

# Girlguiding Scotland launch project – and they expect action!



The latest project from Girlguiding Scotland aimed at encouraging girls and young women to take action on issues they care about has support from gender equality campaigner Laura Bates, comedian Bridget Christie and Director of Equate Scotland Talat Yaqoob.

The innovative project, called Action for Change, is being run in partnership by Girlguiding and Girlguiding Scotland, and it launches in Scotland before being rolled out the remainder of the UK where it will create the largest regional girl-led advocacy network in the UK, over the next three years.

Action for Change will give young members of Girlguiding Scotland the skills, confidence and ongoing support that they need to speak up about the issues that matter to them, build a fairer society and play their part in changing their communities for the better.

Laura Bates, founder of Everyday Sexism, said: “It’s so important that girls and young women are supported to speak out when they experience or witness inequality – because that’s how change happens.

“I think it’s great that Girlguiding is launching Action for Change, as this will give even more girls and young women the opportunity to create the change they want to see.”

Through Action for Change, Girlguiding Scotland members aged 13 to 18 will have the opportunity to attend an action-packed

training and inspiration weekend in Edinburgh where they will learn key skills such as persuasive storytelling, digital communications, how to influence decision makers, and the role of the media in creating change. They will also hear from young campaigners about what inspired them to turn their ideas into action.

Girlguiding Scotland members will then be supported to take action in their own unique ways, whether it's organising a community event, starting a petition, tackling bullying or discrimination they see, fundraising to make changes they care about – or something completely different within their local communities or beyond.

Sue Walker, Girlguiding Scotland's Chief Commissioner, said: "Empowering girls and young women to use their voice and take social action is at the heart of Girlguiding Scotland's values and programme.

"We want to support our young members to take social action to the next level by inspiring them to aim high, building their confidence to take action wherever their passion lies.

"I've seen the amazing difference our members make both in their own communities and beyond – from speaking out on issues such as mental health and body image to providing practical aid to refugees. I can't wait to see what our girls will go onto achieve with the skills and confidence they develop through this exciting new project."

Talat Yaqoob, Director of Equate Scotland, is among high-profile backers of the project. She said: "We may have a woman First Minister and Prime Minister, but look below the surface and there are layers of inequality young women face.

"We need young women to feel powerful and know that they can change society for the better. Girlguiding has led the charge in listening and responding to the concerns of young women in the modern world.

“I’m delighted to support this initiative and look forward to meeting amazing girls and young women from all over Scotland at the Inspiration Weekend.”

Katie Horsburgh, 16, a Girlguiding Scotland member from Edinburgh, said: “Girls are the key to changing their lives for the better. Through my role on Girlguiding’s Advocate panel, I’ve had some fantastic opportunities to speak out on issues that I care about.

“Now, by mobilising Girlguiding Scotland members from the Borders to the Highlands, we want to give even more girls the microphone – empowering them to share their stories and their experiences and to give their answers to some of the key, tough social issues girls and young women face today.”

A spokesperson for the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation added: “We are excited to support Girlguiding’s Action for Change project, which will empower hundreds of girls and young women to take action on the social issues that matter to them. It will ensure that young women’s voices are heard, and are able to contribute to a more just and inclusive society in the UK.”

Yeonmi Park, Fahma Mohamed and Chella Quint are among the high profile supporters who will be taking to social media over the next week, encouraging all girls and young women in the UK to start a conversation about issues they would like to see #ActionforChange on.

Get involved on Twitter and Instagram at @GirlguidingScot, using the hashtag #ActionforChange.

Recruitment to take part in Action for Change is now open to all Girlguiding Scotland members aged 13-18. Interested members can get in touch at [www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk/action-for-change/](http://www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk/action-for-change/)

For more information about Girlguiding Scotland, the leading charity for girls and young women in Scotland, go

to [www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk](http://www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk)