective priorities both widely and strategically, especially with policymakers.

“Canvassing of all members to contribute to campaign and policy influencing means there is broad but directed work towards making education fair.”

(Family Links, the Centre for Emotional Health – member)

Our achievements:

- We convened **Collective Action meetings for members** to debate policy, discuss emerging evidence and align on campaigns, **which over half of all members participated in**. These discussions provided rich insights into members’ policy priorities and advocacy activity for making education fairer.
- We hosted panels at the **2022 Conservative Party Conference** with key policymakers, including Robert Halfon (then Chair of the Education Select Committee, now Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education) and Andrea Jenkyns (then Minister for Skills), focusing on how tutoring can help to achieve a fair education.
- We advocated at **All-Party Parliamentary Groups**, representing the needs of low-income students in front of government leaders.
- We published the **FEA Report Card 2022** centred around three themes of Poverty, Place and Power.
- Our members **built consensus around specific policy issues** which they then led action on, such as supporting tuition for low-income pupils and expanding free school meals.
- We captured the unified message of the **Alliance in our Fair Education Manifesto** and planned for its September 2023 launch.



Youth Steering Group member Oghale participating in the 2022 Conservative Party Conference panel.



1) Gathering input

We gathered input from our diverse membership, young people and sector stakeholders to create a unified message about the policies needed to make education fairer.

Our members led and participated in our Collective Action meetings to align on priorities.

We provided spaces for members to discuss their policy priorities on specific issues, raise awareness on campaigns and sector updates, and seek alignment for collaborative or related advocacy efforts. We used these conversations to build consensus around shared messages that policymakers and funders needed to hear.

This year⁴:

- 55% of members participated in Collective Action meetings.
- 31% of members attended at least one Overarching Campaign Group that focuses on aligning advocacy efforts across members.

We convened members and stakeholders to identify the factors for success in place-based change.

Our place-based roundtable: Building off our first roundtable in 2021-22, we hosted a second meeting with leaders of successful place-based initiatives with input from Graeme Duncan of Right to Succeed and Emily Sun of Place Matters. The discussions led to the recommendation in our 2022 Report Card for a National Centre of Learning for Place.

Our Board of Advisors meeting: The Metro Mayor of the Liverpool City Region, Steve Rotheram, and Royal Society for the Arts CEO & Head of the Levelling Up Taskforce, Andy Haldane, joined our Board of Advisors meeting on place-based change.

This discussion reinforced the need for a National Centre of Learning for Place, the power of our ecosystem map, and the opportunity for increased regional and local powers and collaboration.

We listened to and included the voices of young people in our advocacy.

Our Youth Steering Group members were key partners throughout our Collective Action work. For example, they chaired panels at the Wellington Festival of Education, co-authored a section of our 2022 Report Card and provided input into our Manifesto.

For more information on Youth Steering Group activities, please see page 26.

“Our membership has given us the opportunity to make valuable links with organisations working in the Place space and has enabled to us to develop our own thinking on Place and how we can best drive value for local communities and education settings in the areas in which we have a focus.”

(Business partner member)



Place-based roundtable discussion

⁴ Of the 262 members who were part of the FEA at the start of our last quarter (June 2023).

2) Influencing and advocating for policy

We shared our unified messages with policymakers using the platform of the Alliance and our sector engagement.

“As an organisation without a strong campaigning and policy remit, membership of the FEA helps us have a voice on policy issues affecting the young people we work with, with confidence and without the need for lots of additional budget and resource.”

(IntoUniversity – Member)

The 2022 Report Card: Poverty, Place and Power, highlighted our policy recommendations and practical actions from across our membership.

- This report highlighted three themes – Poverty, Place and Power – as crucial levers for change.
- Specifically, it raised that addressing poverty outside of the school gates, taking a place-based lens to change, and distributing power to young people and communities is essential for system reform.
- This framing shaped our work for the rest of the year. For example, these three themes became the pillars for the Annual Summit sessions (see page 20).
- This report was widely shared: we had over 1,300 clicks on the Report Card link and it was covered by **The Independent**.



“Being mentioned in the Fair Education Alliance’s seven recommendations for a fairer education system in the 2022 Report Card has significantly raised awareness of our model for improving young people’s wellbeing.”

(#BeeWell – Member)

We represented the needs of pupils from low-income backgrounds in front of key government decision makers.

We highlighted youth voice and tutoring to politicians at the 2022 Conservative Party Conference.

- We hosted a panel on improving outcomes for the pupils in greatest need with the Centre for Social Justice to influence government policy and build key relationships.
- Policymakers Robert Halfon (then Chair of the Education Select Committee, now Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education) and Andrea Jenkyns (then Minister for Skills), spoke on the panel with Oghale from our Youth Steering Group and our members Action Tutoring and the Tutor Trust.

At the All-Party Parliamentary Groups on the Teaching Profession and Schools, Learning and Assessment, we took a leading position in advocating for low-income families. For example, we raised the issue of how changes to the assessment system will impact pupils from low-income backgrounds.

Additionally, we submitted evidence calling for the need to take a more preventative and less punitive approach to absence at the Schools Wellbeing Partnership Steering Group.



Conservative Party Conference panel with Andrea Jenkyns (MP), Nick Bent (The Tutor Trust), Susannah Hardyman (Action Tutoring), Oghale (FEA Youth Steering Group) and Alice Wilcock (Centre for Social Justice)

We facilitated connections between organisations who then led their own advocacy efforts together.

Key to our strategy is that members, once connected, collaborate and drive change. Two highlights this year were members' joint action to influence the Spring budget and the Tuition Advocacy Working Group's efforts to highlight the positive effects of the National Tutoring Programme and advocate for its continuation.

To influence the Spring budget, we joined the Education Anti-Poverty Coalition alongside members Child Poverty Action Group, National Governance Association, National Association of Headteachers, Parentkind, and the Centre for Education and Youth. Through the coalition, we called on the government to invest in reducing child poverty through an extension of free school meals and an uplift to the Child Benefit.

The letter was covered by the **Evening Standard** and **The Independent**, with the FEA being specifically named.

Action Tutoring and the Tuition Advocacy Working Group

Action Tutoring helps disadvantaged young people to achieve academically by providing high-quality tutoring to increase students' subject knowledge, confidence and skills.

Action Tutoring's involvement and leadership in the FEA Tuition Advocacy Working Group enabled the organisation to amplify its advocacy efforts over the last few years through strong collaboration with other members delivering tuition programmes. For example, this working group played an instrumental part in the shaping and introduction of the National Tutoring Programme in 2020. As Action Tutoring CEO, Susannah Hardyman explains:

"I think that collective work through the Tuition Advocacy Group was so critical to getting tutoring on the agenda and getting the National Tutoring Programme announced. Because we were able to showcase to policymakers multiple models of how tutoring could work and draw on that collective reach and that collective evidence, it meant policymakers were hearing it from lots of different channels."

This year, the Tuition Advocacy Working Group continued its effective campaigning by evidencing the impact of tuition. The group collectively commissioned and funded research from Public First which demonstrated the vital role tuition plays in supporting low-income young people to achieve academically. This research paper, *The Future of Tutoring*, supports the group's calls for tutoring funding that is ringfenced and targeted at low-income pupils. The report was jointly funded by the Tutor Trust, the FEA, Equal Education, Coachbright, Action Tutoring, White Rose Maths, Impetus, Get Further, TalentEd, Public First, Third Space Learning and Allen and Overy.



