

YOUNG PEOPLE'S ECONOMIC SECURITY: A PROJECT WITH THE RSA

What is economic security and why does it matter?

Our financial situation affects our quality of life. This might be because of how much we earn or how much we need to spend to get by. It might be related to where our money comes from or other things going on in our lives.

When our financial situation allows us to feel confident about our current and future quality of life, we have economic security. When our financial situation does not give us this confidence, we are economically insecure. This confidence, and our economic security, can change over time as our circumstances or the environment around us changes.

Many of us live with uncertainty that we can get by each month. This economic insecurity affects our health, self-esteem and relationships. It shapes how we think, and make decisions, about our futures. We want to make sure that all young people feel greater security and are able to thrive.

Covid-19 has highlighted how exposed young people are to a range of insecurities, particularly in relation to employment, training and housing. But these are not new issues. Since before the pandemic, young people have been the most likely to experience insecure employment contracts or work in the gig economy, have lower minimum wage guarantees and access only to the lowest level of housing benefit.

What's the purpose of the project?

Young people's economic security has long been overlooked in research and policy. Through this project, we want to give it the focus it deserves by:

- Building evidence about young people's economic insecurity and how it affects their futures
- Amplifying young people's voices and needs through participatory research
- Designing new ways of doing things with young people
- Taking these ideas to policymakers and those who play a role in young people's lives

As a Young Advisor, what will I be doing?

Working with the RSA, Young Advisors will have the opportunity to:

- Advise on, and feed into, key stages of the project from your perspective.
This might include:
 - Designing research activities
 - Analysing research findings
 - Communicating the work including in blogs, case studies, reports and events
 - Developing policy recommendations
 - Engaging with policymakers and others
- Share your own perspective and insights into the issue based on your lived experience
- Be advocates for young people's economic security by helping to raise the project's profile
- Get paid £70 per quarter of engagement

Young Advisors will be asked to:

- Make a minimum time commitment of 5 hours a quarter (three months) to:
 - Prepare for, and attend, quarterly online meetings
 - Complete any follow-up activities or engagement after meetings
 - Communicate with the project team between quarterly meetings via email and Whatsapp
 - Help create open and safe group spaces in which all members are able to participate equally

TRANSPORT TO THRIVE: A PROJECT WITH SUSTRANS & UWE

What is Transport to Thrive and why does it matter?

Are you aged 16 to 25 and been frustrated that you haven't been able to access the transport you need to make journeys, for example to meet friends, reach sports clubs or new work opportunities? Would you like to be involved in a project that aims to change this?

Transport influences the opportunities we reach such as work, education, and youth and support services. Being able to make journeys allows us to live the lifestyle we want, reach new experiences and be independent.

Transport also greatly influences the physical space near where we live. Done well, this can make the areas near our homes enjoyable, healthy and give them a sense of identity.

Transport systems can unlock or block our ability to get to the places we need and want to go. This impacts on our lives now, and also matters in the long run- the skills we gain and the support we get when we are young help us to thrive and fulfil our ambitions in the future.

What's the purpose of the project?

TtT aims to address the transport-related barriers young people face in accessing life-defining opportunities.

TtT ultimately aims to influence national and local transport decision makers to consider the impact of their decisions on young people, and to design a better transport system for young people.

As a Young Advisor, what will I be doing?

We are looking for 10-15 enthusiastic and passionate young people from across the UK to work with us on Transport to Thrive, a project jointly conducted by Sustrans (the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle) and the University of the West of England (UWE).

By becoming a Young Advisor, you will meaningfully shape TtT. You will have the chance to input creatively, to provide your expertise as a young person, and to meet and influence decision makers.

TtT Young Advisors will become part of the established network of Sustrans volunteers, giving you access to support from experienced Sustrans staff.

