

External Affairs Lead

Location: London, Hybrid

Reports to: Director of External Affairs and Communications

Direct reports: Advocacy Officer (Youth)

Contract: Permanent, Full-time

Salary: £47,215

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S INTERNATIONAL AWARD

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award (the Award) is a Non-Formal Education and Learning framework encouraging young people to find their purpose, place and passion in the world.

In more than 130 countries and territories, our globally recognised accreditation is available to all 14 to 24-year-olds, of all backgrounds, locations, cultures and abilities.

Through the programme, each young person becomes part of something special while developing their own interests, universal skills and life aspirations.

Founded in 1956, the Award highlights the value of Non-Formal Education and Learning. Today there are consistently over a million young people taking part in the Award to believe in the power of their potential, make a difference in their community and take control of their future. The result? Entire generations of innovators and changemakers who are truly world-ready.

Participant numbers

1,151,012

Award participants in 2023



supported by 169,860 adults | 98% of whom are volunteers

5%

20%

256,167 Awards were gained

6 million+ hours of volunteering, physical activity, and Skills achieved in 2023

Operators

62
National Award Operators

465
Independent Award Centres

3
Operating Partners

Social Impact

23%

$1,408 million USD (£940m) of global social value across more than 120 countries and territories.

26%

And with a projected future global social value of $3,712 million USD (£2,477m).

THE AWARD FRAMEWORK

Whilst the framework of this internationally recognised accreditation remains the same around the world, participants select self-identified areas of interest to pursue. Each young person develops their own unique Award programme that builds the character, skills and confidence needed to improve themselves and their communities.

The Award encourages them to step outside their comfort zone and develop positive habits that they will take with them for the rest of their lives.

FOUR SECTIONS (FIVE AT GOLD LEVEL)



**Gold level only*

THREE LEVELS



WHERE IS THE AWARD DELIVERED?

The Award is delivered via hundreds of thousands of youth-focused partners and operators in a wide range of locations, from schools and custodial institutions to Scout groups, and refugee camps.

Although the Award's framework remains the same wherever it is delivered, every Award is itself unique and no two Awards are the same.

The Award is currently licensed in 130+ countries and territories. Find out more below.



WATCH: Mental and Physical Health, Trinidad and Tobago

WATCH: Blind Boys' Academy, India







WATCH: The Award in Zambia: Plan, Do and Review



READ: Special Projects, Nepal

THE FOUNDATION

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation is the international charity that drives and encourages the Award's growth, access and impact across the globe. Working in partnership with organisations and governing bodies, we oversee the licensing of Award operators – including schools, youth groups, employers and custodial institutions – in more than 130 countries and territories. With our guidance, operators deliver the globally-recognised Award, which provides opportunities for 14 to 24-year-olds of all backgrounds, locations, cultures and abilities, to develop their interests, skills and life aspirations.

Our long-term aim is that every eligible young person aged 14 – 24 will have the opportunity to participate in the Award.

We aim to increase the Award's global access, reach and impact through:

- raising and granting funds to scale up operations and increase diversity, equity and inclusion
- campaigning to raise the profile of non-formal education and
- learning broadening our network of volunteers, operators and digital systems ensuring participation is affordable for all

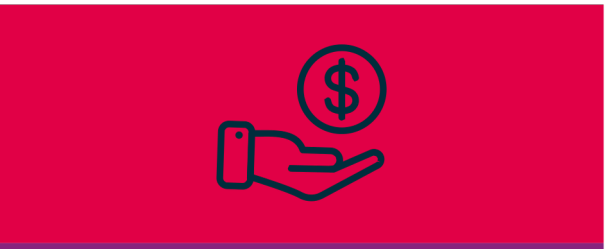
When it comes to creating empowered citizens who will go on to solve some of society's biggest problems, we must acknowledge that many of life's greatest lessons happen beyond the classroom. The Award gives young people the chance to discover exactly that.



OUR KEY AREAS OF WORK

BEYOND LICENSING AND ACCREDITATION

Whilst one of our primary roles is to license the Award around the world, the Foundation is so much more than a franchiser. We work with our Operators Partners to drive global change in a number of key strategic areas.



FUNDING

We provide grants to operators in our global Award family to scale up their operations and/or carry out projects that enable even more young people to take part in the Award.



TRAINING

We provide licensees with advice and support, in the form of ongoing account management, training sessions, online training materials, and access to a global peer-to-peer discussion forum.



ADVOCACY

We partner with key organisations to increase global awareness of the value of Non-Formal Education and Learning and to improve the lives of young people.



GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

We actively work to build partnerships with organisations to deliver the Award around the world. Corporate Partnerships form an integral part of this portfolio.



RESEARCH

We conduct ongoing research into the Award around the world using multiple initiatives, such as satisfaction surveys, outcomes evaluation and work with external experts on projects, like our award-winning Global Social Value research.

OUR IMPACT

The value and impact of the Award extends far beyond the intrinsic benefits enjoyed by the young people.

We believe the Award framework can be a blueprint for investing in human capital, specifically strengthening resilience, improving global prosperity and helping the world's most vulnerable.

The Award does this through working in partnership with young people and their communities, encouraging them in finding their own development solutions.

Participation in the Award also directly enables young people to contribute to a number of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Quality Education and Decent Work and Economic Growth.

Our established impact measurement initiatives, developed alongside academic institutions and partners, have revealed that the Award has a direct, positive impact (both financial and non-financial) on the people and communities it touches. In 2022, the Award had a Global Social Value of £762 million.

