

Equipping young people for life

Our 2014 – 2020 strategy

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation





Our Award challenge

Arguably the relevance and need for The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is greater now than at any time before in its 58 years of existence.

Young people need all the help they can get to be prepared for life and work. There are 1.2 billion 14-24 year olds worldwide. These young people currently make up 40% of the world's unemployed and 71 million young people of lower secondary age are not even in school.

What young people get from their Award experiences – the skills to think in different ways, confidence and enthusiasm, interpersonal skills, a set of values that build character and a sense of purpose, resilience, and practical (often vocational) skills – is exactly what employers and educational institutions look for when distinguishing candidates from each other in the worldwide fight for talent. The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award equips young people for life.

Judging by the demand for the Award, young people realise the positive impact it can have on their lives and their future. Nevertheless, many more still have no awareness of it or no access to it.

Our challenge is to meet the demand and fulfil the need. To achieve our ambition of every 14-24 year old having the opportunity to participate in the Award, we need to increase its spread. We must diversify where and how young people can access the Award, so that more can participate.

If we are to meet our targets we must focus on growing the numbers of people starting and completing their Awards. This focus on growth is not to undermine the outcomes and impact achieved by the Award, but to focus all of us on the need to extend our work to a larger and wider group of young people.

Our strategy, which is explained in this document, will steer the work of the The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation and members of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Association leading into the Toronto 2015 International Award Forum. It will support all of our current work and focus discussions on our future direction.

The Award is coming of age: it is a proven tool for non-formal education and it is acknowledged and respected for the outcomes and impact it has on young people and their communities. The Award has spread from the United Kingdom to over 140 countries and territories; some 8 million young people have participated in the Award and nearly 1 million are involved each year. The credibility and relevance of the Award is no longer in question, but its reputation and value must now be sustained and broadened.



John May
Secretary General



The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award

We are the leading youth achievement award for young people. We bring together practical experiences and life skills to create committed citizens of the world.

Our vision is to reach more young people from diverse backgrounds and equip them as individuals to succeed in life.

We equip young people regardless of their backgrounds, circumstances and abilities for whatever challenges or opportunities lie ahead, to help them succeed in life.

Our long term ambition is that by 2026, when the Award celebrates 70 years, every eligible young person will have the opportunity to participate in the Award.

As a charity we are ambitious for young people, in particular those between 14 and 24, and believe that non-formal education is a critical part of a young person's development and not just an add-on. We believe that what young people do and learn outside the classroom, often in their own time, should receive adequate recognition and appreciation.

We are ambitious for our partners who deliver The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award and believe that with the right support they can reach far more young people.

By 2020 we will:

- Increase the number of young people starting an Award from 500,000 each year to 750,000.
- Engage with more 'at risk' and 'marginalised' young people (making up 20% of all participants).
- Increase the number of Awards gained to 500,000 each year.

Our intention through this work is to increase the value of our **social return** to approximately £400m per annum by 2020. This will be achieved as we increase the number of young people who are participating in the Award.

Our values are to be progressive and empowering, to ensure we are connected throughout our network to enable more collaborative working, and to be diverse in our approaches to engaging with people and in encouraging challenging activities.

The benefits or **outcomes** for young people include increased confidence, personal and social skills. The positive **impact** on the community includes higher levels of educational attainment, improved employability, increased participation in civic life and improved health and well-being.

An award for all

The Award constantly needs to align its messages to the issues facing young people – so ensuring we stay relevant and help young people discover their own solutions.

All young people benefit from experiencing a wide range of extracurricular activities, beyond the walls of the classroom. The Award provides a framework of non-formal education that helps young people learn skills for life and provides worldwide recognition for their achievement.

For those who already have some access to non-formal education, the Award helps to develop a well rounded character, rather than just a focus on academic results. For the 'forgotten middle' – those young people who are neither intellectually gifted, nor academically slow – such experiential learning provides the opportunity to discover talents that often don't show up in the classroom and to develop untapped leadership potential. For marginalised and at risk young people, the effects can be truly transformational – providing opportunities, through genuinely life-changing experiences, to climb out of poverty, to break cycles of deprivation, to gain concrete experience and build the skills, behaviours and attitudes needed for a new and different life.

