



EVALUATION

SUMMER 2022



—● Youth Highland & The
Voluntary Youth Network —●





Executive Summary

Project Summer 2022

Youth Highland supports a **wide and diverse network of voluntary and third sector youth work organisations in Highland.**

The ability of the voluntary sector to **quickly respond to the needs of the communities** it serves and attract extra resources in the shape of funding, volunteers, community facilities and spaces quickly and efficiently is evident through their impact on communities' post covid.

The Summer 2022 fund facilitated by Highland Council and funded by Scottish Government responded to post covid impacts on the emotional health and wellbeing of young people. It was recognized that partnership with the 3rd sector would ensure resources **reach communities most in need.** Youth Highland was awarded £71K from the Summer budget. This funding was distributed between Youth Highland and 12 voluntary youth sector area based youth clubs across the region with an additional £16k issued direct to member clubs as part of the Caithness Cares initiative.

Decision makers must recognise the worth of the third sector and build on this foundation to ensure best possible outcomes for young people in the Highland Region.

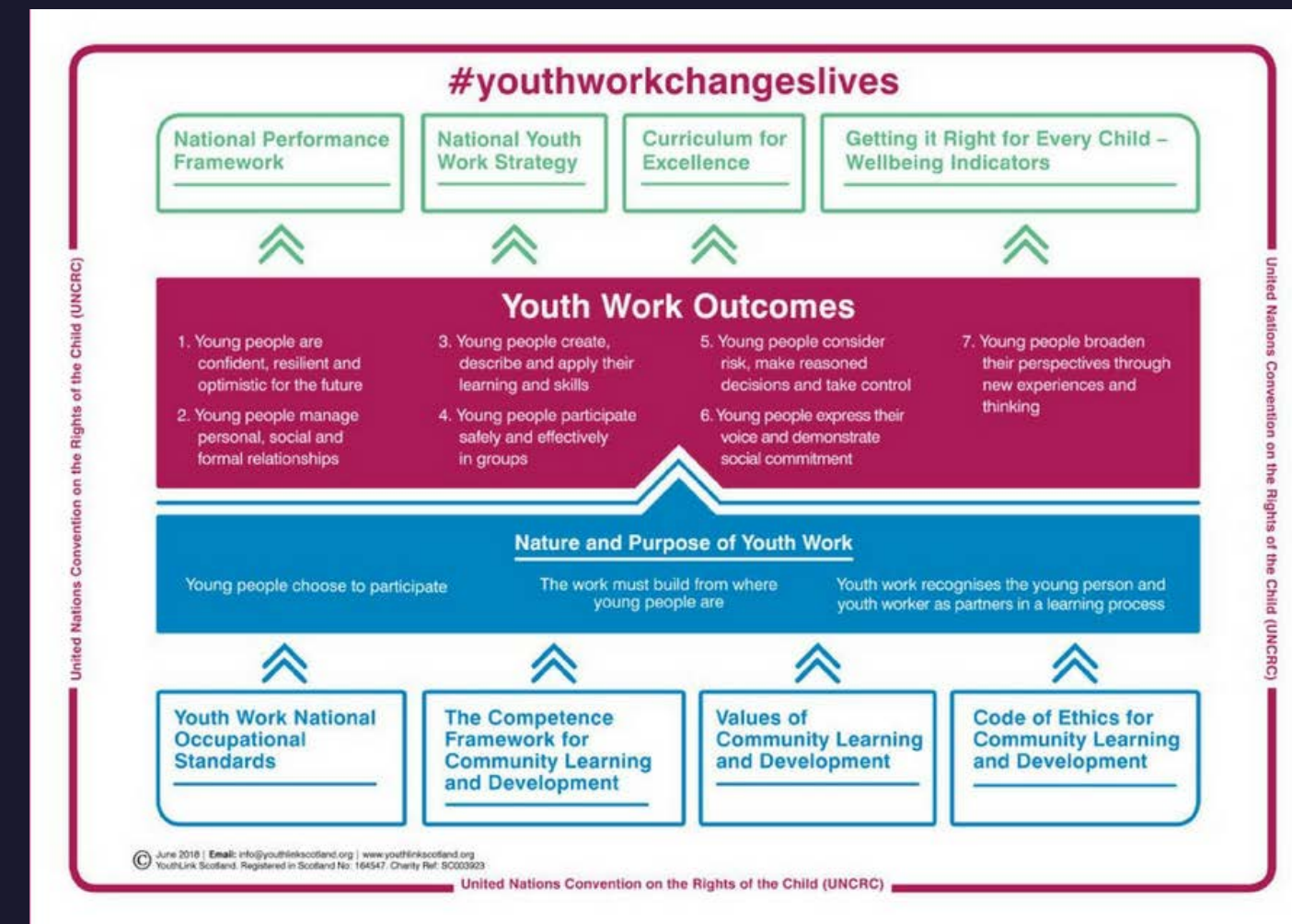
Investment in Continued Professional Development to ensure ongoing improvement in youth work practice in Highland is essential. Confident and competent practice will prove best value in the long run. Currently these courses are difficult to access for people living and working in Highlands however opportunities to access professional training courses has been improved post pandemic with many voluntary sector youth workers attending online training ergo increasing their professional skills and understanding. • Training and CPD needs to be made available for statutory and voluntary youth work practitioners, and joint training will enable improved understanding and partnership between the voluntary sector and HLH. • Further development of digital youth work training offer and online platform —VYN has developed a framework for this, delivered by a range of partners with existing specialisms. **It needs investment.** • Further development of partnerships with National and regional learning partners to improve the CLD / youth work learning offer and professional pathways for youth workers in Highland. It is important that we develop professional pathways that are recognized by the CLD Standards Council.



