

A photograph of two construction workers, a man and a woman, wearing red hard hats and orange safety vests. They are looking at a set of blueprints held by the woman. The background is a blurred construction site with blue and yellow lighting. The text 'spark!' is in the top right corner, with 'KICK STARTING CAREERS' written vertically next to it.

spark!
KICK
STARTING
CAREERS

**Chair of Trustee Board
Recruitment Pack
April 2023**

About Spark!

We believe it is possible for every young person to be ready, equipped and able to enter the world of work, and with youth unemployment rising, there has never been a more important time for our services.


Working in partnership with schools and colleges, voluntary sector partners, and a large and diverse range of employers and funders, we enhance young people's employability skills, knowledge and experience, so they are better prepared for and able to effectively transition into the workplace, finding and keeping a job.

We do this by enabling and supporting long-term relationships between local employers, the education sector and young people, to:

- create **high quality work experience** placements and internships
- broker inspiring **careers mentoring relationships**
- deliver a range of **employer engagement and skills development** opportunities
- **support transitions** into work

Born out of the Hounslow Education Business Partnership, Spark! has been an independent charity since 2010, and now works across west London, in Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow.

We are a small, motivated and passionate team, led by the desire to positively impact on the employment prospects and life chances of young people. We endeavour to live our values; of **empowerment, collaboration, reliability, quality, and learning**, in our decision making and all that we do.



"I had struggled with finding my voice when it came to my career, as I lacked confidence. It was through the mentoring sessions that I gained the knowledge that I needed, and this boosted my confidence massively"

Our Vision

A society in which all young people are ready, equipped, motivated, and able to enter the world of work.

Our Mission

To ensure all young people, particularly those who will most benefit, have access to meaningful employer engagement, work readiness skills development, and employment opportunities, enabling them to transition into sustained work and rewarding careers.

Our Values

Empowerment - We believe in empowering young people, ourselves, and others, to be self-determining in achieving personal and professional goals.

Collaboration - We believe that a collaborative approach is the most productive and effective way to work, and actively seek to be inclusive and partner with others in achieving our vision and mission.

Reliability - We strive to always be reliable, dependable, and trustworthy in our dealings and interactions with partners and beneficiaries.

Quality - We have a continuous commitment to the highest of quality, actively aiming to constantly improve what we do and how we do it.

Learning - We are a learning organisation, always seeking to listen, reflect, develop, adapt, and improve.

Our History

1980: A group of business people and the London Borough of Hounslow's Education Department together created the 'Industry Education Working Group' (IEWG).

1989: The IEWG became the Hounslow Education Business Partnership (HEBP) forging close links with contacts in schools across Hounslow; ensuring as many students as possible were engaged with a diverse range of career services. The staff of HEBP would later be based at the London Borough of Hounslow, with direct input from schools, companies, the Careers Service and other West London training organisations.

2000: With close links to Glaxo Smith Kline (GSK), HEBP moved into their new building in Brentford. We have been there ever since.

2010: We obtained charitable status and began trading as 'Hounslow Education Business Charity'.

2011: The Department for Education abolished funding for Education Business Partnerships. The staff and assets of Hounslow Education Business Partnership (HEBP) were formally transferred to the Hounslow Education Business Charity.

2012: We rebranded as Spark!, established to operate in Hounslow, across west London, and beyond.

2021: A [new strategy was published](#), alongside our new vision, mission and values, with a focus on building place-based partnerships across the 7 west London boroughs and the objective of developing and delivering high impact services directed towards young people who will most benefit.

About the role

Thank you very much for your interest in this opportunity.


After more than 10 years, our current Chair - Will Tyler, is stepping down from his position, and we are now seeking a new Chair to join our Board, helping us to fulfil our new strategy and meet our ambitious plans for growth and impact.

In the past few years we have seen a significant increase both in the need and demand for our services, and in 2021 we published [our new strategy](#), along with our Theory of Change and an updated vision, mission and values; to better reflect that need, define our priority regions and target beneficiaries, and commit to a place-based and collective approach in addressing the challenges related to youth employment.

As Chair you will play a vital role in Spark!'s future success, helping us to expand our reach and deepen our impact for young people who will most benefit from our support.