The report launched in Parliament with the goal of securing a commitment from all parties to a Tutoring Guarantee: an entitlement for all young people in receipt of Pupil Premium or equivalent who are behind in English or maths to be offered a high-quality tutoring provision to help close that gap. This report engaged many key policymakers: Robin Walker (Chair of Education Select Committee) hosted the launch event, Robert Halfon (Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education) gave the keynote, and the Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza authored the report foreword.



Robert Halfon, (MP), Susannah Hardyman (Action Tutoring), Robin Walker (MP), Sarah Waite (Get Further) and Abigail Shapiro (Tutor Trust).

"I think this type of collaboration works because everybody in the group was so mission aligned and continues to be so mission aligned, we all want to see the attainment gap narrowed, if not completely closed for low-income pupils." – Susannah Hardyman

All this work culminated in our 2023 Fair Education Manifesto, aimed at influencing the manifesto pledges of political parties.

We used the culmination of our Collective Action work to create a Manifesto with four clear policy priorities, aimed at directly influencing all parties' education manifesto pledges. This Manifesto launched in September 2023.



Increased connectivity and coordination across the education system

We believe that to effect system change for children and young people's outcomes, there needs to be more effective and efficient coordination between organisations, education settings, funders, young people and policymakers in education.

This year we increased connectivity and coordination by:

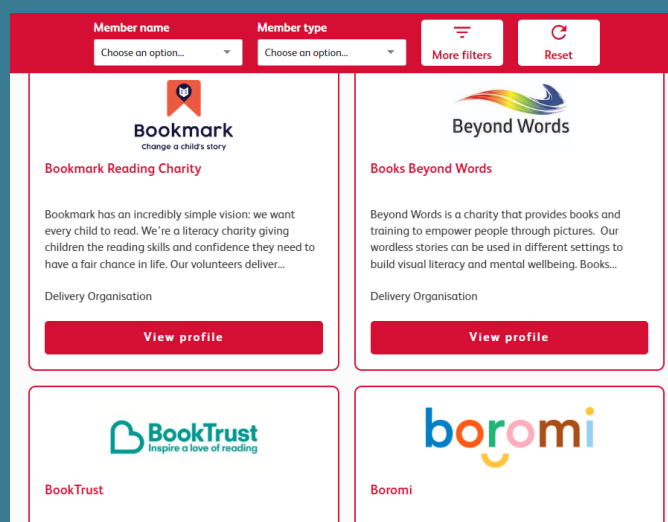
- 1) **Establishing virtual and physical spaces** for organisations to collaborate, build relationships and share information, as well as to connect with funders and policymakers.
- 2) **Launching our digital tools for members** to gain a better understanding of each other's work, target delivery to the areas of greatest need and foster collaboration.

"It has been really impactful to connect with a wide range of FEA members that we wouldn't have reached otherwise. We always leave FEA meetings feeling inspired and re-energised."

(Child Poverty Action Group – Member)

Our achievements:

- We hosted over **360 attendees** including FEA members, sector stakeholders and early-stage innovators at our Annual Summit at the Battersea Arts Centre.
- We launched our **new cohort of 13 Award Winners at our Awards Announcement at Bloomberg** with over 170 attendees, including funders, members and youth leaders.
- We convened over **40 online Working Groups** for sharing best practice, discussing sector updates and building capacity, which involved over half the organisations in the Alliance.
- We launched our **membership tools (an ecosystem map and membership directory)** which provided members with in-depth information about pupil outcomes and service delivery nationally, and highlighted valuable insights for policymakers and funders about the cold spots to target.



Summit opening by Co-CEO Gina Cicerone

1) Establishing virtual and physical spaces

We established spaces, online and in-person, for organisations across the sector to collaborate, build relationships and share information.

Annual Summit

Our Annual Summit was a pivotal moment in our continued fight to drive long-term change for a fairer and more equitable education system.

We brought our members, education innovators and key sector stakeholders together for our first in-person Summit since 2019. The day was structured around two core strands: a system change stand on the themes of Poverty, Place and Power, and a Booster strand for skills and knowledge development.

- We hosted 368 attendees, including members, sector stakeholders and early-stage innovators.
- 63 % of members had at least one staff member attend, including 27 members who had not recently engaged with the FEA.
- 100 % of surveyed attendees rated their overall experience positively.

45 speakers shared their expertise in panel discussions, skills workshops and 1-1 clinics.

In the System Change Strand:

- Sir Tim Brighouse, Former Schools Commissioner for London, discussed his perspective on intergenerational poverty and pupil outcomes.
- Metro Mayor of Liverpool City Region Steve Rotheram and Graeme Duncan, CEO of Right to Succeed, shared their expertise on levelling up and cradle to career services.
- Youth Steering Group members Oghale and Ellie shared how we can enable more young people to lead in the fair education movement.
- Anne Longfield CBE, Chair of the Commission on Young Lives, spoke on how to deliver change in the current climate.

In the Booster Strand, experts included:

- Marcus Shepherd, Principal at the Wells Academy, who led a training on how to best work with schools.
- Lewis Iwu, CEO of the Purpose Union, who ran a session on communicating with influence.

Attendees found the Summit energising and valuable. Following the event, members joined Collective Action Working Groups and signed up for our membership tools. Over 90 % of surveyed attendees agreed that our key outcomes for the event were met, specifically that they:

- Gained an increased awareness of current sector challenges and opportunities to tackle educational inequality.
- Felt motivated to work with FEA members, stakeholders and/or young people to tackle educational inequality.
- Made new connections or strengthened existing connections with other attendees.



What our attendees appreciated about the Summit...

“How collaborative and discursive it felt. It felt like the call to action we all needed after the pandemic. I left feeling more proactive and determined.”
(Member)

“One of the best events I’ve attended in a work capacity!”
(Sector stakeholder)

“To think about the ripple effect from the day out across attending organisations and the wider sector over the weeks and months to come is so inspiring.”
(Member)



Our Awards Announcement introduced our 13 Award Winners in front of over 170 sector stakeholders, including funders, members and youth leaders.

- We welcomed our new Innovation and Scaling Award Winners at a celebratory announcement generously hosted by Bloomberg.
- This event facilitated connections to organisations that could support Award Winners’ initiatives and was a chance for members to build connections with each other.

For more on our Award Winners, please see page 34.

We convened members at the Wellington Festival of Education to speak about the need for measures beyond attainment and best practices for serving low-income families.

Our two panels at the Festival showcased our members’ work and policy priorities through Youth Steering Group led discussions. The event was also an opportunity to connect with the wider Alliance at the largest event for the education sector.

- *Measuring What We Value* explored how our systems can measure essential skills, inclusion and wellbeing, featuring members Skills Builder Partnership, The Difference, and States of Mind.
- *Beyond the School Gates* discussed how schools can work more effectively with other locally provided services, such as housing, community police and social care. The session featured School-Home Support, Sarah Gunner, headteacher at Virtual School, and Dawn Ferdinand, headteacher of the Willow Primary School in Tottenham.

