

Part A - General Information

Organisation

Teenage Helpline

Organisation Type/Structure

Charitable Company (Limited by Guarantee)

Theme/Nature of Project

Children, Youth Development and Families

Charity Registration Number (if applicable)

1194937

Company/CIC Registration Number (if applicable)

09170949

Name of Lead Contact

Joshua Towers

Email

Joshua.towers@teenagehelpline.org.uk

How did you find out about the Awards?

Recommended by a Friend/Colleague or Other Person

Website

<https://www.teenagehelpline.org.uk>

Social Media Handles (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram etc):

Instagram - @TeenageHelpline

Facebook - /TeenageHelpline

LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/teenage-helpline/>

Part B - Project Proposal

Project Mission: A snapshot of the project's intention (50 words max)

Teenage Helpline strives to ensure that no young people are left to suffer in silence when navigating through the difficulties that they may be facing. Recognising that most support services are run by adults, which is a barrier for many young people, Teenage Helpline provides peer-to-peer early-intervention support to young people to close this barrier.

Situation (250 words)

Teenage Helpline has grown significantly throughout its time, originally launching in 2011 and since relaunching in 2020. Joshua Towers founded Teenage Helpline in 2011 whilst he was at school, age 14, following his struggles with his own personal circumstances. He felt that he had no where to turn as he didn't want to speak with adults, and only wanted to speak with others his own age. In his free time he decided to create this online support tool for young people who struggle either their emotional troubles/depression, bullying, sexual abuse and more.

With over 300 case studies of young people who have benefitted from the support that Teenage Helpline provides, with each of those cases demonstrating the demand and success of a service of it's type, we are ready to move to the next stage as an organisation. It is clear to us that there is a definitive need for what we do – in recent studies, 62% of young people reported that they were not able to access the support that they needed through their schools in the UK, and this is where we believe that Teenage Helpline can continue to make a strong difference to the lives and futures of young people right across the UK. Teenage Helpline is currently fully-staffed by volunteers only, and no individuals are paid to operate the charity.

Complication (250 words)

The underlying problem here is that young people have not been trusted to be in the position that we place them into. Young people have the power and possess the maturity to provide the peer-support services that Teenage Helpline offer. Too many young people continue to suffer in silence, as our founder did when growing up as a Teenager. With pressure on existing services for young people exponentially growing, it is absolutely critical that we are able to offer services to young people in a way that means everybody is able to access some form of support.

With such harrowing numbers of young people that still feel unable to access support, Teenage Helpline offers a critical alternative route to early-intervention support for young people. Our service will continue to offer opportunities to ease pressures on existing services (such as counselling and other support services for young people) as pressures continue to grow.

By offering the services that Teenage Helpline does, those young people who need support but feel that there is nowhere to turn because they don't yet feel ready, able or comfortable to speak with an adult, have a clear route to begin their journey in accessing the support that they need.

Solution (250 words)

The solution is clear to Teenage Helpline, and is already being delivered. There is work for us to do to enhance our offering and ensure that it is accessible to all young people who need us. Our peer-support program is currently offered via e-mail, where a young person can reach out to us and be paired with another young person (aged 16-25) who has been trained to deliver critical early-intervention support. This clear solution offers an attractive route to support for young people who need it, but do not feel that they can speak with an adult. We offer support from relatable individuals at a peer-level in a non-judgement and relaxed setting.

To further enhance our support, our upcoming plans see us revamping our website to provide more self-help support, and encourage young people to reach out to our mentors in a more structural way. Not only this, but we are looking to introduce a web-app type solution that will allow young people to chat directly with our mentors rather than via e-mail. E-mail has been identified as another barrier that we face by our Youth Advisory Committee given how young people prefer to communicate. Beyond this, we will then look to deploy mobile friendly solutions such as apps and text-support to ensure that all young people feel they are able to reach out to our services anonymously and in a way that suits their preferred communication methods.

Part C - Wider Support

How would the Stephen Lloyd Award network of partners' support be beneficial to your project? (250 words max)

There is huge benefit that Teenage Helpline could take from the Stephen Lloyd Award network of partners. Most notably, with the challenge that we are trying to solve, we could use the expertise of others in the IT field to help us advance our technological offering. This will be absolutely crucial in enabling us to reach more young people and to continue to further how accessible our support services are to young people.

Not only this, but our CEO launched the charity at age 14. There are clear opportunities here for our CEO, and other executives in the charity, to take on mentoring opportunities that will enable them to grow in their roles. As our executives (who all sit on the Board of Trustees currently) develop their skills through mentoring, the rate at which Teenage Helpline can successfully grow will steadily increase. This will directly impact how we are able to support young people.

There are also other opportunities where we could benefit from many other fields of expertise, and a greater exposure with potential donors will enhance our organisation for the future. It should be noted that Teenage Helpline provides all services for free of charge, and currently relies on the generosity of others to ensure that we are able to continue running our support services to young people.

Part D - Financial Justification

How do you propose to spend the winning funds of £25,000 (50 words max). Please provide a general idea.

The core justification for the financial award would be to support our technology work. This award would allow us to deliver our technology plans much more quickly, meaning that we can deploy additional support to young people sooner. Any excess money would be used to further promote the charity to more young people.

Part E - Supporting Information

Governing Documents: Where relevant, please upload any recent charity accounts and governing documents as attachments.

- [Teenage-Helpline-Charitable-Articles-of-Association-01-Jun-2021-Final.pdf](#)

Team: We would like to learn a little more about the individual or team invested into the project. What are your individual credentials? Is there a story behind how you or your team all came together to support the project? (75 words max)

Josh Towers founded the charity at age 14 whilst at school. Josh struggled with his mental health, coming to terms with his sexuality and issues around family, relationships and bullying. It was this that drove Josh to provide alternative support to young people like himself. Over the years, Josh has enlisted the support from other qualified individuals (i.e. the existing board and over 300 volunteers) who are all fully bought into the mission and aims of the charity.

Additional References: You are welcome to provide a list of up to 5 links with any relevant supporting material or visuals, as further reference

2022 Annual Report - <https://teenagehelpline.org.uk/docs/2022-annual-report/>

News Article - <https://www.dailyecho.co.uk/news/20144816.southampton-man-creates-mental-health-support-service-young-people/>

Diana Award Press Release - <https://teenagehelpline.org.uk/docs/outstanding-young-hero-in-southampton-receives-award-in-memory-of-princess-diana/>