The Award defines what good non-formal education looks like, provides a tried and tested framework for its delivery in any context where young people might be gathered, and allows achievement to be recognised in a way that is consistent worldwide, so giving young people internationally recognised accreditation of their experiences.

The Award internationally provides a common platform for dialogue and sharing of experiences between groups of young people from different backgrounds and cultures; it allows donors to contribute to the development of new cohorts of empowered, forward thinking young people across the world; it allows those working with young people to use a tried, tested and globally relevant non-formal education tool.

How we work together

There are many of us involved in delivering this ‘award for all’ and for it to be successful we must all play our unique part. We must work together, sharing intelligence and learning to ensure improved outcomes for young people everywhere.

Award Units including Independent Award Centres

- **Promote and deliver** the Award in a safe and positive manner within their own area of control.
- **Ensure access** to the Award for the widest group of people as either participants or volunteer helpers, in a variety of guises.

Award Units are the vital environment where young people take part, supported by dedicated teams of volunteers acting as Award Leaders, Assessors and helpers.

National Award Operators

- **Plan** for sustainable implementation of the Award in their country, including financial sustainability.
- **Promote** use of the Award as a tool to help develop young people.
- **Manage** growth of the Award throughout their country.
- **Support** people and organisations within their country to deliver the highest quality Award to the greatest number of people.

The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Association

All National Award Operators (NAOs) are brought together within the Association which:

- **Connects** individual NAOs in a forum for debate, discussion and development of the Award and its strategy.
- **Facilitates** joint working and support by peer NAOs.
- **Helps** to set and agree standards of behaviour and delivery to which everyone will keep.

It is only through fostering an even greater sense of unity and direction across all NAOs that we will have the resources and ability to realise our vision and ambition.

The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Foundation

The role of the Foundation is to frame the overall strategy for the development and growth of the Award and work with the members of the Association to deliver it through the network of volunteers and partners.

We play a key role in creating demand for the Award, increasing awareness of the value of non-formal education and promoting the Award as the tool of choice.

We provide direct financial assistance through Special Projects, but more often help is provided through our specialist teams on a country-by-country or project-by-project basis.





Where are we now?

There are a number of key issues that may affect the achievement of our aims and ambition, making growth slower and harder to achieve. These include:

- Small numbers of participants across an increasing number of countries, stretching support capacities.
- Need for greater human capacity within countries to reach more young people in different areas, from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.
- Need for sustainable financial models across the Award family.
- Need for alignment with the identity and purpose of the Award internationally.
- Need for improved 'intelligence' and better sharing of information about the outcomes and impact of the Award.
- Need to improve the culture of joint working across the Award, improving the quality of experience for young people.
- Need for a clear vision of the state of the Award after its milestone 60th birthday.
- Pressure to introduce the Award into 'new' countries versus growing in existing countries.

Where will we grow?

New countries

The Award is already nationally available in 68 countries, but there are always requests for further work to develop new National Award Operators (NAOs). Our expansion into new countries until 2016 will be limited, whilst we deal with ensuring all existing NAOs are properly involved in the new licensing arrangements and set up with new tools to help them expand.

Existing countries

We will focus on existing country growth during the 2014-17 period. Whilst the Award is nationally available in 68 countries, the penetration of the Award is low. Over 80% of the current numbers of new entrants come from the ten largest NAOs. Thirty-five of the existing NAOs have less than 1000 new entrants per year. This is not financially sustainable either for these individual NAOs or for The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation in supporting them. We will use the quality assurance framework to encourage NAO growth based on a realistic improvement plan.

Independent Award Centres

We have Independent Award Centres (IACs) in around 80 countries and territories. We have established a new structure over the 2013-2014 period to grow our Independent Award Centre numbers. We will be using IACs to test operational processes that can be used by NAOs to work more successfully with their own Award Units.

How will we grow?