We facilitated regular online groups for sharing best practice, discussing sector updates and collaborating on advocacy activities, which involved over half the organisations in the Alliance.

As well as being a place to build consensus (see page 14), our 40 virtual Collective Action meetings were a space for connection and collaboration on specific themes.

- 55% of members participated in Collective Action meetings throughout the year.
- These groups had over 400 unique individuals attend from a diverse range of organisations who might not otherwise have had the opportunity to connect. Throughout the year, 297 individuals from members and 107 from other organisations participated.
- There were regular meetings on the themes of Parental Engagement, Making Teaching a Sustainable Profession, Tuition Advocacy, and Delivery.
- We launched a new group to connect on members focused on Early Years.

Members highlighted they particularly valued the groups for the information sharing on best practice and sector trends. We believe these group were key to the fact that 55% of members agreed that the FEA enables their organisation to increase its impact on educational inequality.

“As a collective, the FEA has actively coordinated activities to ensure the attainment gap is tackled. We have benefited from connecting to the Collective Working Groups and linking up with like-minded charities to discuss best practices, emerging trends, and potential solutions to which we could all contribute.”

(Speakers for Schools – member)

“Membership has enabled us to deliver our programmes more effectively by learning from other organisations and identifying ways we can improve our practice.”

(Get Further – member)

2) Digital membership tools

Our digital tools foster connections, encourage collaboration, and empower our members to target their work to support young people effectively.

Together with our members, we co-created and launched two digital tools to support collaboration and targeting:

- **A Membership Directory** of information about each member, including where they work, contact information and a description of their intervention.
- **An Ecosystem Map** that provides a national picture of pupil level data layered with where members are working.

The tools are crucial in democratising data, ensuring that organisations have easy-to-use insights to drive more impactful work.

In our first year, 141 members signed up to use the tools and 97 shared where they work on the map.

We used the tools to understand the reach of the Alliance and identify cold spots across the country.

Over 80% of schools in England worked with at least one FEA member.

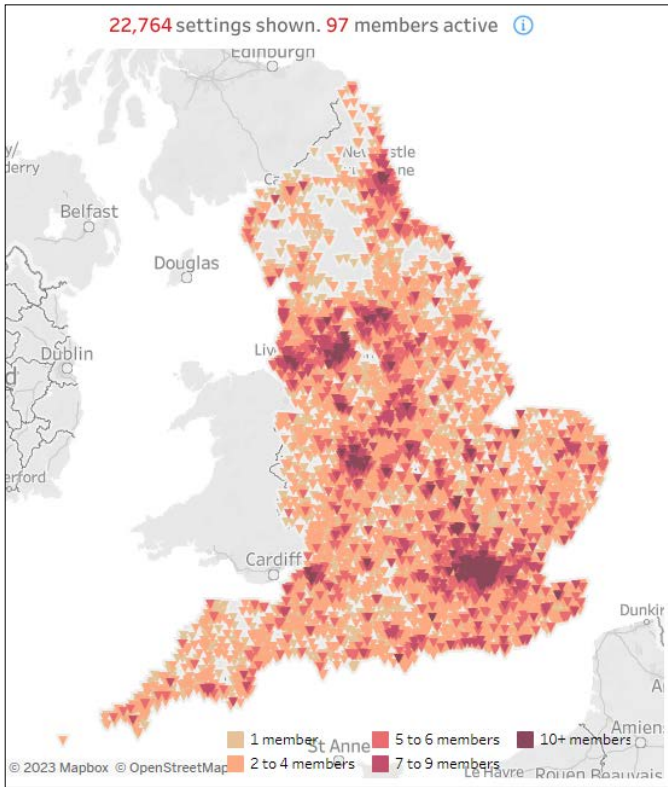
On average two members worked at every school. In London, schools on average partnered with three members.

There were schools where members were more likely to work:

- Schools with higher levels of pupils eligible for free school meals tended to work with more members: 93% of schools with above average levels of FSM worked with at least one member.
- 20% of schools worked with at least four members.
- 173 schools worked with 10 or more members.

The map also identified member cold spots: over 300 schools with more than 30% of pupils eligible for free school meals were not working with any members who submitted their information.





The Ecosystem Map has been an asset for conversations with policymakers.

The Ecosystem Map gives policymakers an accurate snapshot of our collective work and what is happening in their respective communities.

We have used it in policy discussions, including with Metro Mayors, MPs, the Department for Education and the Teach First Schools Forum.

Our members used the tools to collaborate and connect.

We conducted an external evaluation of our tools and learned members used them to:

- Understand the diverse range of FEA members.
- Collaborate with members in similar regions and settings.
- Target delivery based on need across the country.
- Identify areas and FEA members to invest in.

“My team used the Ecosystem Map to research schools that might be eligible and likely to work with First Story, as we only work with schools serving underserved communities and the map provides helpful context on factors such as Pupil Premium”

(First Story – member)

More diverse leadership of the education agenda

We believe that diversity is critical in those who are leading the change to make education fairer. We see it as our role to give individuals with insights, evidence and lived experience a platform to lead change.

This year we aimed to increase diversity in the leadership of the education agenda by:

- 1) **Engaging young people** in all FEA activities.
- 2) **Strengthening capacity** for youth engagement in other organisations.
- 3) **Providing inclusive spaces** within our activities for individuals from all backgrounds and types of organisations across the education system to connect and collaborate.

“The Youth Steering Group is such a privilege to be on. Whether it’s the opportunities that we are given, getting to hear about the experiences of the rest of the group or collaborating and working with other members of the group, it is such a pleasure to be a part of”.

(Youth Steering Group member)

Our achievements:

- The 25 members of the **FEA Youth Steering Group** shared **their expertise and leadership** in all areas of FEA work and led their own advocacy work, including:
 - Speaking at the 2022 Conservative Party Conference on the issue of mental health.
 - Acting as judges for our Awards selection process.
 - Presenting at each of the FEA’s trustee meetings.
 - Submitting evidence to the Education Select Committee’s Ofsted Inquiry.
 - Calling for expanding free school meals.
- We provided 1-1 bespoke support to **build the capacity of 28 organisations** in how they engage with young people.
- We convened a **Collective Action Working Group** focused on **addressing inequality** in schools.
- **Awards judges and Award Winners** were diverse leaders from across the education sector.



Youth Steering Group members Comfort and Joe with Zarah Sultana, MP

Go to www.menti.com and use the code 7754 7040

How are you going to contribute to ensuring young people are given the opportunity to participate in decisions affecting their education?

Mentimeter

government decision making)

our steering group that we are setting up. To help shape our programmes

rather than to self-censor

By getting it off the ground - less planning, more doing!

Spend more time engaging with the children we serve at the start of our programme and collaborating with them in terms of the outcomes for the programme.

Engage young people in weekly committee meetings!

Encourage all staff to use and make the most of youth advisory boards, if they do exist. If they don't - start one!

Established a youth engagement model within the organisation

Working with FEA members to ensure



1) Engaging young people

Young people shared their expertise and leadership across all areas of our work.

Since the founding of the Youth Steering Group in 2021, this group of young people has amplified their voices within the FEA and the wider education sector. We welcomed our second cohort of Youth Steering Group members in January 2023. It is a diverse group of 25 young leaders from every region in the country, committed to ending education inequality.