As a TtT Young Advisor you will be asked to:

- Attend TtT Young Advisor meetings every 2-4 months
- Provide expert insight - by telling us about your experiences and how transport (of all types- bus, e-scooters, walking, cycling, car and more) has impacted on you reaching important destinations
- Get creative- by sharing ideas for videos, infographics, and other communication materials, or even developing communication materials
- Be advocates to the project. As young people you are the voice that matters, and so you will be invited to speak to decision makers and to the public about the project
- Input into our research, by providing feedback on the questions we ask, by helping with recruitment, and giving us your thoughts on the results
- As part of your advocacy role, you will have the opportunity to represent young people in our wider project steering group which includes transport authorities and organisations.
- Make a total time commitment of approximately 6-12 hours a month (including meetings, email contact, and input in between meetings).

You will also be invited to join our end of year virtual-meal out celebration, funded by TtT. Through this role, you will learn new skills and build on existing ones. You will work closely with other TtT Young Advisors, but will also have the opportunity to network with Young Advisors from our partner organisations. You can expect regular communications to support you in your role and direct contact with a Delivery Coordinator within Sustrans.

QUALITY OF WORK: A PROJECT WITH THE INSTITUTE FOR EMPLOYMENT STUDIES

What is Quality of Work and why does it matter?

The quality of the work we have access to has a big impact on our lives, it can affect our physical and mental health, and determine the quality of our life more generally.

How we define quality covers objective factors (earnings, job security, work-life balance, etc.) and subjective factors (feeling fulfilled, liking the work environment, feeling supported, etc.), and what quality means can vary from person to person.

The quality of work young people (aged 16-25) are engaged in has been progressively decreasing in recent years against some measures, particularly for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (eg. due to their ethnicity, education level, health/disability, and/or other complex circumstances in their lives).

What's the purpose of the project?

The Institute for Employment Studies (IES) is looking for six young people aged 16-25 to join the steering group for a project focused on the quality of youth employment. If you are passionate about, and interested in, how we can improve access to good work for young people across the UK including those who are disadvantaged, underprivileged or face obstacles in the labour market, then this is the right opportunity for you!

This project aims to understand how different groups understand good quality work (young people, employers, support services, decision makers), how this insight can help us understand what needs to change to improve access to good quality work for young people, and how we can influence this change.

As a Young Advisor, what will I be doing?

As an IES Youth Advisor you will join a team of IES researchers, spanning senior and early career levels, with interest and expertise in young people's transitions to the labour market, health, and quality of work. The group exists to guide the project and help it to achieve high impact, by bringing together the voices and ideas of people with different expertise and experience and ensuring young people are at the heart of decision-making.

Young Advisors will also be asked to join a 'Feedback Session' after each steering group meeting, which will provide a safe space, where you will be given a chance to provide feedback on the meeting including your views on improvements for future sessions, and discuss the research and its opportunities for you.

As an IES Young Advisor you will be given the opportunity to:

- Take part in research activities that may be of interest to you (providing feedback on the activities we set out to do, helping with recruitment, participating as a peer researcher, etc.)
- Access a development opportunity through participation in the steering group to expand your skillset and knowledge
- Be part of an exciting project that is aiming to achieve change and have policy impact
- Network with experts working in a high-profile and nationally-recognised research organisation on employment, and share your own knowledge and insights with them
- Access networking and influencing opportunities, with other young people, with experts in the field, and decision-makers
- Have regular communication with the project team to support you in your role
- Be paid £50 per quarter (three months)
- Join a wider cohort of Youth Advisors working across the Health Foundation's Young People Future Health Inquiry for two meetings each year.

As an IES Young Advisor you will be asked to:

- Commit one day of time every three months (please note, this will be a single day; instead time will be spread over a number of days so there is flexibility for everyone)
- Attend the IES Steering Group every three months, and the follow-up Feedback Session (these meetings will last two-to-three hours in total)
- Provide expert insight based on your experiences and those of your peers - by sharing your views as a young person to shape and direct the project and activities
- Be an influencing voice for the project. As a young person your voice is key on this issue, and you will be invited to join opportunities to speak to a range of decision-makers.