



# Impact Report

LaunchPad  
Programme



# Youth Employment Crisis

According to recent statistics from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) - nearly 1 million young adults are currently NEET.

Research tells us that unemployment is both a driver and consequence of loneliness, and a vicious cycle in which young people can tragically become stuck.

Too often, unemployed young adults are left feeling invisible - disconnected from peers, overlooked by systems, and unsure how to find a way back in at a critical stage of early adulthood with wide-reaching consequences.

**1. Increased Social Isolation** - Unemployment leads to increased loneliness arising from long hours alone, increased social isolation, lack of purpose, routine, and direction.

**2. Damaged Confidence and Mental Health** - Loneliness significantly increases the risk of developing mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. When young people feel disconnected or excluded, they lose confidence and internalise feelings of failure or hopelessness.

**3. Reduced Employability** - Diminished social and interpersonal skills lead to unsuccessful applications, further damage to confidence, growing demotivation and more entrenched loneliness.

**2.5x**

more likely to experience persistent loneliness than those in work.

**48%**

say loneliness makes them less likely to want to progress in their careers

**1 Million**

of young adults - aged 16-24 are not in employment, education or training

**61%**

say loneliness makes them lose confidence in themselves



# LaunchPad: A New Approach



**LaunchPad is designed for young adults aged 18–25 who are currently NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) - especially those who may not be engaging with traditional job or skills programmes.**

It's for those who feel stuck, disconnected, or unsure where to begin - who may be struggling with low motivation, confidence, or anxiety, and need a softer way into engaging.

LaunchPad offers a safe, structured environment where young people can rebuild routine, reconnect with peers, and regain belief in themselves - so they feel ready to take the next step, whether that's work, training, or something else entirely.

- **Engagement-first, not obligation-led** - Most NEET or employability programmes feel compulsory or transactional - something young people have to attend, not want to. LaunchPad flips that by creating a space young people actively look forward to, prioritising peer connection, trust, and emotional safety.
- **Designed by and for young people** - Unlike traditional, top-down services, LaunchPad is co-designed by young adults with lived experience of loneliness, social anxiety, and unemployment - making it more authentic, relatable, and less intimidating.
- **Fills a gap in the current system** - LaunchPad supports young people who may be reluctant to engage with employability programmes. It complements existing provision by offering a softer, more relational way to rebuild structure and confidence - a space to work on applications with support, not scrutiny.

# What's involved?



**Challenge Days** - Inspired by TV shows such as Dragon's Den and The Apprentice, participants worked in teams on creative challenges designed to build confidence, problem-solving skills, and collaboration.

**Co-Working Sessions** - Structured but relaxed co-working sessions created a welcoming space where participants could focus on job searching, work on personal projects, and build productive routines alongside others.

**Online Community** - Alongside the in-person sessions, participants could stay connected through an online community, helping them maintain contact, share opportunities, and support one another between activities.

**Skills & Tools** - Participants were introduced to practical AI tools designed to help organise applications, manage their time, and support their job search.

**Mentoring** - Participants had access to a dedicated mentor who could provide support with CV writing, job searches, applications, and setting realistic weekly goals.

**Activities** - Alongside the sessions, participants were able to engage in programme of social experiences - including VR, bowling and crazy golf - helped participants form connections in a relaxed setting.

# Evaluation: Our Framework



**Loneliness Reduction** - Combat feelings of loneliness by creating pathways for connection and fostering friendships.



**Agency** - To help participants rediscover direction, personal motivation and belief in their ability to take action on their future.



**Uplift** - Boost mood and hope to counteract common barriers like low motivation, or feeling stuck or demoralised.



**Networks** - Create a peer-to-peer community of young adults with a shared sense of purpose, offering mutual support and accountability.



**Confidence** - To help them build their social skills and interpersonal confidence, known to be vital for job and interview success.



**Habits** - To establish a weekly routine and structure that can reduce the drift and demotivation that often can accompany unemployment.



# Impact: Overview

**This feasibility pilot demonstrated clear positive movement across all measured outcomes, particularly in confidence, hope for the future, and clarity of direction.**

These are critical early indicators of re-engagement, as research consistently shows that improvements in social confidence and motivation often precede employment outcomes.

Participants showed the strongest improvements in feeling hopeful about the future, having a clearer sense of direction, and feeling more confident meeting new people.

These findings suggest that the programme is successfully addressing some of the core psychological barriers that often prevent young adults from progressing into work or training.

While the pilot cohort was small, the consistency of improvement across all measures provides encouraging early evidence that an engagement-first model combining social connection, structure, and practical support can play an important role in supporting young adults who may not engage with traditional employability provision.

## Participants Reported:

**75%**

**Improved Social  
Confidence**

**65%**

**Greater Agency &  
Direction**

**60%**

**More Socially  
Connected**

**82%**

**Strengthened  
Hope & Outlook**

# Impact Measures

Understanding the impact of the LaunchPad Programme, based on participants that completed both pre and post programme surveys (n=4)."