58 %

of Youth Steering Group members were eligible for free school meals.



54 %

of members identify as being from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background.



50 %

of members never engaged in youth social action before joining the group.

Profiles of each member can be found [here](#).

The Youth Steering Group members were key partners in all major FEA activities this year, including serving as judges for the Awards selection, leading a plenary session at the Annual Summit and attending all FEA trustee meetings. In addition to supporting FEA activity, they also conducted their own advocacy activities. The timeline on pages 30-31 shows the wide range of Youth Steering Group and FEA youth engagement activities throughout the year.

What our Youth Steering Group members say about their experience:



Our FEA Youth Steering Group members

“The personal development is unbelievable, and I have grown more in the past year, thanks to the FEA, than I have in my whole life.”

“The YSG (Youth Steering Group) allows young people to connect and work with key stakeholders in the education system. It can be difficult trying to challenge inequality by yourself so having a network is very helpful.”

“I think there are loads of opportunities that we’ve been given, such as at the Party Conferences, where the FEA show their commitment to youth voice, and we’ve had loads of chances to interact with policymakers.”

Elijah, Youth Steering Group member

Elijah is 17 years old and from the West Midlands. He is studying for his A levels, and this is his first year on the Youth Steering Group.

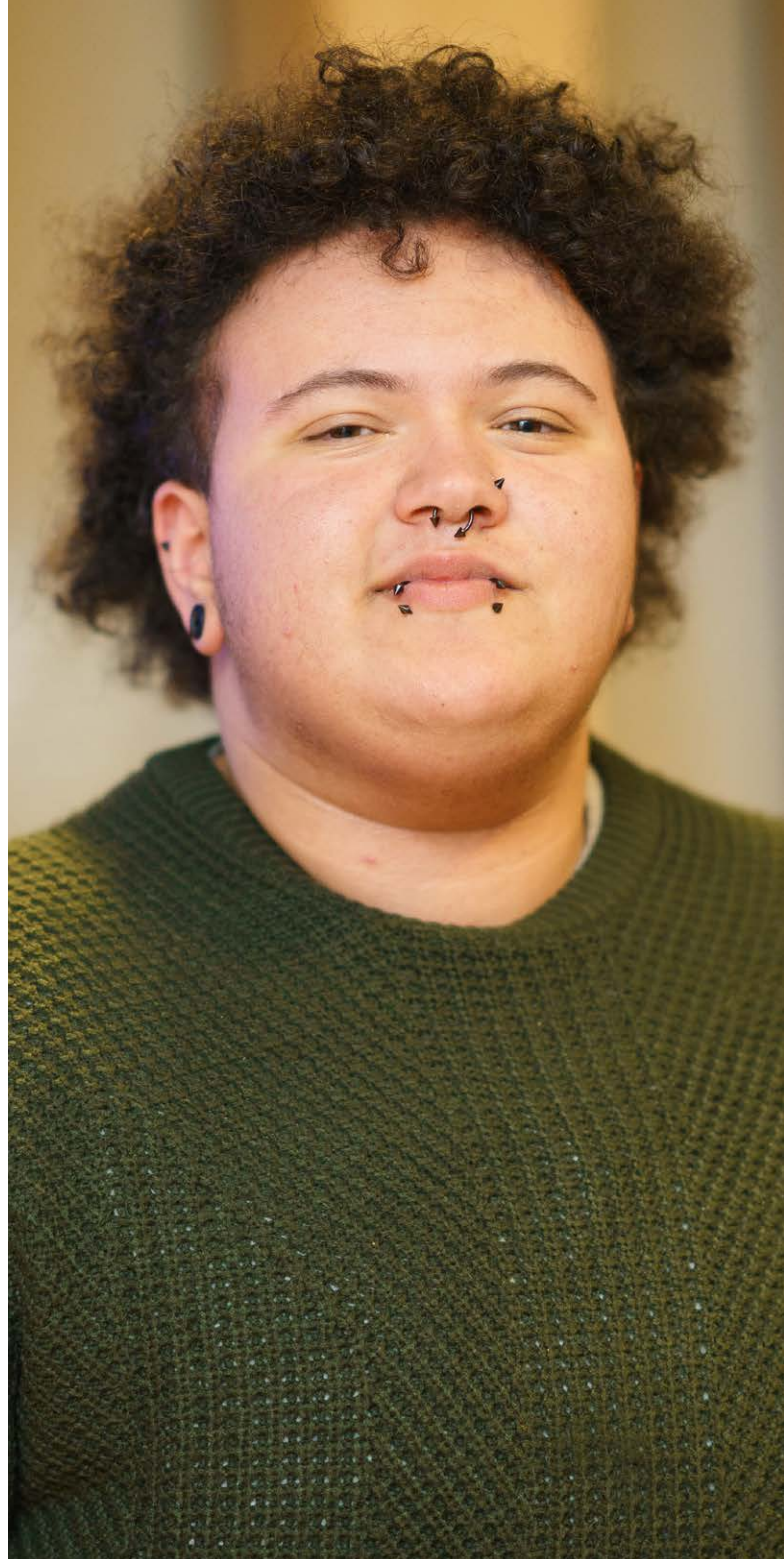
Elijah explained why young engagement is so crucial to making education fairer: “I think it’s really difficult to do something in the benefit of people who aren’t in the room... So, bringing young people into the room and giving them an equal space at the table to discuss issues means that the opinions of young people are properly integrated into solutions... I feel as though I am both making the change and that my personal experiences are being used for something positive”.

One way in which Elijah has influenced the future of the education system is through being a Youth Judge for the Innovation Award alongside fellow Youth Steering Group member Olia. During the final interview process Elijah drew on his experiences of using one of the products that went on to win to give added insight into its impact. Elijah and Olia presented at the Awards Announcement at Bloomberg, giving a speech to more than 170 people about what it feels like for young people going through the education system today.

Elijah’s speech was so powerful that it even inspired Ofsted’s Alternative Provision team to want to do a youth consultation.

“Knowing that somebody who heard about my experience, and then wanted to listen to other young people, has been really amazing... so I’m really glad that me talking has meant that another organisation can bring on board young people and they can hear like a wider array of experiences as well as my own. As part of the Youth Steering Group, I felt as though I’ve actually been listened to.”

Elijah, who is also Chair of the Careers and Enterprise Company Youth Board, hopes to use the experience gained as a Youth Steering Group member to go onto study Education at university with a policy and psychology focus.



“As part of the Youth Steering Group, I felt as though I’ve actually been listened to.”

2) Strengthening capacity

We supported organisations to strengthen youth engagement in their own work.

We provided 1-1 bespoke support to 28 organisations to improve how they engage with young people.

Our Youth Engagement Manager tailored this support to the specific needs of each organisation.

- We developed a tool to help organisations to identify their strengths and areas of development across different dimensions of youth engagement and to help track their progress over time as their youth engagement develops.
- This work involved a broad range of support to organisations, including helping to recruit new team members, develop funding proposals and design sessions for youth advisory groups.

What our members say...