In this role, you will:

- hold the Board of Trustees and Executive Team to account for the Charity's mission and vision.
- provide inclusive leadership to the Board of Trustees.
- ensure that Trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity.
- ensure that the Board and Executive functions as a unit and work closely to achieve agreed objectives.
- support the Chief Executive in the delivery of agreed strategic priorities.
- act as an ambassador and the public face of the charity, in partnership with the Chief Executive.



"The sessions have been amazing and made me smile and helped me to write out my plans for the future. I learned that goals can be small or big, or short term or long term, and I found out some of my strengths and weaknesses and ways to grow and learn from them."

Role responsibilities

Strategic leadership

- Provide leadership to the Charity and its Board, ensuring that the Charity has maximum impact for its beneficiaries.
- Monitor the performance and impact of the Trustees in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the Charity.
- Responsibility for the Board operating within its charitable objectives, and provide a clear strategic direction for the Charity.
- Ensure the Board is able to regularly review major risks and opportunities, and satisfy itself that it can take advantage of opportunities, and manage and mitigate the risks.
- Responsibility for the Board fulfilling its duties to maintain sound financial health of the Charity, with systems in place to allow financial accountability.

Governance

- Responsibility for governance arrangements working in the most effective way for the Charity.
- Develop the knowledge and capability of the Board of Trustees.
- Encourage positive change and, where appropriate, address and resolve any conflicts within the Board.
- Regularly refresh the Board of Trustees incorporating the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the Charity effectively.

External Relations

- Act as an spokesperson and ambassador for the Charity and our cause.
- Maintain close relationships with key influencers and decision-makers within our sector, and in local and national Government.
- Represent the charity at external functions, meetings and events.
- Cultivate new relationships for the benefit of the Charity and our beneficiaries.
- Address any potential conflicts with external stakeholders.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

- Chair meetings of the Board of Trustees effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision making process.
- Ensure trustees are fully engaged and decisions are taken in the best interests of the Charity.
- Foster and maintain constructive relationships with and between the Trustees.
- Work closely with the Chief Executive to provide direction to Board and to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of Trustees.
- Monitor that all decisions taken at meetings are implemented.

Relationship with the Chief Executive and the wider management team

- Establish and build a strong, effective and a constructive working relationship with the Chief Executive.
- Support the Chief Executive, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles.
- Maintain regular contact with the Chief Executive and develop and maintain an open and supportive relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges.
- Liaise with the Chief Executive to maintain an overview of the Charity's affairs, providing necessary support.
- Ensure that the Chief Executive has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.

Person specification

In addition to the qualities required of a Trustee of the Charity, the Chair must also meet the following requirements:

Personal Qualities

- Demonstrate a strong and visible commitment to the charity, its strategic objectives and cause.
- Personal gravitas and credibility to lead a growing and ambitious charity.
- Exhibit strong inter-personal and relationship building abilities, comfortable in an ambassadorial role.
- Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively.
- Well connected, with strong networking capabilities that can be utilised for the benefit of the charity.
- Ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment.
- Ability to commit the required time to conduct the role well, including travel, meetings and events out of office hours.
- A personal or professional connection to our target area of west London (preferable).

Experience

- 10 plus years experience of operating at a senior strategic leadership level within an organisation.
- Successful track record of achievement through career.
- 5 plus years experience of not-for-profit governance and working with or as part of a Board of Trustees.
- Experience of external representation, cultivating and managing relationships and stakeholders.
- Experience of strategic development, change management and growth.
- Significant experience of Chairing meetings and events.

Knowledge and skills

- Broad knowledge and understanding of the Civil Society sector and current issues affecting it.
- Broad knowledge and understanding of the issues and challenges related to youth employment.
- Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate staff and volunteers and bring people together.
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of charity finance issues.
- Good understanding of charity governance issues.



"It was a lovely, wonderful, and amazing place to have work experience. The Manager and employees were very kind and respectful. Thank you Spark! for offering me work experience!"

