

15 MAY 2023

Meaningful Youth Inclusion in the Environmental Sector

YOUTH
STEM 2030

Empowering a generation of STEM changemakers

OVERVIEW

- Why include youth?
- Meaningful youth inclusion
- When it all goes wrong: negative personal experiences
- Case studies
- Creating meaningful paid work
- Questions

Why Include Youth?



The Moral Case



The Business Case



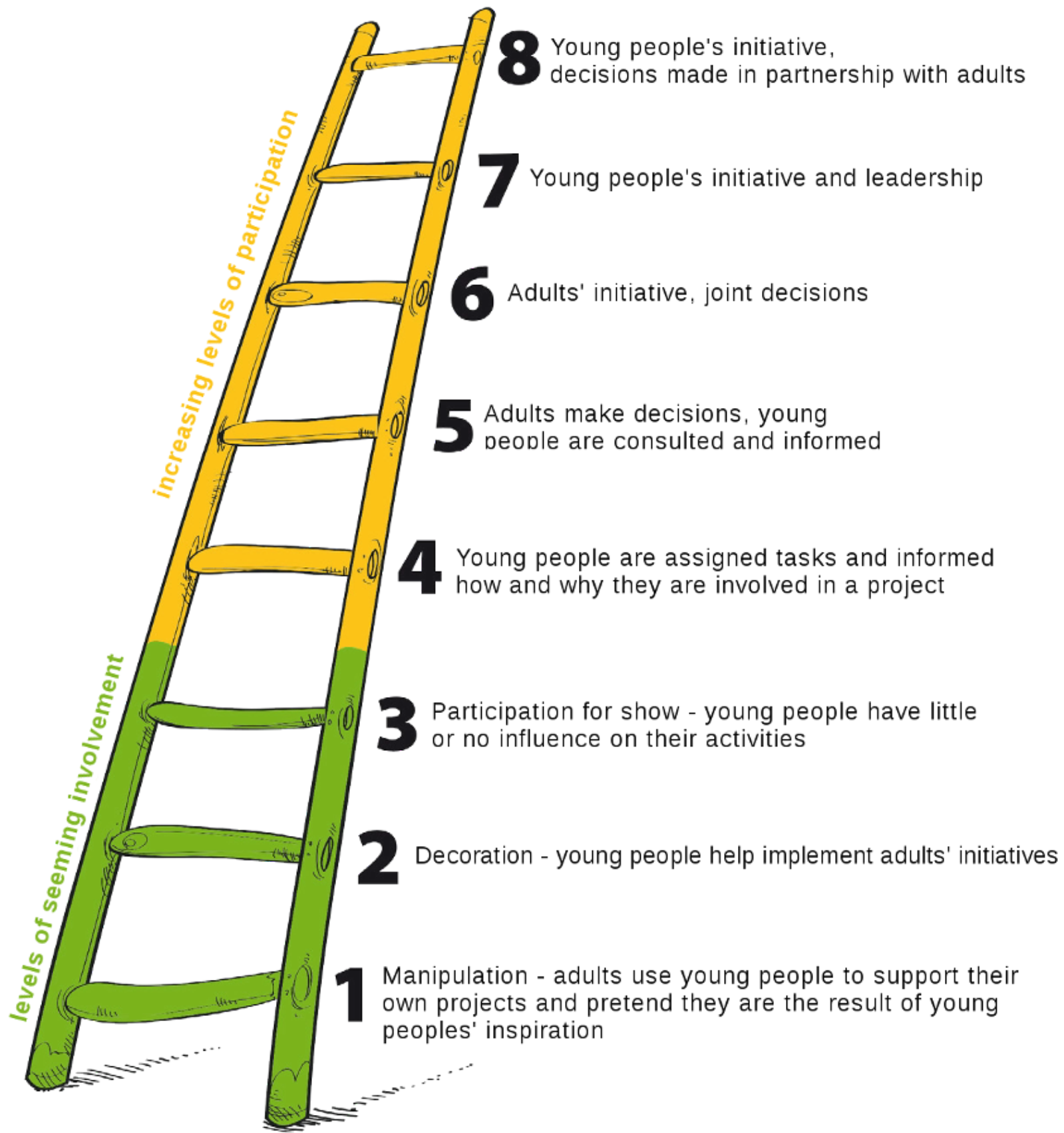
The Planetary Case

The Cupcake Analogy

A North Star for meaningful youth inclusion



Hart's (1992) Ladder of Young People's Participation



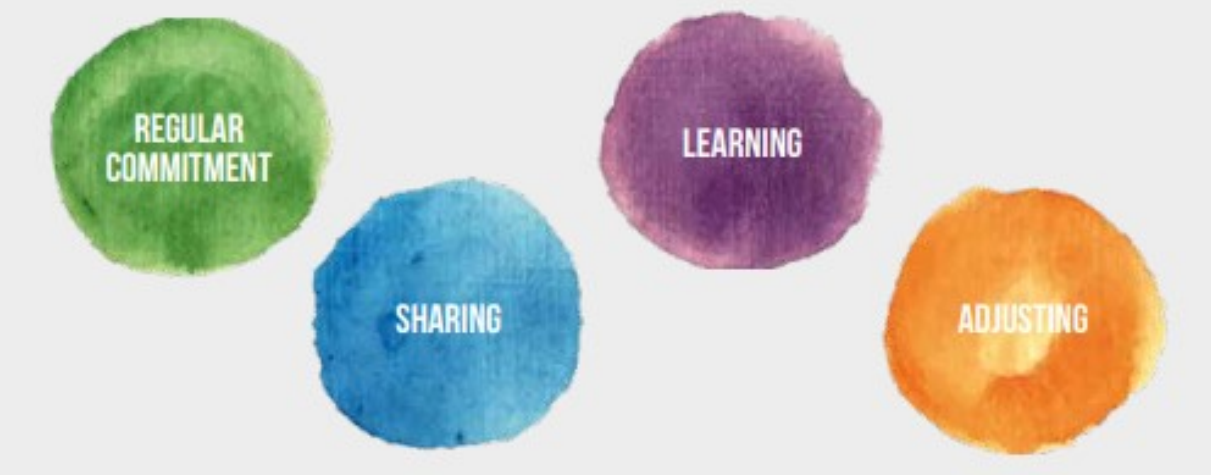
The New Economic Foundation participation ladder



Credit: Wong, Zimmerman & Parker, "A Typology of Youth Participation and Empowerment for Child and Adolescent Health Promotion", American Journal of Community Psychology, Sept 2010
Gail McMillan, via Iriss

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

HIGHER LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT



LOWER LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT



ENGAGING WITH INFORMATION

- QUESTIONING AND PROMOTING**
- Reading a book about nature
 - Researching something related to nature and/or the environment
 - Signing a petition to protect the environment
- LEARNING**
- Watching an information clip
 - Reading an article
 - Downloading/using nature apps
- VIEWING**
- Liking a social media post
 - Sharing photos of nature



DEDICATING TIME/RESOURCES

- DEDICATION/CAREER/PASSION**
- Subscribe to a nature magazine
 - Long term sponsorship of charity
 - Joining a wildlife/conservation/nature-based group or activities
 - Career or studying in environment sector
 - Regular volunteer with nature organisations
- REGULAR COMMITMENT**
- Taking part in an activity outdoors on a regular basis
 - Visiting a nature reserve
 - Actively increasing time spent outdoors
 - One off volunteering
- CURRENT ACTIVITY/ONE-OFF COMMITMENT**
- Enjoying the view
 - Taking part in a one-off nature related activity ie: a nature trail



CHANGING PERSONAL BEHAVIOUR

- DEDICATION/CAREER/PASSION**
- Creating a biodiversity friendly garden
 - Changing majority of shopping habits to reduce impact on the environment
- ADJUSTING**
- Walking or cycling instead of driving or getting the bus
 - Making some different shopping choices based on environmental impact
- OBSERVING**
- Going for a walk to enjoy nature
 - Taking photos of nature



REACHING OUT TO/ENCOURAGING OTHERS

- ENCOURAGING OTHERS**
