



Summary overview – Autumn 2006

The Young Foundation is a centre for social innovation based in London – combining practical projects, the creation of new enterprises, research and publishing.

The Foundation was launched in 2005, but builds on a long history. Our predecessor organisations under Michael Young were responsible for far-reaching innovations ranging from the creation of the Open University and Which? to the School for Social Entrepreneurs, as well as pioneering research on changing patterns of community and family life through the Institute of Community Studies.

Since 2005 a new team has been brought together from NGOs, government, business and academia. Our main goal is to speed up society's ability to respond to changing needs through innovating and replicating new methods and models. We work to achieve this goal through three main strands: Launchpad, action research and research.

I. Launchpad – creating new models and enterprises to meet social needs.

Our work in this area has focused on education where we are developing a new kind of school – the **studio school** – with backing from DfES and local authorities around the UK and a group working on innovations to promote **practical learning** (backed by the Edge). We are also building up a team working to develop new enterprises for the **hard to employ** (with Ingeus). Another major strand is focused on health – building on the Young Foundation's past work in pioneering ways of providing advice to patients and involving users in managing their own care and addressing the radical changes needed around **chronic disease**. We also have a number of projects making use of the web (including with partner organisation MySociety.org), including for real-time feedback to public services and exploiting the potential of web-based street maps. Other projects are focused on support for **young muslims** in Britain, on

leadership development in marginalised communities and radical options for **cutting re-offending**.

To support Launchpad we have developed an active programme of research on **social innovation** drawing lessons on how it can be supported, and addressing the roles of finance, incubators, and the potential of open source methods.

II Action research – practical projects with partners

Our second strand brings together partners interested in carrying through far-reaching change. Our biggest current programme aims to promote a radical shift of power to **neighbourhoods**. The consortium brings together two government departments, 15 local authorities, umbrella bodies (including the LGA and IDeA and the Community Alliance) and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The programme combines research, practical projects in local areas, policy influence and the development of tools for neighbourhoods – such as a website for helping people inform local councils about problems in local infrastructures like broken street lights.

Forthcoming projects include a major initiative on **wellbeing**, developed with the IDeA and Lord Richard Layard from the LSE, and with the involvement of government departments. This will test out a series of approaches to improving well-being in localities, including initiatives with children, teenagers and people with disabilities, and others to reduce elderly isolation. The project will work in South Tyneside, Manchester and Hertfordshire. Both of these initiatives are developing a new and more collaborative model of policy change.

III Research – understanding changing patterns of daily life

The Young Foundation has a long tradition of research into communities and families. Earlier this year we published a major study of life in London's east end ('The New East End'), as well as smaller studies on globalisation in north-east London and the impact of the Olympics. Other research projects have been undertaken on **changing needs** (which will be followed up with a major regular overview of how needs are changing – including the many needs not picked up by official statistics, and taking as much account of psychic needs as material ones). We also have projects underway on the dynamics of **extremism** (focused on north-west England and east London); on the growing importance of **positional**

goods' to the economic and social life of countries like the UK and US; and on the changing shape of **political parties**.

We have also used research to design new methods – including a new method for measuring and mapping **value in built environment** (for the Commission on Architecture and the Built Environment).

These three main areas of activity are supported by our role as landlord and by our wider networks. The Young Foundation now owns and runs three buildings in east London which house over 20 organisations involved in social action of many kinds – from **Operation Black Vote** and the **School for Social Entrepreneurs** to **Creative Commons** and the **London Civic Forum**.

International work

Past innovations from the Young Foundation were copied and adapted across the world and many of the projects we are currently working on have an international dimension. To strengthen our international links we are hosting a major conference on social innovation in October in **Beijing** (and another conference in Chongqing), with partner organisation the CCCPE (which runs China's main annual award for local innovations) and the British Council. In parallel we are building up a global network of organisations involved in social innovation – from India and China, Brazil and South Africa, to countries across Europe and north America – as well as working with governments that are improving their capacity to innovate.

Other

In 2006 we launched the **Michael Young prize** with the Economic and Social Research Council – a prize to back new academics who have done work with wider relevance to improving peoples' lives (won by Diana Burman for work on new methods for teaching deaf children to read and write). We have also run public events and lectures – with speakers including John Browne, Tariq Ramadan, Charles Tilly, Arlie Hochschild and George Steiner.

Supporters

Our work depends on support from many sources. We have support from a group of core sponsors who include: Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust; Esmée Fairbairn Foundation; Barings Foundation; Morgan Stanley; BP; CISCO; Philips Design; SAP; Vertex; the Corporation of London; and the Robert Gavron Charitable Trust. Individual projects are also supported by a very wide range of foundations, governments and local authorities.