The impact of the Award:

- Global Social Value of £762M
- Improved employability and earning potential
- Improved physical health and fitness
- Improved mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Increased engagement with charitable and community causes
- Improved environmental impact
- Increased social cohesion
- Reduced offending



THE AWARD IN 2023

AS A RESULT OF DOING THE AWARD...

79% felt inspired

76% are more confident

81% are more determined

84% are more resilient

85% now see challenges as opportunities to develop

BUILDING POSITIVE HABITS

83% improved their fitness

92% now plan to participate in regular physical activity

77% now plan to volunteer regularly

77% now plan to participate in regular skill development

BROADENING HORIZONS

96% tried something new

82% see the importance of contributing to their community

86% improved their teamwork skills

80% are better at seeing other people's point of view

81% feel more comfortable in new and unusual situations

PARTICIPANTS SAY...

“Not only does it make me feel proud, but it also helps me figure out what I do well at, and why. So that I can carry on doing it and use it to shape my future” Award participant, India

"The Award got me involved in areas outside my natural areas of interest, allowing me to grow and develop through skills and experiences I would not have chosen if I had not done the Award.” Award participant, Canada

*Survey of 2,738 responses from 37 countries, between January 2023 and December 2023

Role Summary

Job Title: External Affairs Lead
Location: London, Hybrid
Reports To: Director of External Affairs and Communications
Direct Reports: Advocay Officer (Youth)

Interviews to take place 17th and or 18th December 2026

Role Purpose

To advance The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation's (the Foundation) Human Skills agenda through high-quality advocacy, influential relationships, compelling policy and thought leadership, and effective engagement with senior stakeholders. The role combines expert advice and authorship with hands-on delivery, building commitment and achieving outcomes across teams, Operators and partners through influence rather than formal authority.

Key Responsibilities

Influence, relationships and partnerships:

- Develop and manage influential partnerships, turning shared policy goals into joint activity and sustaining relationships, commitments and follow-through.
- Lead substantive planning and delivery of global convenings, senior engagements and strategic visits, shaping agendas and coordinating contributions, with accountability for influencing outcomes and tracked follow-up.
- Prepare and quality-assure senior briefings and manage day-to-day royal liaison, exercising diplomatic judgement within authorised channels and respecting colleagues' protocol, logistics and media responsibilities.

Policy, evidence and through leadership:

- Translate the Human Skills strategy into deliverable advocacy plans and policy asks, setting clear outcomes, milestones and responsibilities within agreed priorities.
- Develop and write evidence-informed policy and thought leadership on Human Skills and non-formal education and learning, integrating Operator and youth perspectives and assuring contributions; communications colleagues lead presentation and amplification.
- Provide operational support to the Research Advisory Group and translate evidence into usable advocacy content and tools; specialist leads retain accountability for methodology, ethics and interpretation.
- Deliver Annual Report editorial development and production, drafting and editing the narrative and coordinating timely contributions; accountable leads validate financial, governance and statutory content.

Network capabilty, yourth particiapation and shared accountabilty:

- Build Operators' advocacy capability through practical advice, shared tools and support for national government engagement, adapting global opportunities to local priorities and sharing learning.
- Share operational responsibility for the Influencing community of practice with the Brand and Communications Manager, building alignment, shared learning and accountability for national influencing outcomes.

- Lead meaningful youth participation and line-manage the Advocacy Officer (Youth), setting objectives, supporting development and reviewing performance. Strengthen inclusive practice and safeguarding culture through advice, challenge and appropriate escalation, with responsible consent and data handling.
- Keep delivery on track through clear plans, deadlines, budgets and risk management, resolving gaps in shared ownership. Use evidence to evaluate outcomes, improve cross-team working and advise the Director; deputise as authorised.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL
Essential criteria	• Essential — advocacy and partnerships: extensive experience developing influencing plans, purposeful stakeholder relationships and collaborative partnerships, connecting international opportunities with national policy or practical action. • Essential — engagements and convening: extensive experience shaping agendas and coordinating senior or high-profile engagements with clear organisational objectives, concrete asks, strong briefing and substantive follow-up. • Essential — diplomacy and judgement: sound judgement in complex or ambiguous situations, balancing priorities, risk and impact; discretion with senior stakeholders and sensitive information within delegated authority. • Essential — policy and thought leadership: excellent analytical and drafting skills, with experience producing policy positions, recommendations, briefings and thought-leadership content tailored to influential audiences. • Essential — evidence and research support: strong ability to synthesise evidence, recognise limitations and translate findings into credible policy implications; strong coordination skills for advisory groups or comparable multi-stakeholder processes. • Essential — strategy into delivery: strong ability to turn strategy into realistic plans and personally deliver high-quality outputs, managing deadlines, budgets and dependencies while establishing direction where approaches or ownership are unclear. • Essential — influence and alignment: strong ability to secure commitment through expertise and credibility rather than positional authority, resolve competing perspectives and hold contributors to shared commitments through constructive engagement. • Essential — cross-boundary leadership: strong experience delivering outcomes across teams, partners or geographies, assuring the quality of work delivered through others without direct authority, improving shared tools and approaches, and building others' capability. • Essential — responsible practice: inclusive, collaborative and values-led practice; ability to strengthen safeguarding through advice, constructive challenge and escalation, with sound understanding of consent, confidentiality and meaningful participation.
How identified	Identified during application and interview.



General Information

35 hours per week (Monday to Friday) with some flexibility given and required.

Hybrid, with attendence at the London office two days a week.

International collaboration across time zones, with occasional overseas travel and out-of-hours engagements, planned reasonably and subject to agreed arrangements.

Overtime is not payable, though hours worked over and above standard contract can be taken in lieu of payment (in line with policy).

Benefits to be discussed during interview.