



QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

THE
GRADUATE
SCHOOL

BELIEVING, BUILDING, BETTERING.

THEORY OF CHANGE REPORT

www.rcitybelfast.com



R-CITY is a future-focused programme, where young people are encouraged to seek out new opportunities and build their skills to achieve in their chosen fields.

We believe that every young person has the capacity to achieve. Through our three-year programme we support young people to feel proud of themselves and their achievements, confident to raise their aspirations and fulfil their potential.

In fact, **97%** of young people interviewed believe that **RCITY has changed them as a person**, having changed their outlook on life and enabled them to develop new skills that will help them in the future.

Education and **Personal Development** are at the heart of the programme and **self-efficacy** is encouraged, with **100%** of RCITY participants having set development goals for themselves to achieve within the next year.

These goals range from *spending more time with family* to *travelling abroad and expanding horizons* to *applying to university*, showing the holistic approach the organisation takes to working with young people. **100%** of current RCITY participants believe the three-year programme has **developed their self-confidence** and helped them to believe in themselves.

Before joining R-CITY, young people report having **low confidence** and a **lack of self-esteem** which in turn lead to **anxiety** because of a perceived lack of support. With “little to no aspirations”, they were not involved in other youth groups and felt they had no leadership skills and were uncomfortable in large groups.

However, after one year of participating in the RCITY programme, **100%** of respondents believed they had **gained skills that will help in all aspects of life**. Through being able to open up to others, the young people have felt this has **positively impacted** their mental health. They noted the importance of having fun and relaxing with their peers, giving them a change to switch off from the pressures of their lives at home.





WORKING TO PROVIDE CREATIVE & INNOVATIVE PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

When reflecting on their RCITY journey, the young people speak about the importance of feedback. When youth workers reflected on the personal changes and growth they witnessed, this created a sense of pride in the young people.

Feeling proud was a key theme found through this research. The RCITY process enables the participants to feel a sense of accomplishment and pride in themselves and their achievements with many noting that this RCITY was the first time they have “**stuck at something**”.

This pride then enabled the young people to feel that they could achieve more, raising their aspirations for higher education with **66%** of participants saying they want to attend university and **14%** wanting to set up their own business.

When speaking about the future, **96%** of the young people express a desire to *‘give back’ to their communities*. They see the skills and attributes they have gained through RCITY as valuable to reinvest into their community and ensure other young people get the opportunities that meant so much to them. This shows a deeply rooted sense of place and purpose in the young people.

This shows a deeply rooted sense of place and purpose in the young people, an outcome from the focus on social action projects that RCITY have throughout the three-year programme.



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**CREATING PROUD,
CONFIDENT YOUNG PEOPLE**



**PRIORITISING
EDUCATION**



**IMPORTANCE OF
RELATIONSHIPS**



**COMMUNITY
IMPACT**



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