Terms and Conditions

Job title	Chair of Trustees
Salary	Unremunerated (reasonable expenses will be reimbursed)
Contract	3 year term (eligible for a maximum of 3 terms)
Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Trustee Board meetings a year • 5 one-to-one meetings a year with the CEO, plus ad-hoc meetings as required • Review and approval of quarterly finance and management reports • Attendance at Spark! events as required, including our Annual Awards • Attendance at our annual staff and Trustee social • Attendance at an annual Trustee strategy and planning meeting
Location	Our meetings currently take place based in our office in Brentford, London, however we expect to be relocating to new premises in 2023.

How to Apply

Please apply by submitting a CV and covering letter, of no more than 2 sides of A4, explaining your motivation for applying and how you fulfil the role specification. Send it to mattlent@sparkcharity.org.uk.

Application deadline

9am, 29th May 2023

Interviews

- You will initially be invited to an informal conversation with Trustee representatives and the CEO.
- In-person interviews will be scheduled shortly afterwards.
- Appointments will be subject to Board approval.

Any questions?

Our CEO, Matt Lent, would be happy to respond to any questions you might have about Spark!, or arrange a time to speak informally.

You can e-mail him on mattlent@sparkcharity.org.uk.

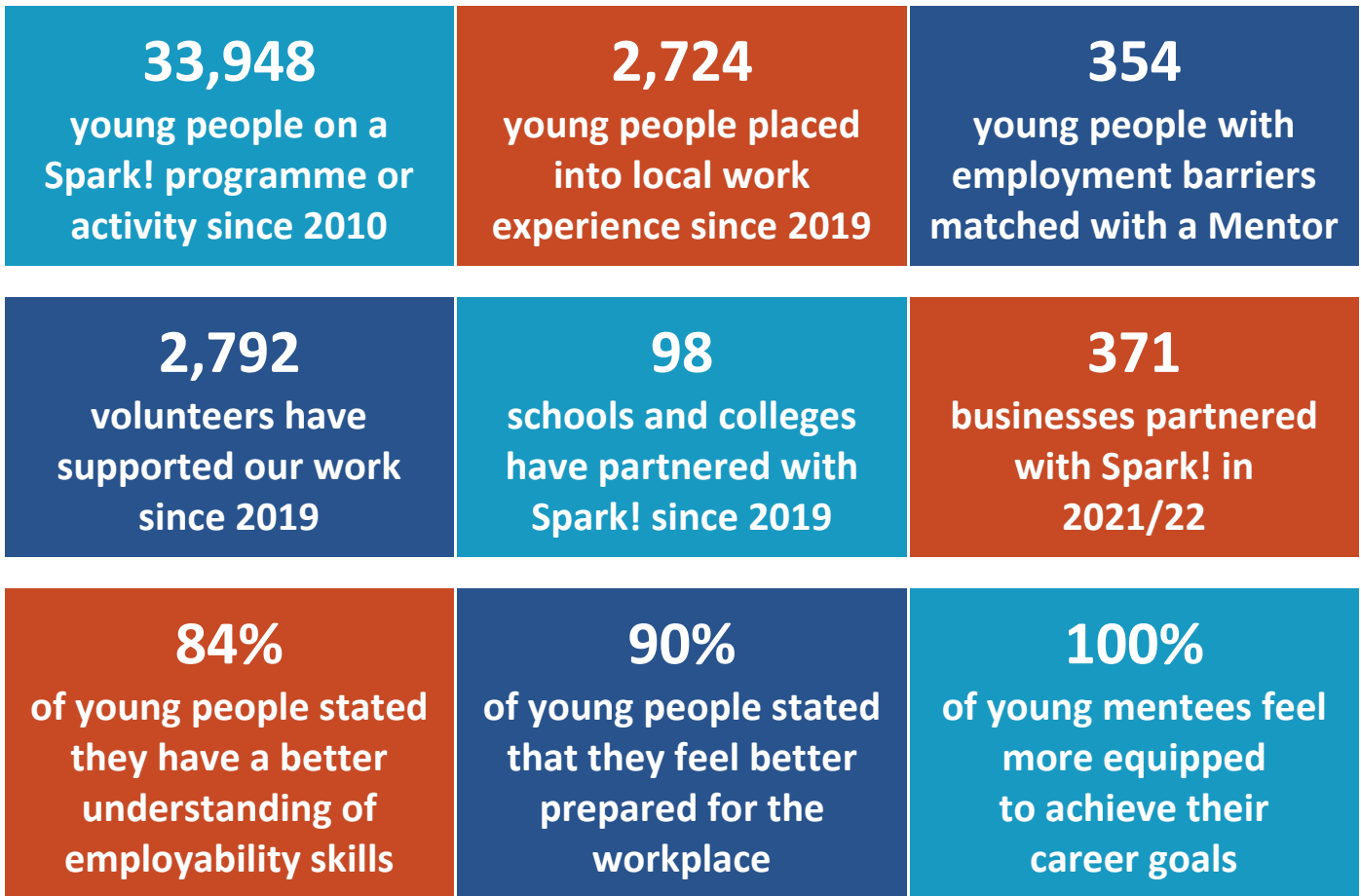
A selection of our hundreds of employer partners



