New programme supports young refugees in Bristol into employment

Monday 18 June, 2018

During Refugee Week, UK Youth has reinvigorated its Youth Action employability programme to better support the needs of young refugees in Bristol. The programme, funded by Starbucks and delivered in partnership with ACH (formerly Ashley Community Housing), provides young people with the opportunity to learn life skills through employability training.

Youth Action will empower young refugees who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), with the confidence, skills and experience needed to feel ready for the work place. The programme addresses the key issues young people face surrounding employment and provides them with the opportunity to learn life skills through employability training, put these new skills into practice in a networking environment and create their own business by running local community cafes.

Patrick Shaw-Brown, Director of National Programmes at UK Youth said: “Reacting to the changing needs of young people and society is at the heart of everything we do at UK Youth. In recent years, youth organisations across the UK have provided vital provision for young refugees. Even with this additional support, we’ve found that young refugees in our network still face high levels of unemployment. Our specially adapted Youth Action programme will provide a safe space for young people to prepare for work and targeted support to help them engage with employment and integrate with their community.”

The Bristol-based pilot will be delivered in partnership with ACH, a leading provider of resettlement services for refugees.

Julia Palmer, Career Advice and Employment Manager at ACH said: “We’re proud to partner with UK Youth and utilise our expertise to adapt the Youth Action programme. Through the programme, we hope to get more employers #rethinkingrefugee and better support the young refugees in Bristol to engage with employment.”

Youth Action reflects Starbucks’ global effort to support refugee integration and provide work opportunities for them.

Russell Butcher, senior manager education and skills, Starbucks EMEA: “Starbucks has a long history of supporting equal opportunities, inclusion and diversity amongst our partners (employees). We’ve worked with UK Youth for over six years now and the extension of the programme with ACH is a fantastic way to offer young refugees real work place skills training.”

After receiving advice and guidance through masterclasses, Youth Action will finish with the young people running their community cafes during Bristol Refugee Festival.

Notes to editors:

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About UK Youth:

Founded in 1911, UK Youth provides young people aged 9-25 with high quality services, delivered through a network of locally accessible youth organisations across the UK. Together we offer support, advice and training to over four million young people to equip them with vital life skills and help them engage in education, volunteering and employment. Our mission is to provide access to appropriate, high quality services for young people in every community so that all young people are empowered to build bright futures, regardless of their background or circumstances.

About ACH

ACH was established in 2008 as a social enterprise specialising in integrating refugees through accommodation, support and community-based training. We provide safe, secure and comfortable

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housing combined with culturally sensitive support and employability skills training. Our unique approach focuses on building individuals' resilience in the labour market, upskilling and supporting refugees into sustainable, higher-level employment in order to develop their independence and ease their integration into UK life.

We have successfully resettled over 2000 individuals from refugee backgrounds in this time and are now one of the UK's leading providers of resettlement services for refugee and newly arrived communities. We operate in Bristol, Birmingham and Wolverhampton, and are aiming to work with 25,000 more individuals over the next 10 years.

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