Measure	Pre-Programme	Post Programme	Avg. Impact
<b>Confident Meeting New People</b>	4.0	7.0	+3
<b>Have people my age to turn to for support</b>	5.0	7.5	+2.5
<b>Understand tools and resources to support my job search</b>	4.75	7.5	+2.75
<b>Clear sense of what I'm working towards</b>	5.0	8.25	+3.25
<b>Feel socially connected with people my age</b>	3.75	6.0	+2.25
<b>Have habits in place to support my job search</b>	4.25	7.0	+2.75
<b>Hopeful about the future</b>	4.25	7.75	+3.5

# Our Impact

## Programme Delivery

- 8 weekly sessions delivered
- 10 participants recruited
- 7 participants completed the programme (70% completion rate)

## Employment Progression

- 1 secured full-time employment
- 3 secured job interviews (incl. above)
- 2 entered new training & development programmes, following completion



# Tarah's Story

After graduating from university, Tarah was spending most of her time at home searching for jobs and apprenticeships.

**Her weeks were structured around applications - updating her CV, writing cover letters, and sending off forms - often without hearing anything back.**

“On an average day I often felt discouraged and frustrated. The process can be repetitive and when you don't hear back from employers, it makes you feel stuck and uncertain about what to do next.”

Living in London added another layer of challenge. Many activities and development opportunities felt financially out of reach, making it difficult to build skills, meet people, or stay active while continuing her job search.



Tarah discovered LaunchPad after her dad forwarded her an email about the programme. Having recently graduated and still searching for direction, she felt she wasn't doing anything that was meaningfully helping her move forward.

“When I looked into it, it seemed like a good opportunity to do something productive with my time, build confidence and gain new experiences while I continued my job search.”

The format stood out immediately. Inspired by shows like The Apprentice and Dragons' Den, the team-based challenges felt engaging and different from traditional employability courses.

“It didn't feel like a lecture. It felt fun and motivating - a way to build teamwork and communication skills in a supportive environment.”

For Tarah, the most significant outcome wasn't technical employability skills - it was connection. “The biggest impact the programme has had for me personally is that I've made new friends.”

# Tarah's Story



Meeting others in similar situations reduced the sense of isolation that had been building during months of independent job searching, “it made me feel less isolated and more confident socially.”

Since joining, she has been going out more and talking to more people, which has strengthened her social confidence and her overall outlook has improved.

During one of the structured self-project sessions, Tarah applied for a role at Wetherspoons - and secured an interview.

Although she didn't ultimately get the job, the experience marked a positive step forward - “it's been difficult to even secure interviews, so getting that opportunity still felt like progress.”

The dedicated time to focus on applications - even in a more social setting - helped her maintain momentum. Tarah believes programmes like LaunchPad play an important role in supporting young adults navigating uncertainty.

Even when employment isn't immediate, staying engaged, practising social skills, and feeling less isolated can help young people remain motivated and ready for opportunities when they arise.

**“Being part of a programme has helped me stay motivated and feel less alone as I search - making it easier to take the next step.”**

As she continues her job search, Tarah would like to see more accessible and visible opportunities for young adults - particularly through job centres and social media.

She believes wider promotion of programmes like LaunchPad could ensure more young people benefit from structured, confidence-building environments while navigating early career uncertainty.

# Alice's Story

**After graduating, Alice's weeks were structured around job searching - scanning mailing lists, submitting applications, and trying to fill her time with volunteering and other commitments.**

"As a graduate from a prestigious university, I didn't envision myself being in a period of unemployment for several months."

The gap between expectation and reality was difficult. Like many young graduates, she was navigating the pressure of career uncertainty while trying to remain proactive.



From the outset, LaunchPad felt different: "it seemed like a really positive and encouraging community. I just had a good feeling about it."

For Alice, one of the most tangible impacts was how she used her time. "It made me more productive and made me feel like I used my Mondays well."

The structured co-working environment gave her meaningful time to complete applications and admin tasks that might otherwise drift. Combined with team-based activities, it also provided a way to "let off steam" and avoid the monotony that can come with independent job searching.

Importantly, her outlook shifted. **"I've started to feel more positive about taking the leap towards applying for jobs on my own."**

Since taking part in LaunchPad, Alice secured a place on the Tate Collective Young Producers programme - closely aligned with her ambition to work in museums.

"I would say the programme accelerated this in that it gave me meaningful time to do admin in a productive co-working space and get everything I wanted to get done for the week."

The structure and accountability helped convert intention into action. Alice believes programmes like LaunchPad are increasingly important for young people navigating employment uncertainty.

"They are really important particularly for the increasing amount of young people who are unemployed. For graduates who expected a smoother transition into work, initiatives like this really help soften the blows and difficulties of prolonged job searching."

# Looking Ahead



**The LaunchPad feasibility pilot has provided encouraging early evidence that combining social connection, confidence-building, and practical employability support can help young adults rebuild confidence, direction, and momentum towards employment.**

Participants showed consistent improvements across all measured outcomes, particularly in hope for the future, confidence meeting new people, and clarity about next steps.

The pilot also highlighted opportunities to strengthen the programme, including increasing cohort size, deepening mentoring support, strengthening recruitment through Jobcentre partnerships, and refining delivery to better support participants experiencing social anxiety or neurodiversity. These insights will inform the next phase of delivery as the programme continues to evolve.

The need for this type of support remains clear. Many young adults face a combination of loneliness, low confidence, and lack of structure alongside unemployment, reinforcing the importance of programmes that address both social and employability barriers together.

As a small feasibility pilot, some costs reflect programme development and testing. Future delivery with larger cohorts is expected to improve cost efficiency through economies of scale while maintaining programme quality.

Building on pilot learning, the next phase of LaunchPad will focus on delivering a further programme with a larger cohort and a refined delivery model, strengthening mentoring support, and continuing to build robust evidence of impact.