

Investing in the leaders and innovators of tomorrow

An overview of The PA Foundation's impact to date
December 2025



Acknowledgements

The PA Foundation would like to thank our charity partners – **Catch 22, The Economist Educational Foundation, Bytes Project, Helena Kennedy Foundation, and Nema Problema (now Belong)** – for helping us with this impact report and for the incredible work you do every day to support our mission.

A special thank you and our appreciation goes to **Anna, Beth, Maria, Adnan, and Kishan** for sharing your personal stories. Your openness and experiences bring this report to life and demonstrate our impact behind the numbers.

Thank you all for helping us tell this story and demonstrate what's possible when we work together.

Overview

The PA Foundation aims to develop and inspire people, particularly those facing disadvantage, to be the innovators and leaders of tomorrow, applying their ingenuity to solve the world's biggest challenges.

Investing in people

Through our work, we are directly reaching over 33,000 people: inspiring and supporting the young and the marginalised, promoting inclusion and social mobility, and transforming futures.



Investing in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM)

To truly fulfil our mission, we are committed to investing in STEM education and careers. Addressing the challenges our world faces – climate change, global health crises, food insecurity and technological disruption – needs more than passion and leadership. It requires deep knowledge and understanding of STEM. These are not just fields of study: they are the language of innovation and the toolkit for change.

STEM education develops vital skills such as innovative thinking, imaginative exploration and strategic problem-solving. It inspires young minds to challenge assumptions, test ideas and engage in thoughtful analysis.

Investing in STEM is also a matter of equity. Historically, STEM fields have excluded many groups, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. STEM education offers a powerful pathway to economic mobility. Careers in STEM are among the fastest-growing and highest-paying across the globe. By equipping people with these skills, The PA Foundation is not just helping them find jobs, it is enabling them to build careers, lead projects and shape industries.

By prioritising STEM education, we can help reshape the landscape of innovation to be more inclusive, diverse and representative. This is not just good for individuals – it is good for innovation, for society and for the solutions we seek.

Investing with breadth and depth

Defining breadth vs. depth

Breadth: Interventions that reach a wide audience, often indirectly, such as through freely available resources or large-scale platforms.

Depth: Interventions that provide direct, sustained support to individuals or small groups, typically through face-to-face engagement and over time.

Through The PA Foundation, we have also chosen to invest in interventions that provide both breadth and depth in terms of impact. Essentially, this means that we are deliberate in funding a range of organisations and programmes that deliver in different ways. For example, some might reach a large number of beneficiaries through an online platform or resource used by thousands of people. Others might work on a one-to-one basis with a small group of people through targeted, individually focused activities. We recognise that both approaches hold value and that these two dimensions – expansiveness and intensity – are not opposing forces but complementary strategies that, when pursued together, create a powerful engine for transformation.

Breadth ensures that opportunity reaches far and wide to as many individuals as possible. By casting a wide net, across geographies, communities, disciplines and age groups, The PA Foundation is identifying and engaging individuals who might otherwise be overlooked.

Depth is equally essential. Breadth may open the door, but depth ensures that those who walk through it are truly equipped to lead. Deep investment means sustained mentorship, rigorous education and meaningful opportunities to apply learning in real-world contexts. It means not just sparking interest in leadership or innovation, but nurturing the skills, resilience and confidence required to thrive over time.

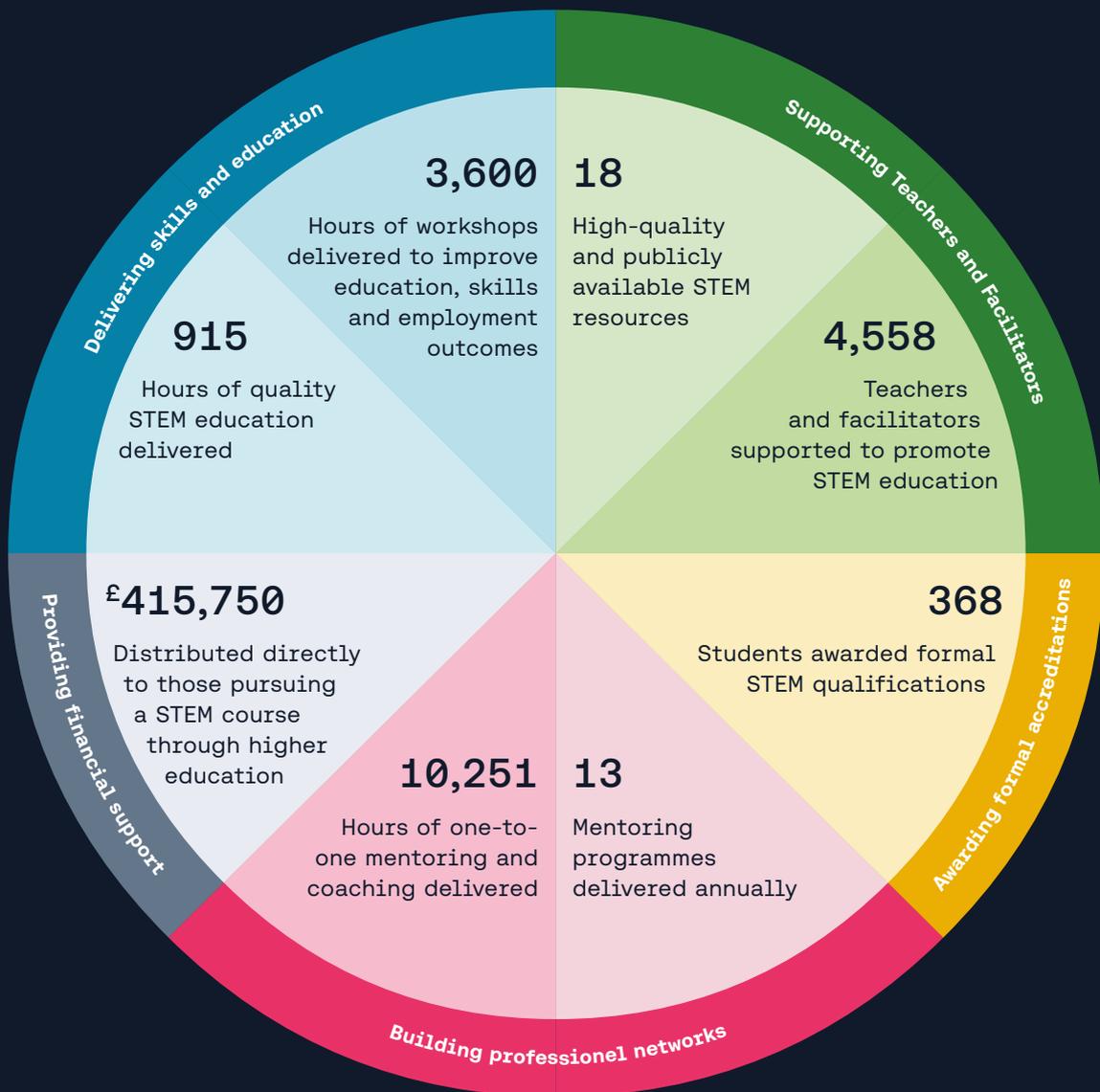
Together, breadth and depth form a virtuous cycle. For a mission as ambitious and urgent as The PA Foundation's, this dual investment is not optional – it is foundational.

Our impact to date

The PA Foundation is now in its fourth year. As we reach this milestone, we are taking stock of the significant, demonstrable impacts – both qualitative and quantitative – that our work has had on individuals and groups over this time.

The following sections highlight some of our headline outputs and tell the stories of people whose lives have been changed as a result of our support for 57 charities across the UK, US, Nordics and Netherlands.

The PA Foundation's outputs to date*



* Data correct as of December 2025 based on The PA Foundation's cumulative outputs since 2022.

Investing in STEM education: Unlocking untapped potential

STEM education is the key to unlocking careers and breaking down traditional barriers to employment.

Careers in STEM are growing fast: the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report projects that by 2030, global labour-market transformation will create 170 million new jobs, with technology-driven roles among the fastest-growing. However, a global shortage of STEM-proficient workers persists, and skill gaps are categorically considered the biggest barrier to business transformation, with 63% of employers identifying them as a major barrier over the 2025- 2030 period.¹

Working through our charity partners, The PA Foundation aims to meet this challenge and extend the reach of STEM learning to underrepresented groups. We are united by a commitment to making STEM education more accessible, engaging and inclusive, and to equipping individuals with high-demand skills that can lead to decent, well-paying careers and entrepreneurial opportunities. The programmes span a wide range of approaches – from coding bootcamps and mentoring schemes to immersive hands-on experiences.

Coding education is a central pillar of many initiatives, introducing learners to programming languages such as Python and JavaScript, often through project-based learning. These programmes are tailored to different age groups and skill levels, ensuring that even those with no prior experience can participate and thrive. Anna's story looks at the impact of the Code 4000 project, run by Catch 22, which introduces female prison leavers to coding skills and potential employment.

Our support for organisations in this area has shown us that learning something new and daunting is possible, with the right kind of support. By linking participants into communities of peer support and employer networks, individuals are being helped to build meaningful connections and develop hard skills. Safe spaces are also created where participants can grow in confidence, manage their mental health and see new possibilities for their future. Career coaches provide tailored support, empowering individuals to take their next steps.

1 [The Future of Jobs Report \(2025\)](#)

Delivering skills and education →



915

Hours of quality STEM education delivered



3,600

Hours of workshops delivered to improve education, skills and employment outcomes



Anna's story

Earlier this year, following her release from custody, Anna joined the Code 4000 programme, which provides coding and digital skills and one-to-one tutoring. Before joining the course, she had been 'dabbling' in coding courses. She knew she wanted to stretch herself and she knew she wanted to improve her technology skills – but she did not know where to start.

Code 4000 gave her a structure and a purpose. She worked hard on every element of the programme: reading and engaging with the course at a specific time every day. She particularly enjoyed the hands-on web design modules.



My favourite modules were on web design. I found it very practical and exciting and loved seeing things come to life!

As part of the programme, participants are matched with volunteer coaches working in a range of technical roles. These coaches share practical guidance on how to navigate the tech industry, build soft skills and prepare for employment. Importantly, they aim to build the confidence and aspirations of those receiving their support.



I don't know what I would have done without my career coach. I used to isolate myself and when I received my conviction, I felt as though my brain had stalled. My career coach gave me confidence and helped me to organise my thoughts. She gave me advice on CV preparation and interviewing skills. She also reminded me that I had transferable skills and showed me the value that I could bring to employers.

Anna has secured employment. She is waiting for her final job offer to come through and aims to start her new role as an employability coach with the Department for Work and Pensions – she will be passing on the experiences, skills and confidence that she has gained through the Code 4000 programme.



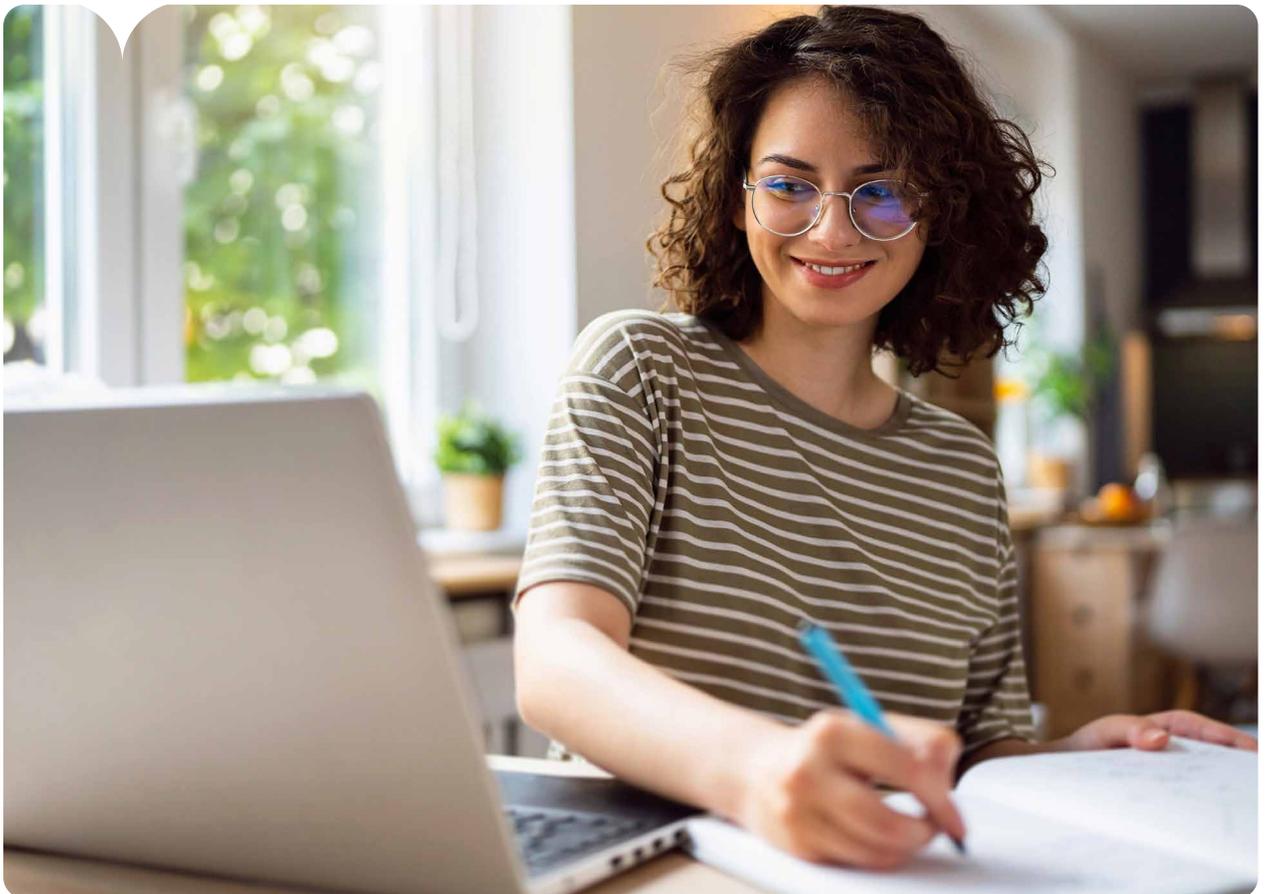
It's easy to stay in a dark place. Focusing on something positive, something that you can use in the future empowers you and gives you confidence – Code 4000 has definitely done that for me. I believe in myself, I am much more confident, and I look forward to the future now.

catch 22

→ About the programme

Anna is involved the Code 4000 programme, designed and delivered by Catch 22, an organisation that offers public services to build resilience and aspiration in people and communities. Code 4000 provides computer programming training/coding to women impacted by the criminal justice system.

We are supporting women with direct experience of the criminal justice system to obtain new skills, build confidence and provide a springboard into employment. Participants get one-to-one support throughout a 12-week programme and access to bespoke learning materials to enable the successful completion of the course.



Investing in teaching and learning: Inspiring and informing future innovators

High-quality STEM teaching materials significantly enhance student outcomes, with measurable gains in achievement, engagement and long-term interest in STEM careers.

Around the world, schools that use structured STEM programmes see students perform much better in science. A 2023 meta-analysis of STEM integration on student attainment found that these programmes boost achievement by about 25%.²

Through a number of our partnerships, we are introducing high-quality teaching resources on STEM-related topics into classrooms: supporting teachers all over the world to deliver challenging, engaging and up-to-date STEM content, even if they do not have a specialist background.

The resources we produce are developed in collaboration with educators and experts (scientists and leaders in the field). They are all free and publicly available, levelling the playing field for schools and educators that may lack funding for advanced and well laid-out STEM materials or training. Access to these resources ensures that students, regardless of their background, can explore and develop their STEM skills.

They are exposed to expert-led content, on topics including space exploration and AI. Our story below looks at the impact of our resources on Beth, a teacher in the north of England, and her students.

When teachers like Beth have access to high-quality teaching materials, the ripple effect can be profound. These resources empower educators to deliver more engaging, accurate and inclusive lessons, which in turn boosts student understanding and enthusiasm for STEM subjects, leading to higher achievement, increased enrolment in advanced STEM courses and greater interest in STEM careers.

Over time, this creates a multiplier effect: well-equipped teachers inspire more students, who then become the next generation of innovators, researchers and problem-solvers. Our commitment is not just about education. It is about empowerment – turning classrooms into launchpads for the next generation of changemakers.

2 [A Meta-analysis of STEM Integration on Student Academic Achievement, Research in Science Education \(2024\)](#)

Supporting Teachers and Facilitators →



18

High-quality and publicly available STEM resources produced



4,558

Teachers and facilitators supported to promote STEM education globally



Beth's story

Beth has been a teacher for 17 years, teaching 11 to 16-year-old students at a secondary school in the UK. Over the last few years, Beth and her colleagues were finding that when students reached Year 11 – their examination year – they were lacking in general knowledge and were limited in their ability to form and express opinions. This was having a detrimental impact on their studies and their exam results.

Beth, who was looking for non-curriculum resources that could add to the student experience, came across the Topical Talk resources offered by the Economist Education Foundation. These resources aim to inspire students aged 10 to 16 to develop essential critical-thinking and communication skills through informed and open-minded discussions about global issues in the news – mainly focused on science, technology, engineering, arts and maths.

They are now offering students in Year 9 fortnightly lessons where they cover issues ranging from climate change to recent changes in the law. This long-term approach is intended to make sure that 13 to 14-year-olds are being equipped with the skills needed for the coming years of study and employment.

“

These classes have been incredibly well-received by the students and the staff. For the students, the topics are relevant and engaging. The nature of the sessions improves their fluency and their ability to listen to someone else's viewpoint. The format helps them to make connecting and cohesive arguments – and increases their vocabulary. You can see them thinking about the words they are choosing.

“

For the teachers, it is extremely motivating to see students with fire in their bellies, talking about issues they really care about and offering authentic opinions. For some students, it can be the first time they have volunteered an answer or contributed to a group discussion.

Beth is making cross-curricular links with other subjects, such as maths and sociology, where a lot of themes are shared and where challenging topics and concepts can be brought to life through the expert-led materials and the interactive nature of the classes.

“

Almost all of the staff have noticed changes in the students' awareness and engagement in topical issues as a result of these sessions and resources. They are more aware of politics and current affairs - some have started watching the news!

The
Economist

EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION

→ About the programme

Beth is using ‘Topical Talk’ resources developed by the Economist Educational Foundation, an independent charity that combines deep educational knowledge with the journalistic expertise of *The Economist* newspaper. It leads high-quality and inspiring discussions that enable school-age children to be curious about news and current affairs; and develop their listening, critical thinking and communication skills.

We are supporting students aged 10 to 16 from disadvantaged backgrounds to join expert-led discussions specifically about science, technology, engineering, arts and maths issues in the news. We are doing this through a series of free lessons, in-person workshops at PA offices, and online events and discussions between children all over the world.



Investing in achievement: Providing accreditation and acknowledging success

STEM qualifications and accreditations do more than validate technical skills, they unlock opportunity.

For individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, they serve as powerful tools for social mobility, offering a recognised pathway into employment, entrepreneurship and further education.

These credentials can clearly signal to employers what competencies a candidate has mastered and how they align with specific roles or career pathways. A 2025 study found that 76% of employers across 12 countries rated vocational and technical qualifications as ‘highly aligned with workplace needs’. The study emphasised strong employer confidence in these qualifications for roles including engineering and information technology.³

Many disadvantaged individuals face systemic barriers to formal education and industry-recognised qualifications. Without these, their talents and potential often go unrecognised. By working with our partners to provide accessible, high-quality STEM accreditations, we help ensure that these individuals are seen, heard and respected.

Importantly, qualifications do more than teach skills, they build confidence. Accreditation provides a sense of achievement and belonging, inspiring ambition and reinforcing the belief that success is possible. For those who have been historically excluded, this can be transformative. It is not just about getting a job – it is about changing the narrative. Maria’s story below looks at the impact that our work with the Bytes Project has had by providing training and qualifications that have turned her life around.

Our strategy is intentionally focused on those who need it most. By offering a bridge to meaningful careers, we help break cycles of exclusion and disadvantage. STEM accreditations become a launchpad for self-sufficiency, dignity and long-term impact – not just for individuals, but for their families and communities.

3 [An Empirical Study of Employer Perceptions of Vocational Education Graduates and the Alignment Between Training Outcomes and Labor Market Needs, International Journal of Vocational Education and Training Research \(2025\)](#)

Awarding formal accreditations →



368

Students awarded formal
STEM qualifications



Maria's story

When Maria joined the Bytes Project, she was incredibly shy and was not sure what the future held for her. However, the new experiences, friendships, skills and qualifications that she has gained through Bytes have set her on an exciting path towards a career that she cares passionately about.

Maria's journey took her from a participant to a project volunteer, helping to lead youth groups herself. And now she is a part-time Bytes employee. At only 19 years old, she is supporting young people aged from 11 to 18, using and sharing the knowledge she has gained through the programme.

“

I have gained a number of qualifications during my time with Bytes. I have taken part in the Bytes Digital Champions Programme and have qualifications in youth work. I have completed the first two OCN levels in Youth Work Practice and I am currently studying for Level 3. I am aiming to go to university to do my Level 4 to become a fully qualified youth worker.

Through the digital skills and inclusion programmes, Maria has gained practical digital skills that are applicable in educational, employment and personal contexts. Her OCN qualifications are nationally recognised and respected across youth work, education and community sectors, enhancing her employability and further education prospects.

She has also gained qualifications in digital empowerment and animation and is taking part in the Cyberquest programme for 16 to 25-year-olds which is building her leadership and cyber skills. She will gain the International Certification of Digital Literacy and accreditation in youth leadership, along with over 2,000 other young people across Northern Ireland.

All of this expertise is helping Maria to be more effective as a youth leader. She is using her digital skills daily to help her design and deliver focused and engaging sessions for her youth groups, while passing these skills on to them at the same time.

“

The confidence that the Bytes team showed in me has given me the ability to do my job well and strive for more. The team saw leadership qualities in me that I did not know I had. They have pushed me when I needed it.

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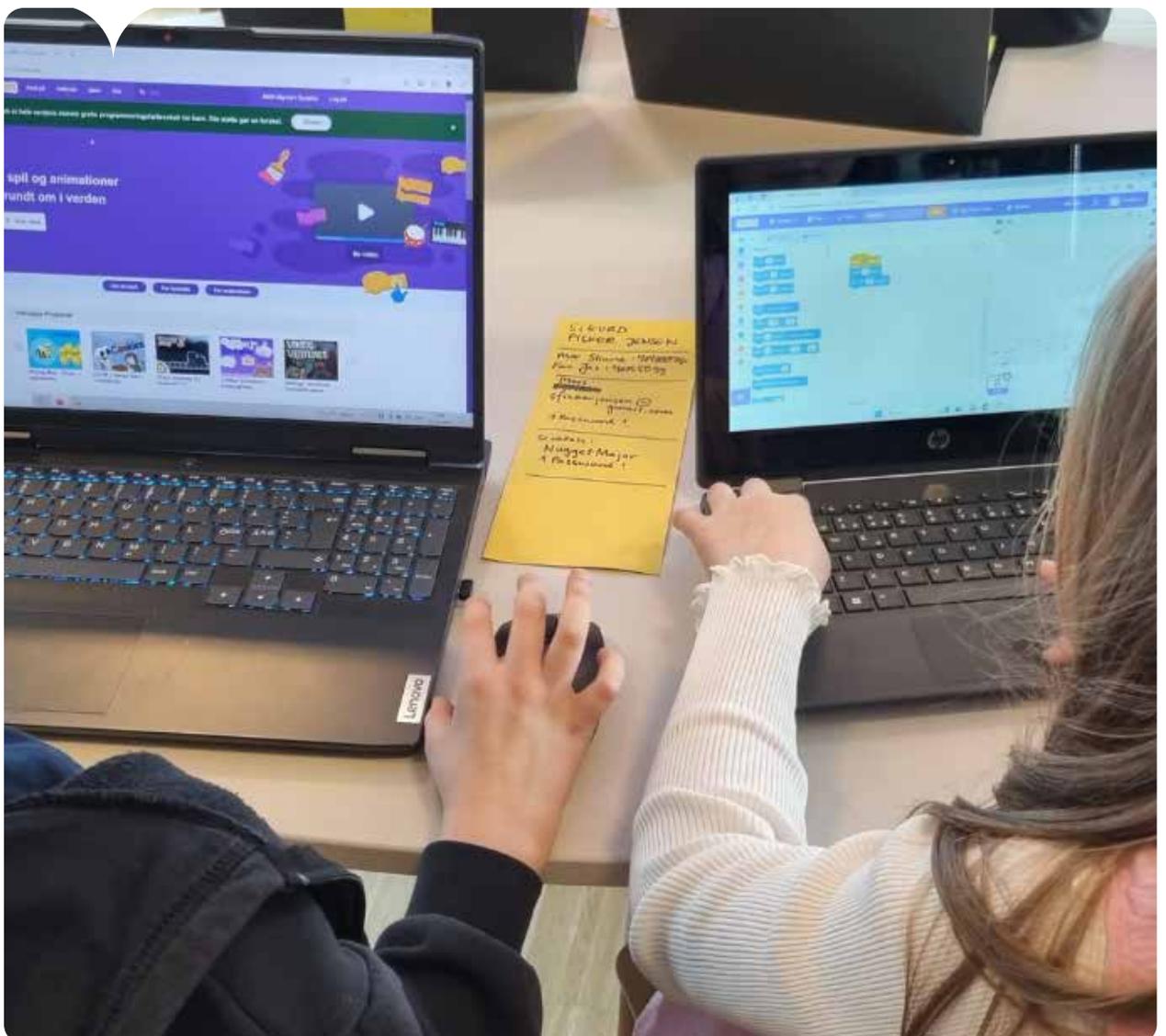
When I first started working with the young people, I was really nervous about how they would respond to me. Now I am excited to see them every week. My age means I can relate to them – and I can show them how valuable the Bytes courses and qualifications can be. It makes me really proud to see the young people grow and develop and know that I have played a part in that!



→ About the programme

Maria is one of over 3,000 disadvantaged young people in Belfast who are supported by the Bytes Project each year. Bytes aims to help young people achieve their full potential and overcome any barriers they may face by ensuring access a digital skills access programme.

We are supporting them to provide skills and accreditation that will prepare participants for meaningful employment. Focus areas include workshops in creative digital skills (video editing, graphic design, coding, and web design) and a more intensive enhanced digital skills course.



Investing in individuals: Providing financial stability and support

Bursaries are more than financial aid – they are enablers of opportunity, equity and long-term impact.

Bursaries can be a game-changer in education because they break down financial barriers and open doors that might otherwise stay shut. OECD data shows that financial aid significantly boosts participation rates among students from low-income households, helping close equity gaps in tertiary education.⁴

At The PA Foundation, we believe that talent is everywhere, but opportunity is not. That is why we support organisations that provide bursaries, alongside mentoring and guidance, to students from disadvantaged backgrounds pursuing STEM-related courses for higher education.

These bursaries help students from low-income backgrounds to afford essentials like books, travel and equipment. They come without parameters – and without debt. We believe that the bursary recipient knows best what they need to be able to pursue higher education and succeed. Financial stress can force students to leave education early and bursaries can ease that pressure, helping students stay enrolled and focused.

STEM fields have long struggled with representation from underprivileged communities. Bursaries help level the playing field, enabling students from varied backgrounds to enter and succeed in these disciplines. This diversity enriches learning environments, bringing fresh perspectives to classroom discussions and collaborative projects.

Bursaries are not just support, they are a statement of belief. They signal to students that someone believes in their potential and is willing to invest in their future. That belief can be transformative, instilling confidence and a sense of belonging in spaces where students may have felt excluded. The story below shows how Adnan, supported by a bursary from The PA Foundation provided by the Helena Kennedy Foundation, was able to fulfil his dream to become a doctor.

Empowering potential over privilege is at the heart of our approach. When financial barriers are removed, success is determined by talent, effort and ambition, not by socioeconomic status. This shift has ripple effects: graduates from bursary-supported programmes often go on to become role models, mentors and changemakers in their communities, multiplying the impact of the initial investment.

Providing financial support →



£415,750

Distributed directly to those
pursuing a STEM course through
higher education



Adnan's story

In 2018, Adnan arrived alone in the UK from Cairo, Egypt aged just 24. He was granted refugee status and moved to live in one of Glasgow's most disadvantaged areas. He faced huge challenges: a new language, culture and life without family support. Despite these barriers, Adnan was determined to study to become a doctor – an ambition that had taken shape after he had witnessed his father suffer a fatal heart attack when was just 12 years old. He is now in his second year at Edinburgh Medical School.

His journey has not been easy. Financial hardship threatened to derail his progress. Living independently, Adnan struggled to afford the essentials he needed for his studies.

“

My journey has not been easy. I have struggled financially and there was a time when I couldn't afford the basic tools I needed for my studies.

Then came a lifeline – a bursary provided by The PA Foundation through the Helena Kennedy Foundation. He was able to buy essential equipment and could afford travel costs for clinical placements. It also represented more than financial assistance: it was validation that his dreams were achievable and that others believed in his potential.

“

The HKF bursary had a positive impact on how I performed and achieved in my study. It improved my confidence and self-esteem, provided work placement support, and allowed more time to focus on studies.

“

The bursary changed everything. With that support, I was able to buy a stethoscope, medical textbooks, scrubs and a lab coat. I could finally afford the travel costs for clinical placements. But more than that, the bursary was a message: that my dreams were valid, and that others believed in me.

As Adnan successfully continues his studies, he also understands that his lived experience as a refugee gives him unique insight into culturally sensitive healthcare, positioning him to serve underserved communities with empathy and expertise. The bursary did not just fund his studies – it unlocked his potential. Every patient he treats, every student he mentors, and every contribution he makes to research will be part of that legacy.



→ About the programme

Adnan received a bursary from the Helena Kennedy Foundation which enables disadvantaged students to realise their potential by supporting them with financial bursaries and mentoring through Higher Education into fulfilling careers.

We work with the Helena Kennedy Foundation to provide bursaries that support students undertaking undergraduate study in STEM or STEM-related subjects. We are also supporting wraparound mentoring, wellbeing and career guidance for the students who aim to make a positive difference in the world.



Investing in mentoring: Building confidence and networks

Mentoring and exposure to role models significantly improve career outcomes for disadvantaged young people, helping to bridge the opportunity gap created by limited networks and visibility.

A systematic review of mentoring in higher education found that students with mentors report higher academic performance, stronger career aspirations and greater confidence navigating professional environments.⁵

For young people from disadvantaged or low-income backgrounds, the journey into professional life is often shaped by a lack of visibility and access. The phrase “you can’t be what you can’t see” captures a fundamental truth: without exposure to relatable role models and real-world opportunities, many young people struggle to imagine themselves in careers they have never seen represented in their communities or personal lives. This lack of visibility is compounded by the absence of informal networks: connections that can offer guidance, encouragement and practical insight into how different industries work.

Mentoring and coaching are powerful tools to address this gap. Working with a number of our partners, The PA Foundation is increasing access to networks, mentors and role models, levelling the playing field and ensuring that talent and ambition are not limited by background.

The mentorship programmes that we fund offer long-term, one-to-one support from a mentor, to help individuals navigate career paths, set goals and make informed decisions. These relationships can be life-changing: building confidence, resilience and a sense of direction.

The story below highlights the impact of our support on Kishan who has been matched with a PA mentor by Nema Problema (now Belong), one of our partners who link newly arrived migrants and refugees with established professionals in Sweden.

Those facing disadvantage, including migrants and refugees, often have to deal with unique challenges that mentoring can directly address. Mentors can guide them through credential recognition, licensing or retraining pathways. Feeling seen and supported can be transformative for someone unsure of how to enter the labour market. Mentoring is not just a career booster – it can transform someone’s trajectory.

5 [The impact of mentoring in higher education on student career development: a systematic review and research agenda \(2024\)](#)

Providing financial support and
Awarding formal accreditations →



10,251

Hours of one-to-one mentoring and
coaching delivered



13

Mentoring programmes
supported annually



Kishan's story

Kishan came to Sweden from Sri Lanka in 2023 with his wife and his children. He had high expectations of the IT job opportunities he would find, but the reality was very different.

After three months of unsuccessful job searching – whilst trying to learn Swedish – his morale was low and his opportunities felt limited. This was when he came across Nema Problema (now Belong), a non-profit organisation that works to strengthen integration in Sweden by providing professional mentoring to job seekers looking to enter the Swedish labour market.

Kishan made contact with Nema Problema, was interviewed and was matched with Peter, a programme volunteer and partner at PA consulting.

“

I could immediately see that Peter was the right mentor for me. He had a similar background in technology and understood my interests and my skills. He was able to explain the labour market situation in Sweden – the challenges and the opportunities – and supported me to take the most effective approaches to job-seeking.

Kishan took his own steps to improve his CV, his presentation and his communications skills, while continuing to meet with Peter and discuss his options. He also benefited from the other elements of Nema Problema's programme: meeting with other mentees who shared their experiences and advice, and attending seminars and networking events.

“

The programme gave me tools: a mentor, the mentoring platform, the other people who could keep me steady, and the events. My takeaway is that the mentor is there to guide me. It's up to me to make the most of these opportunities, but he is there when I need him.

In January 2025, Kishan was offered a job as a System Manager. He is feeling more settled in Sweden, as are his wife and children – although they still miss their family in Sri Lanka. Kishan also credits his relationship with Peter with helping him integrate more fully into his Swedish life.

“

Peter and I visited cafes and restaurants and discussed all sorts of topics, including Swedish history, which has helped me to understand the culture here. Peter is a fantastic resource. He is very willing to share. He has been there to provide balance and tell me to 'hang in there!'.

Belong

→ About the programme

Kishan was matched with his mentor Peter through a programme run by Nema Problema (now, Belong), a non-profit organisation that works to strengthen integration in Sweden for migrants and refugees.

We are supporting the mentoring programme that aims to help people take steps towards the Swedish labour market. This includes mentor/mentee pairings and support via skill enhancement sessions, job forums, developmental meetings and networking.



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