- Having an active role in encouraging others to take action
 - Tell other people about specific issues or topics related to the environment
- SHARING**
- Communicating information to others about nature/the environment
- ACKNOWLEDGING**
- Sharing a social media post with friends
 - Talking about personal experiences of nature

Recognition of youth as stakeholders

Shifting Power

Different ways of taking part

Making it Meaningful

Diverse youth

Youthful and youth-friendly

Feeling valued

Accessible, inclusive & safe

Trust & Resources

Negative Experiences

- Tokenism & youthwashing
- Lack of accessibility
- Unequal terms of participation or lack of resources & trust
- Valued solely for our age, or seen as a spokesperson for a generation
- Blame apportioned to children & young people for 'not engaging'
- Young people being simply added into a room
- Needing to change to 'fit in' and be accepted in the space
- Not being taken seriously when reporting problematic behaviour & response to report creating more harm – lack of safeguarding

Case Study: Youth STEM 2030 @ COP26

Advocacy by older person for Mhairi to speak at event



Advocacy for more meaningful youth inclusion by Youth STEM 2030



Co-creation with youth



Total of **18 young people share their voices** through video, talks and highlighting their work



Open call for young people to share their voices & video creation



[Watch the Video](#)

Case Study: Surfers Against Sewage



What Made It Meaningful...

- ✓ Young people involved in all aspects
- ✓ Opened doors to decision-makers for young people
- ✓ Manifesto reflects diverse young peoples' views
- ✓ Utilised a SAS superpower: policy & campaigns expertise
- ✓ SAS recognised our expertise, especially in youth inclusion

Case Study: Surfers Against Sewage



Even Better If...

Advisory Group was not only experienced changemakers (although Summit attendees were a mix!)

Policy training for Advisory Group

Longer-term youth inclusion



Support to Create Paid Work

- Graduate Career Advantage Scotland (GCAS) – submit by 12th June!!
- Year In Industry
- Robertson Trust
- Saltire Scholars
- Career Ready
- We Can Work Internships
- Recent programmes including Kickstart Scheme & New to Nature (ongoing), show ongoing support for creating paid roles for young people!



Work Together to Advance Your Meaningful Youth Inclusion Objectives

Mhairi McCann, Youth STEM 2030 Founder & CEO
mhairi@youthstem2030.org