IARS’ Youth Advisory Board

Terms of Reference

1. About Independent Academic Research Studies International Institute

IARS International Institute is a UK-based leading, international think-tank with a charitable mission to give everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society.

We achieve our charitable aims by producing evidence-based solutions to current social problems, sharing best practice and by supporting young people and the community to shape decision making. IARS is an international expert in criminal justice, restorative justice, human rights and inclusion, citizenship, public service and user-led research.

2. Youth Advisory Board (YAB)

IARS began as a pan European networking and idea sharing platform for young people. IARS is committed to empowering young people to influence policy and practice. It is for this reason that IARS regards role of young people within the organisation as crucial. To accommodate this ideology, IARS has created an independent body of young people aged 15 - 29 named the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) who will take on responsibility for evaluating and steering the work of the organisation. It is Important that IARS’ work incorporates the views of young people in its projects and therefore the YAB provides the means for this to be achieved.

The YAB will consist of no more than 20 members with a quorum of 3 members who will meet, at a minimum every three months but it is possible for the YAB to meet every month also. The aim of these meetings will be to evaluate and discuss IARS projects and operations as well as to respond to youth policy issues in the community.

3. The role of the YAB

- The YAB has been created to serve as an independent youth-led and youth focused panel, with the objective to empower young people, make a tangible change to youth policy and give their unfiltered perspectives on the work done by IARS.
- Each member of the YAB must agree to deliver their role for one year minimum, after which there will be a review.
- Each YAB member will be required to sign an agreement of their role and commitments
- Through the agreement of roles each member is taking on a responsibility to attend each group meeting and to come prepared for each meeting.
- All of the members of the YAB must decide and agree together, the boundaries and expectations of the members.
- Each member is expected to be well organised and to read agendas and relevant paperwork ahead of each meeting.
4. Membership attributes:

- Proactive
- Diverse
- Passionate
- Committed
- Volunteerism
- Self-Managing
- User or Ex user of youth services
- Aware of youth issues
- Ambitious
- Campaigner
- Networker
- Advocate
- Computer Skills
- Organised
- Get involved
- Team player
- Optimistic

5. Accountability:

The IARS Project Coordinator (PC) will be responsible for communicating group meetings back to the IARS Project Team and vice versa.

6. Meetings

- The dates of future meetings will be discussed periodically will be expected to be quarterly (every three months) or monthly of necessary
- Venue of the meetings will be decided by the group, IARS offices will provide free room bookings if desired
- Organised by the PC
- Topics discussed will be generated by the previous meeting and the PC
- Meetings will be arranged via email by the PC
- When available Trustees will be invited with the group’s permission
- Each YAB member will take it in turn to be the minute-taker and chair
- YAB representatives will be invited to IARS Trustees Board meetings that are taking place quarterly.

7. Sharing of information and resources (including confidential materials)

- The YAB will have access to IARS office resources such as computers, telephone, fax and internet if desired.
- There is a small budget for the YAB and any requests will need to go through the secretary.
- Group members share information and resources via a closed YAB group on Facebook
- The Facebook group will also be a space to post policy and allow for discussion outside of meetings
- Confidential materials will be kept in the IARS shared drive
8. Review Process

Every YAB member after appointment needs to sign a declaration of willingness to act as the YAB member and agree to all responsibilities enclosed in the Terms of Reference before he or she may contribute at any meeting of the YAB.

The YAB will be reviewed annually.

Two members of the YAB must retire at each review, those longest in office retiring first and the choice between any of equal service being made by drawing lots.

A retiring YAB member who remains qualified may be reappointed for a maximum of 2 consecutive terms of office.

A YAB member’s term of office automatically terminates if he or she:

1- Is absent from 3 consecutive YAB meetings within a 6 month period and is asked by the majority of the other YAB members to resign;
2- Resigns by written notice to the YAB (but only if at least five YAB members remain in office)

The YAB may at any time co-opt any individual young person who is qualified to be appointed as a YAB member to fill a vacancy in their number. The co-opted YAB member holds office only until the next review.

9. The Role of IARS

A YAB member will occasionally be given the opportunity to represent the views of the YAB at a trustees meeting, so that young people’s views form the youth projects.

IARS will be able to assist and support the YAB through the role of the PC who will be the main point of contact for the YAB secretary (the secretary is appointed by the YAB and can revolve from member to member, the secretary will take minutes and share these with the PC), the PC will be the main point of contact between the YAB and IARS’ staff members.

IARS will also induct the YAB team at the beginning of their term a brief breakdown of all the projects and policy areas that the organisation covers as well as introducing each member of staff. This is to ensure the YAB team are fully aware and understand the work and vision of IARS to enable them to make robust, effective and relevant recommendations in their term.

10. Access Requirements

Please specify any access requirements you have for attending meetings or communicating between meetings (e.g.: wheelchair access, hearing induction loop, large print papers)

On completion of their term, members of the YAB will receive certification for their contributions to the project if they have upheld their responsibilities under the Terms of Reference.

Date: Name: Signature: