

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**5 July 2023 – for immediate release**

**CAMDEN GIVING *YOUTH FUTURES FUND* AWARDS MORE THAN £300K TO YOUTH SERVICES TO SUPPORT LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE AND BRING ABOUT COLLABORATIVE SYSTEM CHANGE**

**A charitable fund set up in 2018 following a night of tragic violence in Camden\*, has awarded its latest round of grants for 2023 totalling £315,000 to local organisations in the Camden area that are making a difference for young people and the systems around them – including supporting  young people’s mental health, working with police on ‘stop and search’, and influencing the Mayor’s office on its knife crime policy.**

The charity [**Camden Giving**](https://www.camdengiving.org.uk/) receivedapplications totalling £1.8million for its *Youth Futures Fund*, showing the critical demand for long-term funding for the youth sector in this area. Fund money has been donated by foundations, businesses, wealthy individuals and local government.

As a champion of *participatory grant making*, Camden Giving recruited 12 Camden residents aged 16-25 to participate in its youth panel, which is made responsible for deciding how the grant money is awarded to charities in Camden. It believes that the diverse life experiences of young people who live in the very areas the funds aim to support, bring insight and understanding at a grass roots level that is invaluable in determining how the funds can best help those who need it the most and bring about positive change.

The participatory grantmaking panel of young people shortlisted 6 organisations whose applications total £457,000. The Youth Futures Fund was able to award £315,000 to:

* **Somali Youth Development Resource Centre** - £71,220 – to support their youth offer of coding, volunteering and a youth-led leadership programme

* **St Mary Community Centre** - £87,000 – to support young people’s mental health and work with police around ‘stop and search’, and supporting young people to influence the Mayor’s office on its knife crime policy
* **Kings Cross Community Association** - £90,000 – covering MMA sessions, social action, and a healthy in-house meal provision
* And a reduced grant to **Corams Fields** - £73,000 – to support ongoing work with Camden and Islington NHS Trust to merge traditional psychology and youth work to work with young people at risk of youth violence

Camden Giving’s unusual process of participatory grantmaking ensures diversity and inclusivity, appointing individuals from minority groups, including different ethnicities, people on low incomes, people with disabilities and those with experience of the criminal conviction system – typically those young people who are usually excluded from decision-making. Panellists receive training and support in their role, including how to be anti-racist grantmakers, from Camden Giving and partners [brap](https://www.brap.org.uk/%22%20HYPERLINK%20%22https%3A/www.brap.org.uk/).

Natasha Friend, Director at Camden Giving, says: “Camden Giving has worked with 50 young people over the last five years to shape how we award funding to youth services. They’ve told us clearly that the status quo isn’t good enough; in a borough with so much opportunity, it’s still too hard for young people to thrive. Something big has to change and that’s why young people voted for us to give larger grants to organisations who share their commitment to breaking unequal systems.

“We’ve awarded grants to organisations who will spend the next three years helping young people to change failing systems; everything from working with police, to influencing what the future of youth work will look like.

“These grants are a response to what young people in this borough want to see from civil society, meaningful change. Camden Giving is only able to do this because of a group of young people who have spent their evenings plotting for a better future, they’ve given their time and their hearts to this work and everyone in Camden owes them a great debt.”



Picture: 2 panellists (Sabir left and Adam right).

Panellist and grantee Sabir Abukar states, "I hope that the young people who are involved in these projects will become role models to the next generation of young people.”

Adam Irvanipour adds, "I was impressed by how organised Mary's Community Centre is, they are doing lots of different things that will lead to a more tolerant and respectful society."

Over the last 5 years Camden Giving has worked with 50 local young people in its participatory grantmaking programme and has awarded more than £500k in grants to charities and projects in Camden.

**There will be a collaboration event in September for panellists/grantees, young people and donors. Projects and achievements will be acknowledged and showcased as examples for both the future in Camden and to encourage other boroughs to consider this form of participatory grantmaking.**

**For further information about participatory grant making and the work of Camden Giving is creating a better future in Camden go to** [**www.camdengiving.org.uk**](http://www.camdengiving.org.uk/)

**— ENDS —**

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**Notes to Editors:**

\* The *Youth Future Fund* was set up in 2018 following a night of tragic violence in Camden where 3 young men were stabbed; 2 fatally. Following this, it was apparent that young people needed to be in control of power and have money to choose the youth services they fund.

**About Camden Giving**

Our mission is to end local poverty and inequality in Camden. We think it’s time for a different way of doing charity, we work with businesses to support Camden citizens to be at the heart of change in our borough. We work with community members to give grants to everything from foodbanks and homeless shelters to community research and organising.

Camden Giving is uncovering better ways of creating equity in our opportunities. We think that volunteering, participatory funding, resident decision-making and employment opportunities are key in creating equality, and we’ve learnt that the way these things are delivered is key.

For further information about participatory grant making and the work of Camden Giving is creating a better future in Camden go to [www.camdengiving.org.uk](http://www.camdengiving.org.uk/)

Registered charity no. 1174463 in England and Wales

**About Participatory Grant Making**

We prioritise shifting power to a varied range of voices, over counting the number of residents involved in our grant-making, because people who are surviving the issues we’re concerned about should be the ones we look to for solutions. When we interview for panellists, we look for people who are struggling to have their voices heard and who have experienced the harsher side of Camden and we change our programme to fit their specific needs. For more information about Participatory Grant Making, read our report on PGM <https://www.camdengiving.org.uk/camden-giving-reports>

**About brap**

brap is a charity transforming the way we think and do equality. We support organisations, communities, and cities with meaningful approaches to learning, change, research, and engagement. We are a partner and friend to anyone who believes in the rights and potential of all human beings.