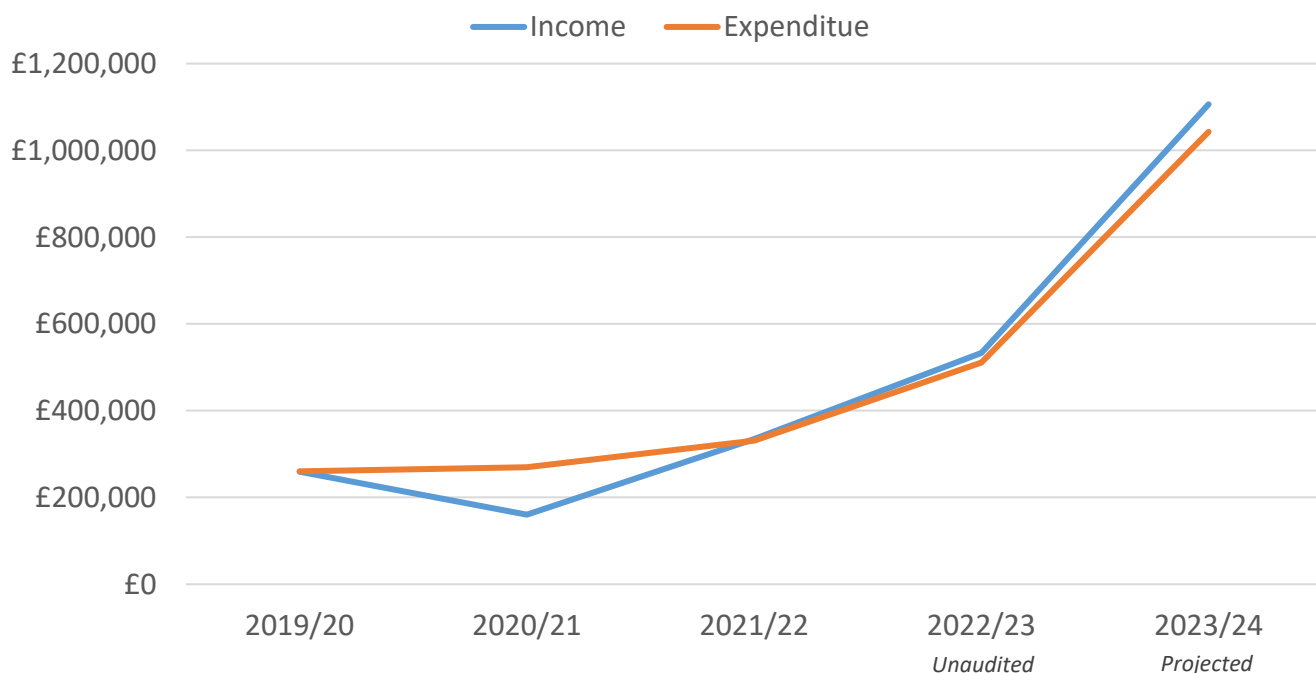
A selection of our dozens of education partners



Our success in numbers (last updated July 2022)



Our recent finances



spark!

KICK
STARTING
CAREERS

