Can you help to create a ground-breaking piece of art in Birmingham?

Friday 20 September, 2013

A group of young people from Birmingham are appealing for help in creating a unique live art installation to tackle the stigma surrounding mental health.

Lead by Fixer Joe Gaffney, 24, the group want to use the live installation to educate people, in particular the younger generation, about the true facts of mental health.

Working with Fixers, a charity which supports young people to ‘fix the future’, the live installation, called 'Miles: My Modern Mental Illness', will take the audience on an interactive journey exploring the life of someone who is experiencing mental health issues.

The use of live performance, film sets and abstract art will set this out as a unique, abstract and completely innovative experience for everyone involved.

The Fixers will launch the installation in the city centre in October.

In the meantime, they are appealing for anyone who can help by providing materials such as wood or timber or who would like to volunteer their time to get in touch.

“The installation will benefit young people by getting them actively involved in the creative process as well as educating them about mental health,” says Joe.

“They will develop an understanding of the stigma attached to mental health problems and engage in dialogue about the common misconceptions that come with being labelled with ill mental health.

“We are targeting the younger generation who we believe are growing up with pre-conceived misconceptions of mental health due to mainstream media misinformation.

“We need to educate them on the true facts of mental health, and how it can affect them, their family and the people around them.

“We really want the local community to get involved and help us create this memorable project."

The Fixers need help to source wood and timber, and would be grateful for any time and expertise local people can offer to help them build and decorate the installation.

Fixers coordinator Nithee Kotecha says: “This is a great project because the young people are creatively tackling this problem and getting the local community involved in creating something that will benefit future generations. That is what Fixers’ projects are all about.”

To offer support to this Fixers project, please contact Nithee Kotecha on 07436 265937 or nithee@fixers.org.uk.

Fixers is charity which supports young people across the UK to take action and change things for the better, addressing any issue they feel strongly about.

How each Fixer tackles their chosen issue is up to them – as long as they benefit someone else.

The award-winning Fixers project has already supported over 9,000 young people to have an authentic voice in their community.

Each Fixer is supported to create the resources they need - such as films, websites or print work - to make their chosen project a success.

Now, thanks to a grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers aims to work with a further 19,000 young people over the next three years.

For images, interviews or more information, please contact Sue Meaden in the Fixers Communications Team by email sue@fixers.org.uk or phone 01962 810970.

Related Sectors:

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There are lots more stories about young people doing great things on the Fixers website, Twitter and Facebook pages:
http://www.fixers.org.uk
http://www.twitter.com/FixersUK
http://www.facebook.com/FixersUK

Notes to editors:

• Fixers started in England in 2008. Now with a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers is extending into Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. To date, over 9,000 young people across the UK have become Fixers and created 1,040 projects.
• Margo Horsley, Chief Executive of Fixers says: “Fixers started in 2008 as just an idea… an idea given a voice by over 9,000 young people over the past five years. They have reached thousands of people with their work, on a national stage as well as in and around where they live. They choose the full array of social and health issues facing society today and set about making their mark. Fixers are always courageous and their ideas can be challenging and life-changing, not just for themselves.”
• Peter Ainsworth, Big Lottery Fund UK Chair, said: “The Big Lottery Fund is extremely happy to be supporting Fixers to engage with more young people to change things for the better. Thousands of public-spirited young people across the UK are campaigning to make improvements in their own communities. By providing a platform to highlight their voluntary work and many achievements, Fixers demonstrates the positive contribution thousands of committed young people are making at a local level and challenges negative stereotypes.”
• The Big Lottery Fund (BIG), the largest distributor of National Lottery good cause funding, is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised for good causes by the National Lottery.
• BIG is committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need and has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since June 2004. The Fund was formally established by Parliament on 1 December 2006.
• Since the National Lottery began in 1994, 28p from every pound spent by the public has gone to good causes. As a result, over £29 billion has now been raised and more than 383,000 grants awarded across arts, sport, heritage, charities, health, education and the environment.

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