MLMS
MYLIFEMYSAY

DEMOCRACY CAFÉ

THE CONCEPT

Democracy Café is our reinvigoration of the 17th century coffee house tradition where members of society would gather and discuss local issues.

Working together with partner organisations, we hosted 83 events in coffee shops across the UK and Europe. These events brought together diverse members of the local community who do not usually interact with each other, to discuss the most pressing issues of the day, as well as possible solutions. This model brings a social buzz back to coffee shops and makes them a place where communities can come together and engage in meaningful discussions.

MLMS' Democracy Café concept received the UK Government's 2018 National Democracy Award, which recognises an organisation that has put a new idea forward to increase access to democracy, convinced others of the merit of their idea and affected a real change that benefits the greater good.

HOW IT WORKS

Democracy Cafés kick off with an icebreaker to create a comfortable, friendly atmosphere. Then, our trained facilitators gather people around tables and host the session, guiding the discussions at their table. The facilitators then rotate, giving participants the opportunity to explore a variety of topics. The event lasts approximately two hours.

Working together with the London School of Economics, we have developed a research methodology for these events to ensure that they are more than just a "talk-shop" and we are able to gather invaluable insight to help support decision-making.

BENEFITS

- The methodology is inclusive to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Helps develop 21 different life development and employability skills crucial for youth development
- Reinvigorates the idea that a local coffee shop can be a place for vibrant discussion.

STATISTICS

80%

OF OUR EVENTS TOOK PLACE OUTSIDE OF LONDON

We have delivered events in every region of the UK including all three of the devolved nations. We've also delivered eleven events across Europe covering 10 countries.

6 OUT OF 10 PARTICIPANTS WERE FEMALE

33%

IDENTIFIED AS BAME

OUTCOMES

DEVELOPMENT

Personal and social development through building confidence, increasing self-efficacy and through working with young people from different backgrounds and regions.

INSIGHTS

Our Democracy Café events provide invaluable insight for decision-makers to help improve their knowledge and understanding of youth issues and how policy affects young people.

ENGAGEMENT

Vibrant and nonthreatening discussions centred on local issues serve as a highly effective way for individuals to explore active citizenship and community engagement.

LIFE SKILLS

We have identified 21 different life development and employability skills ranging from leadership to critical thinking, that a young person gains from participating at one of our Café events. These include building confidence, critical thinking, debating, teamwork and many other key transferable skills, to support and empower young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

"A UNIQUE AND INNOVATIVE WAY OF CONSULTING YOUTH VIEWS"

SADIQ KHAN, MAYOR OF LONDON

Our Democracy Café events have been recognised by many high-profile institutions as a unique and innovative methodology for consulting youth views.

We offer consultancy services to Government(s), corporates and third sector organisations to help provide invaluable insight from young people, thus ensuring their products and services are inclusive of young people.

Clients include UK Government, Mayor of London, Plexal, Resolution Foundation, British Council, European Commission, Turkish Airways, US Embassy and many other leading institutions.

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

DESIGN

We co-create the right Cafe style for your aims by working with our internal network of diverse young people

ENGAGE

We engage with diverse young people who are unusually harder to access, through the convening of our inclusive of Democracy Cafés

SHARE

We gather invaluable data and insight from our Democracy Cafes to help inform your consultation or help shape your product/services

MY LIFE MY SAY

My Life My Say (MLMS) is a youth-led, non-partisan charity on a mission to empower young people to participate in democracy, by creating spaces for dialogue across communities and generations, and by providing young and socially excluded citizens with the tools to lead change within society.

OUR VALUES

INCLUSIVE - committed to ensuring that ever growing numbers of diverse young people get involved in political dialogue and discourse.

EXPERT - knowledgeable about the issues that we are pursuing with and on behalf of young people.

CONNECTED - linked to the people, causes and movements that are pro-democracy and politically progressive.

CHALLENGING - prepared to push the boundaries of debate to ensure that young people's voices are heard on the key issues of the day.

/MYLIFEMYSAY

/MYLIFEMYSAY

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WHAT WE DO

OUTREACH

ADVOCACY

COMMON FUTURES FORUM

COMMERCIAL

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE EMAIL INFO@MLMS.ORG.UK OR VISIT WWW.MYLIFEMYSAY.ORG.UK

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