“We have built our own internal knowledge, learning from best practice examples from across the education and not-for-profit sector. We have made a difference to the (youth) advisory board’s welcome, offering a clear and accessible introduction meeting and onboarding paperwork, bolstered by FEA’s engagement support. This support also included tactics for encouraging commitment from young people and practical tips on how to best structure meetings and gather youth feedback.”

(Financial Literacy and Inclusion Campaign – member)

“Her (FEA Youth Engagement Manager) insight, expertise and knowledge has supported us in launching the initial design stages of our Youth Advisory Group and supported us in recruiting an incredible Youth Advisory Group Lead by volunteering to sit on our recruitment panel.”

(The Difference – member)

We convened two youth-focused Collective Action Working Groups, one centred on youth engagement practices and the other on youth participation in policy, engaging education, and youth organisations to discuss and share best practice.

Our Youth Engagement Working Group held two meetings, focused on supporting young campaigners’ mental health and measuring the quality of youth engagement. Over 90 people from 65 different organisations attended. Following the meetings:

- 96% said they learnt something about making their work more inclusive.
- 92% said they were ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ to act on what they had learnt.

We launched our first Youth Participation in Policy Working Group, established in partnership with States of Mind. It is co-chaired by three young people and had 18 attendees at the first meeting. The group looks forward to developing ahead of the general election next year.



COSMIC DREAMS

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND



90,000

**PEOPLE DEMAND
FREE SCHOOL
MEALS FOR ALL**

Youth engagement timeline:



Esther, Oghale and Pelumi spoke to the Children's Commissioner about online learning, climate change in the curriculum, school strikes and student mental health.



Oghale opened our Annual Summit and led a **session on 'Power'** with fellow young people Ellie, Naomi, and Amelia.

Youth Steering Group and 12 other youth representatives co-authored our **Report Card** chapter on Power.

2023

February

January

December

November

October

September

2022

Youth Steering Group helped judge applications for the Innovation Award and presented the Award in front of 170 people. Elijah and Olia's speech inspired Ofsted's Alternative Provision team to do a youth consultation.

We worked with eight youth judges to recruit 14 new members of the Youth Steering Group.



Youth Steering Group member Oghale joined a panel on tutoring and a roundtable on mental health at the Conservative Party Conference.

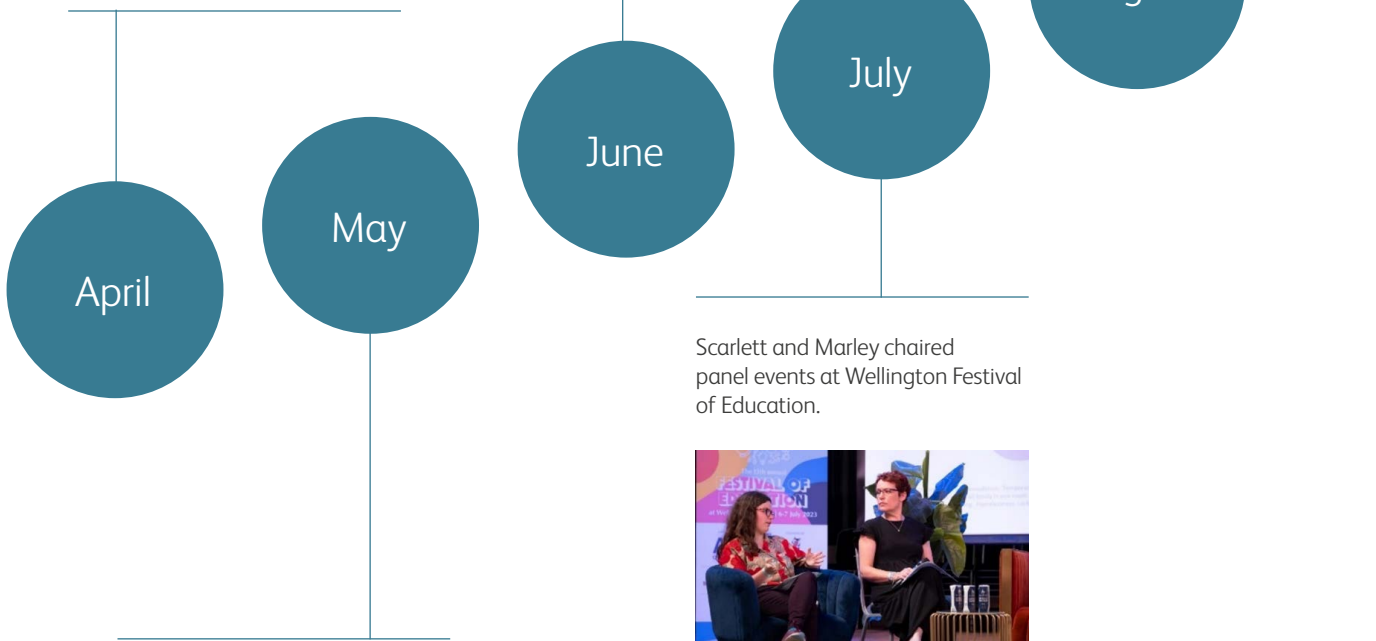




Year 13 students Aleema and Michelle joined us for work experience to research access to work experience opportunities.

Young people from pupil referral units met with Ofsted's Alternative Provision Team to feed into Ofsted's new strategy.

Youth Steering Group submitted evidence to the Education Select Committee's Ofsted Inquiry and were invited to take part in a roundtable on GCSEs with the 11-16 Education House of Lords Committee.



Scarlett and Marley chaired panel events at Wellington Festival of Education.



We recruited a Youth Engagement Coordinator and Intern, and we hired our previous Youth Intern as a permanent employee.



3) Inclusive spaces

We have provided inclusive spaces within Alliance activities for individuals from all backgrounds and all types of organisations to connect.

We brought together school leaders, trust leaders and organisations working to increase racial diversity of the school workforce through our Tackling Racial Inequality Working Group.

Our Tackling Racial Inequality Working Group launched with the goal of addressing racial inequality in schools. The group discussed topics such as school leadership programmes and effective practices to retain and promote middle leaders into senior leadership positions.

Raza Ali, Tackling Racial Inequality Working Group

Raza Ali, the Headteacher at the Chalk Hills Academy, was one of the founders of the Tackling Racial Inequality Working Group. This group is focused on addressing disadvantages around race in the education sector, particularly how we can get more professionals from Black and ethnic backgrounds into headteacher and school leadership roles. By harnessing the connections of the FEA network, the Tackling Racial Inequality Working Group has already started to bring school leaders and policymakers round the same table.

Raza, says:

“By knowing who there are other people who are also fighting the same cause, and knowing you are supported by organisations like the FEA, gives you that increased confidence. But it also gives you increased hope that you are slowly starting to make a change. Having the opportunity to meet likeminded individuals, facilitated by the FEA, meant that we could all share our common experiences and common strategies”.

The Tackling Racial Inequality Working Group provides space and support for members to come together and agree on what collective actions will have the most impact. The group has achieved tangible progress in exciting and positive ways, including:

- A working group session with influential education CEOs where members had the opportunity to share their experiences in an open forum.
- A meeting with the Department for Education to discuss the issue of racial inequality in school leadership.

Our Awards judges and Award Winners represented the diverse leadership of the education agenda.

