

The Distillers' Charity Announces the Results of their Work to Transform Scottish Young People's Lives with the Release of Their Latest Impact Report



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Edinburgh, March 2025 - The Distillers' Charity is pleased to release their latest 2024 Impact Report, highlighting the remarkable results achieved by the Youth Action Fund over the past year. The Youth Action Fund was created by The Distillers' Charity in early 2022, following the spectacular success of the inaugural Distillers One of One® Auction. The Fund aims to support young people in Scotland, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to reach their potential and make a positive contribution to their communities. It is funded by proceeds from The Distillers One of One Auction, the biennial series of ultra-rare whisky auctions, made possible through the collective endeavour of the Scotch Whisky industry. 100% of the hammer price from each auction goes directly to charity, principally to the Youth Action Fund.

Having raised £4.3 million since the first auction, more than 2,800 young people have been engaged through the Youth Action Fund and have benefited from the work the fund's dedicated charity partners have undertaken, dramatically increasing each young person's opportunities to enter the workforce. In the past year alone, 1,157 young people across 23 local authorities in Scotland have been engaged by the Youth Action Fund's portfolio charities. They have been provided with vital support where they might otherwise have faced significant barriers to entering the workforce, such as mental health, experience of trauma, or severe deprivation and poverty.

The cumulative employability outcomes for young people that the Youth Action Fund charities have achieved stands at 1,974 since its inception, with 890 in 2024 alone. These young people have significantly improved their long-term prospects, either securing employment (33%), progressing to further/higher education (28%), pursuing other vocational training and apprenticeships (19%), or re-engaging with school (15%). The report also shows that last year, 4,403 key progression milestones were achieved, including earning a recognised qualification, improving literacy and numeracy, and taking part in Alcohol Awareness Training (721).

These powerful results are a testament to the success of the programme and the commitment of the Scotch Whisky industry who have collectively united to support the Youth Action Fund in this vital work. Grant Gordon OBE, Chair of The Distillers' Charity, said: *"This is the third year that we're presenting the Impact Report and we're very proud to see the exceptional results that the Youth Action Fund has achieved to date, thanks to our charity partners' hard work, and thanks to the ongoing support of the Scotch Whisky industry. The Distillers One of One Auction series continues to raise a significant amount to help young people in Scotland, and we're looking forward to this year's auction to continue the Fund's vital work."*

Deputy First Minister Kate Forbes said *“The Youth Action Fund has provided young people with access to career opportunities including in Scotland’s vibrant whisky sector. Whisky exports are worth £5 billion and the sector supports 41,000 jobs. To boost the sector’s growth, we are working with the Scottish Chambers of Commerce and Scottish Development International to unleash Scotland’s export potential. Our budget for 2025-26 includes an additional £11 million for Local Employability Partnerships to ensure that services are in place to support people furthest away from employment towards and into work, helping to address inequality and create a fairer labour market.”*

“The generous contributions of a wide range of Scotch Whisky companies generates the funding - through the Distillers One of One auction - that facilitates the important work of The Youth Action Fund. The Fund is making a real, tangible impact reaching and supporting young people facing significant disadvantages and barriers in some of the most deprived areas of Scotland, helping to improve their lives during some challenging times”, says Mark Kent, CEO at SWA.

ENDS

Case studies

Mikey’s Path to Employment: From Homelessness to employment at Diageo

When Mikey, 20, from Methil, Fife, joined the Next Steps Programme, he was homeless, couch-surfing, and struggling with ADHD, making job applications and paperwork feel overwhelming. With no clear direction but a strong desire to work, he connected with Ashley, his Employment Coordinator, in May 2024. Through weekly meetings, structured support, and step-by-step guidance, Mikey built confidence, completed an Employability Award, and gained vital skills in job coaching, interview preparation, and financial literacy. His dedication paid off - after excelling in his interview, he secured a six-month internship at Diageo’s Cameronbridge Distillery. Once daunted by paperwork, Mikey now navigates official processes independently and feels optimistic about his financial future.

KG’s Support to Success: Overcoming Barriers to Independence

By the age of 16, KG had already endured family breakdown, homelessness, and the responsibility of caring for her siblings all of which took a toll on her education and confidence. Despite these challenges, she was determined to pursue a career working with children but lacked the qualifications and stability to move forward. Referred to FARE Scotland, she found support through her Key Worker, Hannah, who provided both practical assistance and emotional guidance. With structured sessions and crisis interventions, KG gained confidence, remained committed to her work placement despite setbacks, and took steps toward financial independence. Her resilience paid off - she earned her first qualification, secured a college place in childcare, and began a modern apprenticeship, now facing the future with confidence.

Editors Notes

About The Distillers' Charity

The Distillers' Charity is the philanthropic arm of The Worshipful Company of Distillers, supported by the generosity of our Livery members and the significant proceeds from The Distillers One of One. The Charity's vision is to make a difference especially to young people, and those within the distilled spirits trade, helping them to reach their full potential, improve their life chances and make a positive contribution to their communities. Distillers' Charity mission is manifested through three distinctive grant-making areas:

1. Vocational Training & Education: to provide educational and development support to new and recent entrants to the UK spirits trade, encouraging high standards of distilling practice and service.
2. Livery & City giving: to fulfil our wider civic duties as a Livery, supporting the Lord Mayor's Appeal, the Master's charity and other good causes aligned with our vision.
3. Youth Action Fund: created by The Distillers' Charity to use proceeds from The Distillers One of One auctions to support young people in Scotland, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds, to reach their potential and make a positive contribution to their communities.

The Distillers' Charity is a registered charity in England and Wales (no1193683) and Scotland (SC052075)

About The Distillers One of One® Auction

One of One® and Distillers One of One® are registered trademarks of The Distillers' Charity

The Distillers One of One Auction is a biennial series of ultra-rare whisky auctions. The Auctions have raised a total of £4.3 million for charitable purposes since 2021 and uniquely, 100% of the fundraising goes to grant making, with 90% of that amount going to the Youth Action Fund and 10% going to The Distillers' Charity for its general charitable purposes.

With a total of eighty-one unique lots created across the past two auctions, 37 of which broke world sales records for the distilleries in question, the Distillers One of One has earned its reputation as a once-in-a-lifetime experience for collectors. Each lot is imbued with the spirit of craftsmanship and exclusivity, representing the pinnacle of Scotch whisky. No two bottles are the same, and no lot will ever be recreated - a powerful draw for the most discerning collectors.

The Distillers One of One® is a trading name of The Distillers' Ventures Limited, a company registered in England & Wales under company number 13264121 and registered office at 1 The Sanctuary, Westminster, London SW1P 3JT

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