Background Basics

The Summer of Hope 2022 programme has been an opportunity to **support the development and growth of community-based youth work** organisations to deliver in line with the VYN Improvement Plan model – with Youth Highland co-ordinating, area HUBs leading delivery and specialist partner organisations **supporting delivery of wide-reaching ambitious youth work programmes**.

Through **ongoing conversations and consultations with young people and the sector**, the VYN has developed a shared youth work improvement plan which sets out delivery partners roles, specific actions and regional priorities aligned with National youth work outcomes, CLD values, ethics and competencies and SHANARRI indicators. The plan identifies the need for these **services to be accessible to all young people** and is based on investment in local area youth work HUBs through existing youth clubs in each of the Community Partnership areas – aligning the voluntary youth sectors delivery with local government planning requirements as well as legislation in The Children and Young Peoples Act 2014 and the UNCRC which is currently being incorporated into Scottish law.



Summer In Numbers

13

Programmes Supported

15 member clubs received funding. 13 delivered summer programmes. 2 withdrew due to short notice of funding.

11,357

Contact With Young People

Attendances through a total of 407 sessions across the Highland Region.

55

Partners In Delivery

Third sector organisations supporting each other, sharing skills, knowledge and resources. A total of xx referrals by statutory organisations were made to member clubs over the summer.

£83k

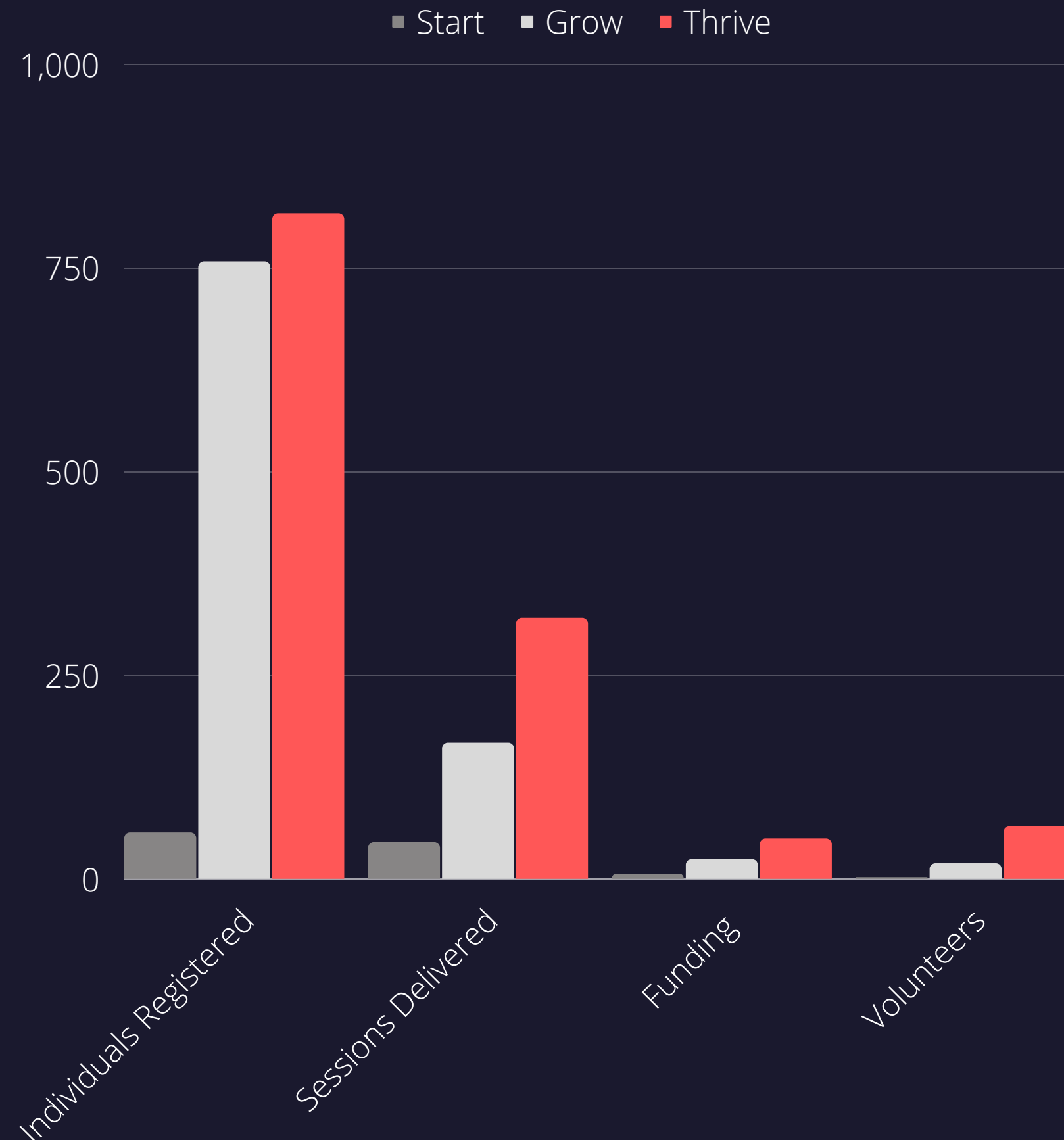
Total Cost

£87k received through Highland Council streams. Match funding around £90k. £4k returned to local authority due to 2 clubs withdrawal due to short notice of funding.

85

Volunteers

Across the region local volunteers and young leaders supported the Summer programmes.



The Youth Highland member clubs were allocated the funding based on experience and capacity. Start = £2k Grow = £4k Thrive = £7k

Bridging the Attainment Gap

Youth Highland have been actively supporting member clubs to deliver youth awards through their engagement with young people since Summer 2021. Investment through the YWERF project demonstrated the positive impact on attainment for young people, employment for youth workers and engagement with youth provision in areas of multiple deprivation. Through the investment we have evidenced a huge increase in the confidence of youth workers to support young people who access their local clubs and an increase in successful awards across the Highlands. This work has continued to be a part of the programmes in member clubs thanks to match funding secured by Youth Highland.

01 Hi5 Awards – 105 in progress

- Are for young people age 5+
- Have a minimum of 5 hours of activity
- Have 3 levels (star rating) based on the young person's cumulative hours
- Can be incorporated into existing or planned activities
- Can be used in a range of settings

Are inclusive and suitable for young people with a range of interests and abilities

02 Dynamic Youth Awards – 33 in progress

Dynamic Youth Awards are peer assessed awards recognising the contributions and achievements of young people in the 10 to 14 age group. The awards are easy to use and can be incorporated into existing youth work and school programmes.

03 Youth Achievement Awards – 24 started

Bronze to Gold Youth Achievement Award: aimed at young people aged 14+ Platinum Young Leader Award: suitable for 16+ year olds. Some of the awards might be suitable for you even if you're not within the suggested age range.

04 Saltire Awards – 36 signed up

The Saltire Awards are the Scottish Government's way of celebrating, recognising and rewarding the commitment, contribution and achievements of young volunteers in Scotland.



CONCLUSIONS

The Local Authority must acknowledge the significant partners responsible for delivery of youth work in Highland. Local authority investment in the VYN improvement model would attract significant funding from external sources and increase the local resource for essential youth work services. The financial support for summer programmes albeit days before the Summer holiday started has evidenced that the following outcomes are achievable:

Increased opportunities and a wider range of youth work activities and learning programmes for young people in Highland.

Increased jobs in local communities. • Innovation and enterprise in local communities—enabling retention of young people in rural areas. •

Increase in collaboration between community based and specialist organisations leading to easier access to specialist services and resulting in prevention of crisis.

Increased numbers of young people accessing accredited learning opportunities. Closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Increased local engagement, skills and responsibility for care and wellbeing of children and young people.

Final Words

Youth Highland is proud to support such a **wide range of community led youth organisations**.

We know our members are **well placed and experienced to plan and deliver successful holiday programmes**.

Over the past two years we have been able to support local youth work staff and volunteers to plan and deliver summer holiday programmes at **extremely short notice**.

Clubs have **existing relationships** with local children and young people and so have no trouble encouraging people to join in, participate, help lead, have fun and learn and take part in new things.

Community run and community based youth work has a **significant impact on enabling positive outcomes** for children, young people, families and communities.

- Increased skills and jobs.
- Increased attainment and qualifications.
- Increased social action and engagement in local democracy.
- Prevention of crisis through community capacity building and support.
- Improved local facilities.

Youth Highland continues to support the development and growth of community led youth groups. However, **none of these groups receive any consistent core funding from local authority** and their future remains uncertain.

It is essential that decision makers and council officers recognise and value the work being done in the voluntary sector. This demands that they **understand the difference between community led action and empowerment and service delivery** by their own service providers.



Grow – Rokzkool



introducing The Rokzkool Academy is a charity led by volunteers and based in Merkinch, Inverness ranked the 8th most deprived community in Scotland in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. Rokzkool has been operating in and around the Highlands for over 5 years. Running workshops during term time for young people of all ages and backgrounds, working in partnership with Schools and Communities. During the holidays Rokzkool also offer week long courses which emphasise music, sport and fun.

Young people work towards building skills and incorporating recognised awards, such as Hi5, Saltire, Youth Awards and DofE, with the aim to build confidence, self esteem, resilience and social skills as well as independence and respect; we provide a platform for our students to develop skills and knowledge to perform their best not only on stage but in the spheres of work, life and society.

Health and well-being is encouraged, as is parent participation, with a student led approach that allows students to become a main part of every project delivered. . We enhance and encourage musical skill through a variety of activities, believing that everybody has some kind of musical ability that only needs inspiration, confidence and direction to find it. Our workshops offer a series of activities devoted to the musical, emotional and social development of youth. The facilities are designed to entertain, exercise and stimulate them in a positive way while reinforcing good social skills in a group environment.

As a Youth Highland member the Rokzkool Academy has all necessary policies and procedures in place.



25 SESSIONS

526 MEALS

**168
REGISTRATIONS**

**19
VOLUNTEERS**

PARTNERSHIPS

= 572 ATTENDANCES

Rokzkool engage with families of young people via their social media platforms and in partnership with schools. In addition to band practice, orchestra, stage performances and introduction to musical instruments the Rokzkool programme included sport, outings, art attack and hospitality into the summer fun. The results meeting the objectives of the programme to "have fun, build confidence, socialise and try new activities."



CONCLUSIONS

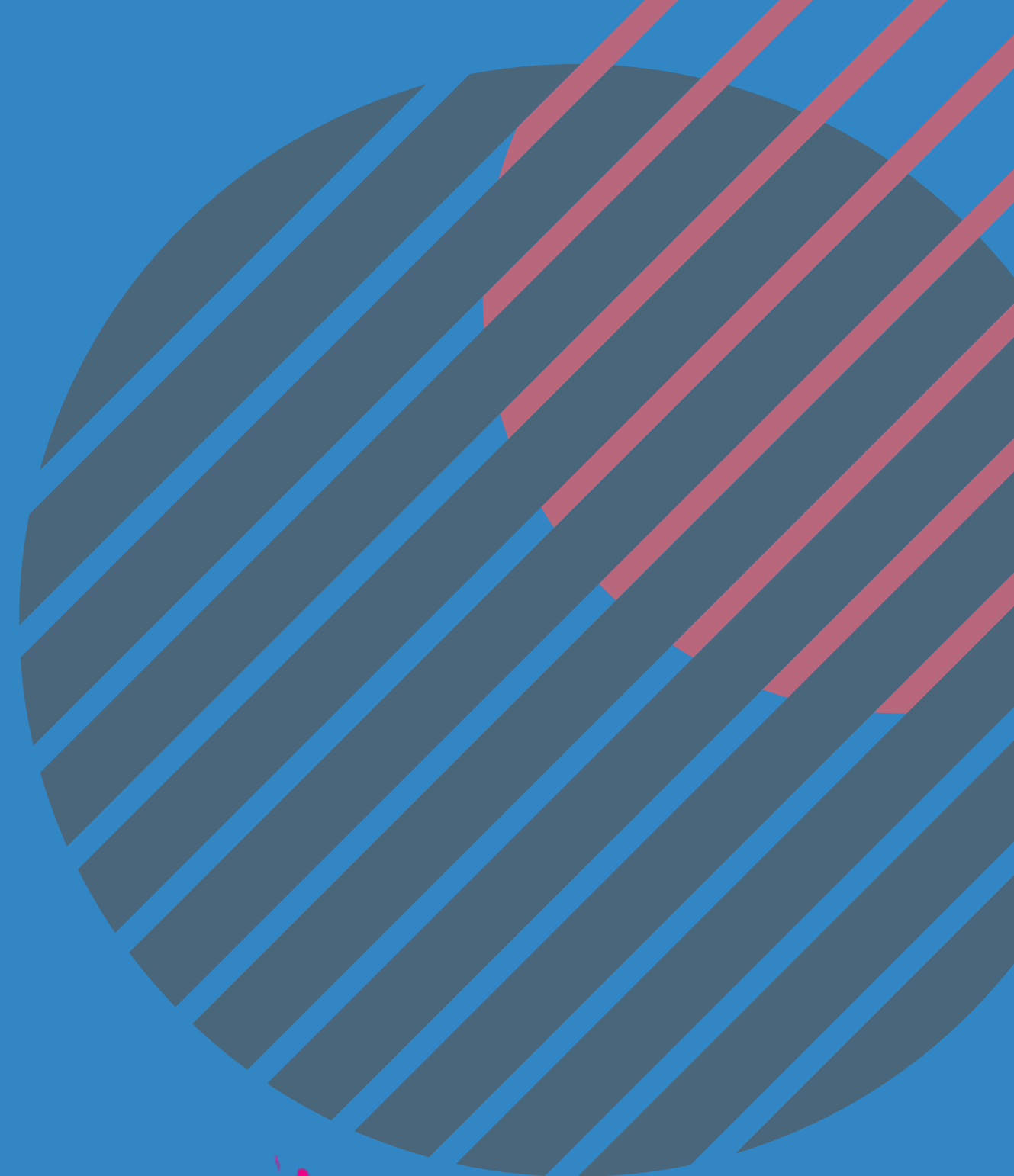
The Rokzkool management team are passionate about the programme they deliver, which includes certificated training including food hygiene and first aid through their platform. "Prior to the end of school term, the team offered taster sessions to primary and secondary schools in the Inverness ASG. The sessions were well received, Head Teachers and ASN's were very interested in the way we worked with their pupils. We accommodated on average 80 pupils over 2 days in each school." The summer programme was free of charge with transport, breakfast and lunch provided.

"We have learned "no start to the programme until funding has been sourced and confirmed." This would negatively impact young people and families most in need.

Funding would facilitate a part time position to focus solely on Youth Awards.

At least 2 months notice- not days - are required re successful funding. impact of short lead in time impacts on partnership working and collaboration as "every charity/ community groups offering holliday provision were equally busy setting up and planning their own event."

"There is demand for the work we carry out within our communities, parents have been contacting us to ask when our next holiday program will start.



SCOTTISH CHARITY
NUMBER:SC049455

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK
.COM/ROKZKOOLACADEMY
/ABOUT](https://www.facebook.com/rokzkoolacademy/about)

We have received many thank you cards, and notes from parents, carers and children to highlight the benefits and tell us how much their children enjoyed themselves.

Some said they had noticed a marked improvement in sleeping patterns, communication, how even one child who according to mum, would always struggle to get up in the morning, he was waiting downstairs dressed and ready to go at 8.30! Some parents also noticed their children eager to tell them all about their day, spending more time as a family sharing tales and stories of their adventures. Some eating habits changed, one mum noticed her daughter was willing to try vegetables with dinner, this was before chicken nuggets with chips, now a healthy bowl of vegetables is a side dish and plate cleared apart from the 'baby trees' (broccoli) Another told mum, if Rokzkool was in their school, he wouldn't bother with snack or lunch time breaks, he would stay at Rokzkool and never leave!!