Attracting diverse leaders to apply for our Innovation Award is one of the ways we aim to increase the diversity of the members in our Alliance.

- In the application process for the Innovation Award, 40% of applications from the public were individuals who identified as from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds and roughly 60% were female.
- Among Innovation Award Winners:
 - 50% received free school meals or were first in their family to attend university.
 - The cohort included one of the youngest ever Award Winners.

The cohort of Award Winners represented those with lived experiences of educational disadvantage but was less diverse in terms of ethnicity than previous cohorts. The judges and the Secretariat considered this throughout all stages of the selection process.

We will continue to provide intensive support for the applicant pipeline to refine their ideas, encourage unsuccessful applicants to reapply and amplify our partnerships with organisations who work with individuals from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

See page 34 for more information on our Award Winners.

We tracked detailed demographic and organisational information about our members so we could hold ourselves to account on how inclusive our membership opportunities were.

Based on our Annual Survey, the diversity of leaders in our Alliance was similar this year to previous years⁵.

- 13% of members had a CEO who identified as from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds.
- 25% members had a CEO who identified as being from a low socio-economic background.

We also aimed for our events to be representative, both in terms of attendees and speakers. For example, at our Annual Summit, 17% of attendees identified as from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds and roughly one-third of attendees were from outside London.

⁵ These percentages are out of the 182 members who completed the Annual Survey this year

Solutions to issues in education are scaled systematically and based on need

The education system urgently requires solutions to address deep-rooted educational inequalities.

We nurtured innovation and scaled impactful and innovative initiatives based on need by:

- 1) Hosting an **Innovate and Scale Booster** as part of the Annual Summit to support the public and our members to innovate and scale ideas.
- 2) Selecting a **new cohort of 13 high-potential Award Winners**.
- 3) Delivering an **intensive package of support** for the Award Winners.

“I have received invaluable support in every one of the sessions and I really look forward to them. These sessions have equipped me with the confidence, knowledge, and skills to lead my innovation successfully. As a result, over 200 teachers and teaching assistants signed-up to participate in my new programme!”

(Beth O’Brien – Chartered College of Teaching, Innovation Award Winner)

Our achievements:

- 67 early-stage innovators attended the **Innovation and Scale Booster** and received 1-1 support and skills-building workshops.
- We **selected 13 Award Winners** through a competitive process from 79 total applications.
- We launched our new cohort of Award Winners at a high-profile **Awards Announcement event at Bloomberg with over 170 attendees**.
- We helped Innovation **Award Winners to prepare to implement and test their pilots** through developing their Theories of Change, establishing evaluation frameworks and setting up their organisation with the right legal structure, financial models, and safeguarding practices.
- We launched bespoke support **for Scaling Award Winners** by establishing personalised support plans for each organisation. We also launched a small grants programme to build their capacity, through which we distributed over £40,000 of grants. These grants were paired with investments of almost equal value from the Winners.

1) Innovate and Scale Booster

We hosted an Innovate and Scale Booster as part of the Annual Summit to support the public and members to innovate and scale ideas.

As part of the Annual Summit, the Booster aimed to build the pipeline of applicants for the Awards and support individuals from the public and our membership to start and scale their ideas to tackle inequality in education.

This support involved 12 skill-building workshops and over 50 1-1 clinics. These workshops were open to both members and early-stage innovators. Attendees developed their skills and knowledge and built relationships with the experts, many of whom were FEA members. For example:

- Gabrielle Hamill, from member Football Beyond Borders, hosted a workshop on Theories of Change.
- Rebecca Scott, from member Future Frontiers, held a clinic on programme design and delivery.

Popular workshops included Communicating with Influence, Selling to Schools and Winning the Bid.

Sessions also supported innovators to prepare for the Innovation and Scaling Awards. Following the sessions, of the 67 early-stage entrepreneurs who attended the Booster:

- 13 applied for the Innovation Award.
- Three progressed to the final panels and all three received the Innovation Award.

“The breakout sessions were incredibly well tailored and offered a breadth of useful training for innovators at different stages”

(Business partner member)

“The booster sessions were very engaging, and I felt that I was upskilled by them! And it was fantastic to meet in such a beautiful space!”

(Ellie Cassidy – InsideUni, Innovation Award Winner)

A Booster session at our Annual Summit



2) New cohort of 13 Award Winners

We launched a new cohort of Award Winners, selecting 13 winners through a competitive process from a total of 79 applications.

The FEA has two types of Awards, made possible thanks to the support of Bloomberg and Credit Suisse.

Innovation: We support up to six individuals with new ideas that challenge the status quo and tackle the root causes of educational inequality. This award is open both to the public and to FEA members. Winners receive one year of incubation through training, coaching, and mentoring alongside a six-month salary contribution of £22,500.

Scaling: We support up to seven FEA members to scale proven impactful solutions to reach the young people who need it most. Winners receive two years of bespoke support in tackling key challenges to scale through consultancy, peer learning and funding.

We conducted a rigorous selection process with multiple rounds of judging to identify the 13 Winners.

- We had 53 applications for the Innovation Award and 26 for the Scaling Award.
- 15 % of FEA members applied for an Award (36 members) and a further 24 % of members showed an interest in applying for an Award but decided not to apply this year.
- We worked with 42 expert judges from across the sector and our Youth Steering Group to deliver a fair and transparent selection process.
 - 20 judges represented our member organisations, including Ambition Institute, ImpactEd and Save the Children.
 - 12 judges were from the wider sector such as the Education Endowment Foundation and National Foundation for Education Research.
 - 10 judges were from schools and multi-academy trusts.

We announced our Award Winners at a high-profile celebration hosted by Bloomberg.

We were joined by over 170 leaders from across the sector to celebrate as we announced our Award Winners at Bloomberg. Attendees included leaders from 57 member organisations (roughly 22 % of the Alliance at the time of the event).

- Our 13 Winners impressed the audience with their pitches and made connections for support and funding from attendees.
- The event included a panel with previous Award Winners Aspiring Heads, ImpactEd and The Difference, who shared their experience of the Award support.
- We also celebrated the dozens of impactful organisations that have been part of previous Awards cohorts.



Innovation and Scaling Award Winners with FEA and Youth Steering Group judges



Our Award Winners include the following FEA members, who are innovating within their own organisations

Chartered College of Teaching, led by Beth O'Brien

Chartered College's internal innovation aims to improve teaching for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) through an online journal club for teachers and support staff that will focus on effective teaching approaches for students with SEND and how these can be embedded into teaching practice.

Campaign for Learning, led by Miranda Baxter

Campaign for Learning's internal innovation aims to enhance parental engagement through a campaign and multimedia resource designed to help parents to engage in their children's learning and enrich the home learning environment.



Our Award Winners include the following social entrepreneurs, who have developed new initiatives to tackle educational inequality

Stone Soup Group, led by Laura House and Tiffany Day

Stone Soup Group are a group of parents from diverse backgrounds on a mission to offer more affordable childcare, with creativity and collaboration at its core. They want to set up a cooperative nursery in Walthamstow (led by and for the community) and share their learning so that others can replicate their model. They'll offer life-changing educational experiences for children, and help parents to develop their skills and employability.



InsideUni, led by Ellie Cassidy

InsideUni is a student-driven initiative helping young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to confidently navigate university applications. They empower their nationwide student community to crowdsource and share first-hand advice about applying to university, from choosing what to study right through to what the interview might look and feel like.



GoodWork, led by Felicity Halstead

GoodWork helps young people who face systemic barriers to access the training and opportunities they need to transition successfully into the workforce. They deliver pioneering programmes that connect employers with talent, engage teams to deliver social impact and empower the next generation.



The Story Project, led by Olivia Richards

The Story Project turns popular children's stories into a tool to support and improve children's wellbeing. They use diverse and engaging stories and book extracts to discuss characters who are tackling the same challenges and emotions that children face, so that children can better understand themselves and others.



Scaling Award Winners



Get Further

works with colleagues to identify students in need of extra help with GCSE English and maths, matching these students to top tutors, who deliver a bespoke catch-up tuition programme.



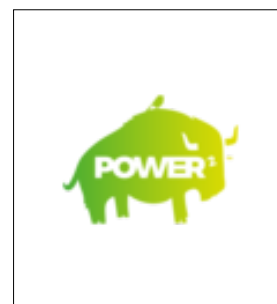
Magic Breakfast

exists to end morning hunger as a barrier to learning in the UK. It enables hungry children and young people to access stigma-free and barrier-free breakfast provision.



Khulisa

supports the development of young people's social and emotional skills and wellbeing. It does this through a whole institution approach that combines targeted therapeutic programmes with trauma training for frontline professionals and parents.



Power2

helps children and young people to improve their wellbeing so they can thrive and reach their full potential, by helping them identify their strengths, address their challenges and develop their skills.



Learning with Parents

supports families to have positive learning interactions by creating high-quality videos, games and activities that teachers select for pupils to use in their learning at home with parents.



Villiers Park

is a national social-justice charity delivering evidence-led programmes that develop personal and employability skills and raise academic outcomes for young people aged 11-19 from underrepresented backgrounds.



Life Lessons

aims to help young people make good decisions, be healthy and navigate the emotional and social complexities of life. It does this by helping teachers to deliver outstanding, peer-led relationships, sex and health education.

3) Support for Award Winners

We launched support for Innovation and Scaling Award Winners

We supported Innovation Award Winners so that they were ready to implement and test their pilots.

Award Winners found both the programme support and the network of other innovators impactful.

- Award Winners participated in nine Incubator training days, some including multiple sessions a day. Through these, Award Winners developed knowledge and skills on topics such as Theory of Change, evaluation processes, legal structures and finance. The trainings involved a mix of expert input, individual work and peer feedback.
- Winners gave very positive feedback of these trainings: 10 of the 11 Incubator training sessions were rated as either ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ by all Winners.
- The FEA Head of Innovation provided a total of 45 hours of 1-1 bespoke support across five months to help Award Winners design, deliver, fund and evaluate their pilots.

Highlights from Innovation Award Winners

Olivia, the Story Project: Secured £600,000 to fund expansion in Bradford schools over the next three years. She underscored how her updated Theory of Change and evaluation plans supported her in securing this funding.

Felicity, GoodWork: Launched the second iteration of GoodWork’s programme for a further group of young people, developed a new Corporate Partnership model and began to expand both Advisory and Staff teams.

Laura and Tiff, Stone Soup: Navigated complex legal incorporation, with brokered support from Bates Wells, to enable the cooperative’s innovative distributed leadership model.

“My experience of the Innovation Award so far has been absolutely fantastic. A highlight has been working with the other Award Winners, Tisha (Head of Innovation) and the wider FEA team whose perspectives have all been really valuable.

Over the last few months, we have been focusing on the problems that we are working on and rethinking our solutions so they can have the maximum impact. I am really proud of how much stronger our projects are looking after this experience.”

(Olivia Richards – The Story Project, Innovation Award Winner)

We launched bespoke support for Scaling Award Winners.

To support our Winners to scale:

- We led an in-depth needs assessment to determine the focus of their two years of support. These workshops involved a cross-section of staff from winning organisations to identify the main challenge areas the Award will support to address.
- We created a personalised support plan for each Winner. Common areas of support include strategy development, leadership development, sustainability, people and culture strategies, effective communications and impact measurement.
- We began delivery of the personalised support, including leadership and strategy workshops, and matching staff with expert mentors.
- We awarded six Award Winners £40,000 of funding to build their capacity through our Small Grants Programme. The grants, supported by Credit Suisse, were paired with investments by each organisation, such that the total funding across the projects was £73,000. Funded projects will transform their HR, advocacy activities, communications consultancy and training and external evaluation commissions.

How one Scaling Award Winner is using the Scaling Award support:



Life Lessons supports a whole school approach to teaching Relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). Fresh and current, they connect to the lives of students using videos across their spiral curriculum and lessons, form time activities and teacher CPD. With the rise of mental health issues, sexual harassment and anti-social behaviour, Life Lessons supports teachers to deliver outstanding, peer-led relationships, sex and health education.

Since winning the Innovation Award in 2020, Life Lessons already scaled to 120 schools by 2022. It now works in over 180 schools and are scaling quickly. Whilst they have national reach, Life Lessons' growth strategy focuses on three regions with high levels of deprivation: Greater Manchester, Merseyside, and Middlesbrough. They focus on these areas because children from low socio-economic backgrounds are twice as likely to experience sexual abuse.

With support from the Scaling Award, Life Lessons aims to work with 1,000 schools by 2025. By launching a 'Hub school' pilot, they aim to invite exemplar schools to become Life Lessons Hub schools and host best practice community events for other schools in the region. They are also working with three Violence Reduction Units to pilot their preventative intervention to the schools and young people they work with.

As part of the support from the Scaling Award, its work is partnering with previous Scaling Award Winner ImpactEd to update their impact measurement framework so that they can evaluate, quantify, and publish the impact of its work with schools, multi-academy trusts, and Violence Reduction Units. This support will allow them to better understand the impact of their work and build capacity within their organisation. The proposed activity could have a wider impact on the system by improving the perception and prioritisation of RSHE nationally and potentially internationally.

Tom Harbour, Learning with Parents Scaling Award Winner



Learning with Parents is on a mission to transform the UK education system to work for all families. It does this by helping families to have positive learning interactions through high-quality videos, games and activities that teachers select for pupils to use in their learning at home with parents.

The organisation has been supported through the FEA Awards for the past six years.

- 2017: Learning with Parents set up in its first iteration Maths with Parents, after winning the Innovation Award.
- Early 2020: the pandemic hit and requests for resources that parents could use with their kids skyrocketed, creating more demand than the organisation could sustain.
- Mid 2020: Now a registered charity called Learning with Parents, the organisation won the Scaling Award which ensured tailored support to deal with a constantly changing pandemic environment.
- 2023: A second round of Scaling Award support was secured to help focus on scaling a new reading log alongside core programmes and to develop a partnership strategy and pursue collaborative projects.