Publications

2006 has been a very active year for publishing including:

- **The New East End** (Profile) by Geoff Dench, Kate Gavron and Michael Young ('one of the most important books I've read in a long time' Trevor Philips; 'everyone who cares about the future of our cities should read it': David Willetts MP)
- **Good and Bad Power** (Penguin) by Geoff Mulgan (described as 'terrific' by Alan Ryan in Prospect; 'dazzling' by Peter Preston in the Observer; and 'a classic' by Peter Hennessy in the Tablet)
- **The Polycentric Metropolis** (Earthscan) by Peter Hall and Kathy Pain, the culmination of a major 8 country study of the changing shape of cities focused on the advanced business services that many expect to be key drivers of growth over the next few decades.
- **Porcupines in Winter** (edited by Alessandra Buonfino and Geoff Mulgan), a collection looking at the changing shape of communities and relationships in Britain
- **Social Silicon Valleys: a manifesto for social innovation** (published in parallel in English and Chinese in April)
- **Double Devolution** (edited by Fran Bury and Geoff Mulgan) a collection published with the Smith Institute setting out the case for local government reform, launched at 11 Downing St in June.

Who we are

The Young Foundation has grown to around 25 staff, alongside a group of fellows and advisers. Geoff Mulgan, director, was previously head of policy in the Prime Minister's office and head of the UK Government Strategy Unit, founder of Demos and chief adviser to Gordon Brown MP. Simon Tucker who runs the Launchpad programme was previously at McKinsey and was Chief Operating Officer of Kids Company. Associate director Rushanara Ali was previously at the Home Office, Foreign Office and IPPR, and is chair of the Tower Hamlets Summer University and SummerUni London. David Edgar is responsible for operations and was previously at Volunteering England and PwC, and has been a lead councillor for housing and housing association chair. Nicola Bacon runs our local projects, and was previously at Shelter and the Peabody Trust. Saffron James leads our work on neighbourhoods. Our fellows include Peter Hall, Paul Barker, Paul Hilder, Kate Gavron, William Davies, Tom Steinberg, William Heath, Jenni Russell, Christian Ahlert, Geoff Dench, Belinda Brown, Elaine Bauer, Paul Thompson and Jim Ogg.

Recently appointed trustees include Peter Wheeler (chair of Futurebuilders and co-founder of New Philanthropy Capital), Amelia Fawcett (Vice Chair of Morgan Stanley Europe), Michael Bichard (rector of the University of the Arts London and former Permanent Secretary of DfES), Ed Mayo (director of the National Consumer Council), Michelle Giddens (of Bridges Community Ventures) and Marcial Boo (director of research and policy at the Audit Commission). Other trustees are Kate Gavron, Chair of Carcanet Press and the Runnymede Trust; Kirsteen Tait, founder director of the National Association for Sick Children and the Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees, and now at City University; Malcolm Dean, associate editor of the Guardian; Kevin O'Sullivan director of the WSP Group and Chair of SOS Sahel; James Cornford former director of IPPR and the Nuffield Foundation; Tariq Modood, Professor at Bristol University; and Tony Flower who has decades of experience in setting up new ventures in around the Institute of Community Studies. We also have a group of senior advisers including Haleh Afshar, Roger Graef, Tariq Ramadan, Richard Sennett and Charles Tilly.

Background on Michael Young

The Young Foundation draws its inspiration from the work of Michael Young. During the second half of the 20th century Michael Young was one of the world's most creative and influential social thinkers and doers. After 1945 he helped to shape the UK's new welfare state. In the early 1950s he set up the Institute of Community Studies and used it as a base for research and action. Together with collaborators including Peter Willmott, Peter Townsend and many others, he wrote a series of bestsellers which changed attitudes to a host of social issues, including urban planning (leading the movement away from tower blocks), education (leading thinking about how to radically widen access) and poverty. He pioneered ideas of public and consumer empowerment both in private markets and in public services, some of which are only now becoming mainstream (for example NHS Direct, the spread of after-school clubs and neighbourhood councils can all be traced to his work). One of his books coined the term 'meritocracy'. Another radically rethought the role of the family.

Probably his greatest legacy was institution building. He initiated, and in some cases directly created, dozens of new institutions including the Open University, the Consumers Association, International Alert, the University of the Third Age, the Economic and Social Research Council, Education Extra, the National Extension College, the National Consumer Council and the Open College of the Arts – right through to the late 1990s when he created the School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) and Grandparents Plus. Other organisations he created pioneered new approaches to funerals and baby-naming, neighbourhood democracy and the arts. He was described by Harvard's Daniel Bell as 'the world's most successful entrepreneur of social enterprises.'

For more information on projects and events please check our website:

www.youngfoundation.org