Calling Black Disabled UK-based content creators or artists

Who are YoungMinds?

YoungMinds are a UK based charity and we want to see a world where no young person feels alone with their mental health. Through our website and social media channels, we want to make sure young people can find advice, support and stories from other young people like them that can help them feel more hopeful about their mental health.

Why are we running this project?

We know we need to do more to reach young people from marginalised groups, with content that makes them feel seen, valued and heard and gives them support in looking after their mental health. We also know that both public data and insight from our young people tells us that Disabled people are more disproportionately affected by mental health struggles. Additionally, for Black Disabled young people, racial and intersectional inequality brings up several factors that make their experience of mental health far more complex.

This project is part of our ongoing commitment to create content that serves Black Disabled young people, to help them feel less alone with their mental health. In addition to the content we are commissioning from creators like yourself, we are also working on improving our accessibility across our channels, reviewing the content on our website to ensure it speaks to Black Disabled young people, and undergoing staff training to deepen our understanding of intersectionality and disability.

What is the project about?

We are looking to commission up to ten Black Disabled content creators or artists living in the UK, to produce to digital-first content that shares your stories and experiences under the theme ‘Celebrate what makes you, YOU’. The content you create will be posted on our social media channels, to support Black Disabled young people with their mental health and help them feel less alone.

Prior to launching this project, we ran some research with the young Black Disabled community and parents of young Black Disabled people in collaboration with Purple Goat Agency. The aim was for the stories and experiences from the participants to help shape and craft this project to ensure it meets the needs of the community.

This is what we learnt was important for the participants in this project:

\* Authentic representation: authentic representation of real-life experiences from Black Disabled young individuals is key to resonating with this community.

“When I was younger, and sometimes now I always kind of feel like I'm by myself [...] show me [...] There's other people like you going through the same thing. I feel like that's very, very important.”

\* Intersecting identities: young people want to see content that acknowledges the intricate identities of Black Disabled folk, and stories of how people identify and relate to the different parts of their identities.

“So I am a black, working class, trans masc, non-binary artist. I also have borderline personality disorder and I’m awaiting an autism diagnosis [...] I’m a northerner as well, I’m very proud of that [...] and I identify as chaotic good.”

\* Fluidity of disability: this community want others to understand the dynamic nature of disabilities and how it can vary day to day, and no experience is the same.

“My disability gets better, well more manageable, and then it gets less manageable and that ebbs and flows. It's not a constant state. I think that's a narrative that's missing in the media.”

Important Information

Below is some important information for this project. If you have any further questions, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with us via the contact details at the end.

Creator Criteria:

\* We welcome interest from established, Disabled artists and content creators based in the UK of Black or mixed-Black heritage.

\* Applications are open to individuals of any age. The content will be aimed at an audience of 11-25 year olds.

\* All commissioned artists and content creators are responsible for paying their own tax and National Insurance contributions through self-assessment.

\* We are looking to go live with the content on our channels from February 2024 - April 2024, but we’ll continue to post pieces of content throughout the year.

\* This is a paid opportunity. Deliverables and fees will be discussed as part of the contracting for this work.

Accessibility Information:

We want to be as accommodating throughout this entire process as possible, therefore, if you have any accessibility requirements, please do not hesitate to share those with us, and we will address them as soon as possible.

If you require this document in another format or language, just let us know and we will get that sent over to you as soon as possible.

Whatever you need, our team are on hand to support you throughout this entire project.

What are we looking for

Through our social media channels, emails and website, we want to post content from a range of Black Disabled content creators that celebrates the individual identities, stories and experiences you have, under the theme: ‘Celebrate what makes you, YOU’. The theme for this content has come from the feedback in the research sessions we ran, with one young person telling us “Joy is finding a space where every part of ourselves is celebrated”.

Based on this, we are looking for content that we can post across our channels, specifically:

\* Content that shares and celebrates the multiplicity of identity and the many things that make you who you are, whether that’s your race, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, gender, interests, culture, career – however you identify.

\* Content that young people can relate to. We know we will never speak to every unique, complex and diverse experience, but the content should help them feel seen and valued by witnessing your stories and experiences.

\* Content that is honest, authentic and shares the fluctuating nature of being Disabled, showing the high and lows, impact on mental health (the good, the bad and the in between), and that not one day or experience is always the same.

We chose celebrating what makes you, you to reflect young people’s desire to make space for joy and to authentically represent their experiences.

Anything you create could reflect on your own mental health journey, joy and celebration, identity and intersections of identity or anything you think would help Black Disabled young people feel seen and validated.

Although the theme focuses on celebration, we know it’s also important for young people to hear about what people are going through, and that includes the downs as well as the ups. So you may also want to share all kinds of experiences, challenges, difficulties, and honest stories that you are comfortable sharing.

Here are some ‘thought starters’ that could be used as inspiration for your content.

Thought starters:

\* Day in the life TikTok or Instagram videos e.g. demonstrating your self-care routine whilst speaking on a specific topic

\* Video interviews or conversations with another Black Disabled content creator/friend/family member

\* Joining us for an episode on our podcast

\* Spoken word, photography, poetry, song or dance reflecting your experience and identity

\* Art, design or illustration relating to your experiences

\* Blogs, zines or any kind of written storytelling

Deliverables

Below are examples of the type of content we are looking for from you for this campaign. However, these may vary depending on the type of content you are creating for the project.

\* 1x Hero Piece of Content (a TikTok Video, IG Reel, Blog, Podcast Episode, Spoken Word Piece, YouTube Video, Art Piece etc)

\* 3x Supporting pieces of content to further amplify the hero piece (e.g. an IG Story etc)

As previously mentioned, this is a paid opportunity, that will be based on the deliverables and usage rights we agree on. Any details you can share with us on your rates for these types of deliverables would be greatly appreciated.

Next steps

We are really looking forward to potentially working with you on this project. This is a project that is important to YoungMinds and is part of our ongoing effort to ensure mental health resources are reflective and representative of marginalised groups.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity further, we would love to hear from you.

Simply email Yasin, the Senior Digital Inclusive Content Officer at: yasin.hassan@youngminds.org.uk.