The organisation experienced a surge in demand for resources to support home learning since the Covid lockdowns. But, as they recognise, having both clarity of purpose and the ability to scale up quickly and sustainably is a key. Through it all, the FEA Awards Programme has been there to help navigate challenges and seize opportunities, especially during Covid. Tom Harbour, Learning with Parents CEO and founder, explains:

“Having the FEA by our side was really helpful, and so was having the Scaling Award where the support is dynamic to your own needs. That was really useful in times like Covid where it feels like what’s needed is changing, day by day, or week by week.”

Now a registered charity, Learning with Parents has already helped 20,000 families across the UK to enjoy 250,000+ learning opportunities together. Learning with Parents aims to engage 100,000 families a year by 2027. They are carefully considering how best to scale given the challenges they experienced with scaling very quickly during Covid. The team are now asking themselves how much, and how quickly do they want to scale?

As Tom describes: “Part of the Scaling Award has been helping us to have clarity that we can go slow with some of our programmes and build the impact within each school that we work with, to then scale in other ways later.”

Another core part of how Learning with Parents approached their scaling is through collaboration. Thanks to the FEA Parental Engagement Working Group, Learning with Parents connects and collaborates with other members.

Tom says: “Educational inequality is such a wicked problem. So much is set up to widen the gap. But we realised pretty early on that we couldn’t really achieve our goals working in our own little silo... We have always been keen to think about how we bring organisations together and how we create an ecosystem that does work for low-income parents in particular.”

Sarah Waite, Get Further

2023 Scaling Award Winner



Get Further want to transform the experience of students who are facing challenges while studying GCSE English or maths in further education, by matching them with top tutors.

Get Further has already seen a huge amount of growth over the first five years. They first won the Innovation Award back in 2018, which Sarah Waite, founder and CEO, credits as a “catalyst” without which they “would not exist”. Learning to scale up at pace has been a key part of the Get Further journey. The organisation secured a second round of support from the Scaling Award this year.

As a relatively new charity when Covid hit, Get Further had to navigate various unexpected challenges including having to scale up quickly to meet increasing needs. This speed of growth has continued as the pandemic left an increased need for supporting young people to catch up with tuition, and more demand from the education sector. This academic year, Get Further aims to work with 3,000 students and 45 education partners, and longer term they want to reach 20,000 learners a year.

Sarah Waite, founder and CEO says: “There’s so much to do when you’re scaling at pace like we have, it wasn’t a typical trajectory for a start-up charity. Having the support from the FEA for scaling, in particular, has helped to do things like build a really strong executive leadership team. We’ve had support with taking that time to understand the most effective ways of working as a leadership team, so that we can drive the charity effectively and, that’s been phenomenal.”

With the help of the FEA’s Scaling Award, Get Further have also benefitted from:

- Connections with experts to mentor them in building new skills.
- A platform to spread the wider message of the work they do with others in the sector.
- Support with putting together a strategic review to support and guide the charity through periods of change.

Aside from winning the Award itself, Get Further have also been able to benefit from the support of peers from other organisations through the Tuition Advocacy Working Group. As Sarah describes:

“Everybody has networks and experiences that I can learn from, and hopefully, they learn from me too. And we can combine that and really harness all the strengths of each organisation, and work towards a common goal. So, it has been a really powerful experience.”

The benefit of having a peer group of other charity leaders working in similar fields can be invaluable for learning and raising profile for key issues together. Get Further has found it can provide an opportunity to have these conversations with people who have “paved the way” in areas that they want to pursue. As Sarah says:

“It means that we’re not reinventing the wheel but are actually learning and are more effective as we progress different pieces of work.”

This impactful year of work has been made possible thanks to the incredible support of our funders. Thank you for all you have done to make this possible.

ALLEN & OVERY

“Businesses play an important role in addressing educational inequality. We’re proud to continue to support the FEA to help build a fair and equitable society for all young people. At a time when the school system in England is under significant pressures with the financial climate and tough accountability contributing to a teacher recruitment and retention crisis, we all need to invest and focus our efforts collectively to bring around change.”

Jessica Kerslake, Partner, Allen & Overy and Fair Education Alliance Advisory Board Member



“We are delighted to be members of the FEA and part of the important work that they do, especially during these unprecedented times. The pandemic has widened the social equity gap for young people across the country and we acknowledge that without equitable action this gap will continue to move further, further apart.”

Kate McGoey, LifeSkills Senior Programme Manager, Barclays Life Skills

Bloomberg

“At Bloomberg, we know that innovation and collaboration can drive growth and create new opportunities. We’re committed to building a more equitable future for young people, which is why we are proud to support the Fair Education Alliance in their work to promote new ideas and collective action across the education system.”

Caroline Rowley, Head of Corporate Philanthropy – Europe

IG Group

“IG Group is a relatively new member of the FEA. Over the last couple of years our community programme has grown significantly, with a focus on empowering socially and economically disadvantaged groups through knowledge, skills and experiences. So far, as FEA members, we’ve been in full listening mode – and we couldn’t think of a better place to learn about all the complex challenges around educational inequality, or to find inspiration from all of the fantastic initiatives that are being developed by FEA members. Being a member of this network gives us confidence that we are putting our energy in the right places, and we have been so impressed at the scale of the FEA’s ambition and their excellence and expertise in this field. We are incredibly proud to be part of this alliance and hope we can play our role in helping achieve the vision that no child’s success is limited by their socioeconomic background.”

Ben Hemington, Group Head of ESG



“The power of the FEA is its ability to bring together the breadth of stakeholders, insights and skills required to target support where its most needed and work towards a future where all young people have the tools and support they need to achieve the best educational outcomes they can.”

Roisin Sharkey and Roisin Murphy, Co-Heads of Corporate Responsibility in the UK

MISSION 44

“One of Mission 44’s priorities is to empower young people to become an influential force for change. We are delighted to partner with the FEA to increase young people’s voices in shaping the decision-making of their 250-strong organisational membership. As match funders we are also pleased for the opportunity to collaborate with Pears on this partnership.”

Sharon Jones, Head of Impact – Mission 44



“We are delighted to support the FEA through our Backbone Fund, enabling the coalition to increase collaboration and use its powerful collective voice at such an important time. With the cost-of-living crisis and political shifts, it’s crucial that the FEA continues to advocate for a fair education for all children and young people, and in doing so, achieve a just and equitable society in which everyone, especially young people, can realise their full potential.”

Catherine Sutton, Head of Programme:
Education, Paul Hamlyn Foundation



“We are passionate about creating opportunities for young people to be active citizens, and we understand the hugely important role of schools and colleges in supporting those experiences. We are delighted to be partnering with Mission 44 to continue our support of the FEA’s work developing and celebrating social action opportunities with, and through, their members.”

Bridget Kohner, Deputy Director, Pears Foundation



“Investing in education can be a powerful way to tackle social inequality. And cross-sector collaboration around proven innovations can be a powerful way to scale their impact. At a time when the need for both is increasingly pressing, the mission of the FEA is more relevant than ever.”

Sarah Payne, Head of Social Impact and Philanthropy UK



“We greatly value our partnership with the FEA in these ongoing challenging times. It is the strong collaborative nature of the collective action from its fast-growing broad cross-sector membership that really draws us in. We are really excited to see the fruits of a huge amount of work over the last year after the launch of the digital tools that have been further shaped and enhanced by the membership. We believe this will be highly significant in supporting this collective effort.”

Chris White, Founder, Zing



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