Our headline targets for 2020

750,000 new entrants each year

500,000 participants gaining an Award each year

20% of all participation to be by 'at risk' and 'marginalised' young people

To achieve our ambition, vision and aims we will work on four key areas:

Area of focus	This includes	This is how we'll measure our progress
Resourcing – finding and retaining suitable human and financial resources	Having a sound financial model, fundraising, developing people, tools and materials, and developing our intellectual property	Operating and commercial income Donations Number of staff and volunteers trained
Communications – promoting and profiling the Award	Managing and developing our brand, research, engaging doers, deliverers and supporters of the Award, and sharing information internally and externally	Usage of website and digital tools Awareness and value of our brand Attendance at fundraising and Association events
Operations – developing a quality Award infrastructure for participants	Finding new Award Operators and partners, developing those we have already, and providing grants to engage more diverse groups of young people	NAO and IAC customer satisfaction scores Staff and trustee satisfaction scores Participant and volunteer satisfaction scores
Sustaining – ensuring continuity and quality of experience	Good governance, sound financial management, assuring the Award's quality, and developing digital tools that support quality and growth	Income statement and balance sheet Accreditation by external quality marks

Over the 2014-2017 period some key initiatives will help to drive growth. These include:

Special Projects

We will develop this direct grant fund and use it strategically to enable a more diverse group of young people to participate in the Award, and to enter new target markets.

Digital tools

We will develop our digital infrastructure so that we can support millions of participants, focusing in particular on the Online Record Book and Online Learning Hub. We will improve our reporting using these tools.

Licensing, quality assurance and improvement planning

We will re-license operators and work with them to improve their performance, so that the Award grows in a sustainable way. We will identify best practice to improve the quality of all those working to deliver the Award, and use The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Association to maintain standards.

Brand building and promotion

We will roll out a strategy to build the Award's brand, providing materials and key messages with which our stakeholders can create demand and build support. We will develop our brand values and integrate these into our work, supporting Award Operators to do the same.

Customer service culture

We will introduce better stakeholder feedback systems on the value of our Foundation service, including customer surveys. We will use this feedback to create specific improvements.

The Award's 60th anniversary

We will introduce a clear planning process and activities to bring the Award family together and create a clear vision of the state of the Award at 60.



Measuring our value

As a non-formal education programme, the Award can play a vital role in providing opportunities for young people to develop essential life skills. We will begin to measure these through our new outcome measures.

We've developed this by drawing on outcome measurement tools and frameworks which already exist within the youth development sector. This enables us to explain our impact in a language that is common to the sector and to donors who support it. It will also allow us to benchmark ourselves against our competitors and partners who work in the same field.

There is already lots of evidence which proves and explains the relationship between these outcomes and our existing impact measures. That means we can focus on measuring outcomes – which can be observed in the short-term – linking these to the longer term impacts on society which may otherwise take many years for us to show.

Our outcome measures

Confidence	Managing feelings	Resilience and determination	
Relationships and leadership	Creativity and adaptability	Planning and problem solving	
Civic competence	Intercultural competence	Personal and social well-being	Communication

Our impact measures

Improved educational attainment	Improved employability and sustainable livelihoods	Improved health and well-being
Increased participation in civic life	Social inclusion	The environment
Gender equality	Reduction and prevention of violence, conflict resolution and peace-building	Reduced reoffending rates

What does this mean for me?

We want this document to direct the actions and decisions of a large number of independent organisations, who are dedicated to providing a framework of non-formal education to as many young people as possible across the world. Our ambitions are stretching, and without direction we will not reach our full potential.

This document is the first step in a long journey. It will guide The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation and the decisions made about where and how to grow the Award internationally. It will also influence the support which the Foundation provides to members of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Association.

This strategy will become stronger as it continues to develop. We need to build consensus across all operators of the Award to help us act as one Award, combining our strengths and reducing our weaknesses, creating a powerful force to support young people across the world. This will be an ongoing process and the content of this strategy should be discussed, improved and acted upon at every opportunity. This document will be particularly important as we head towards The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Forum in Toronto, Canada in 2015: we will debate our strategy there and gain input to ensure it continues to steer all of us towards achieving our global ambition in 2026.







The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation
Award House, 7–11 St Matthew Street, London SW1P 2JT, United Kingdom
T +44 (0)20 7222 4242 | F +44 (0)20 7222 4141 | info@intaward.org | www.intaward.org
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