

Combating Young Disabled People's Worklessness: An International Network

Network Lead: Prof. Alan Roulstone
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
19th March 2014

The Network-Aims

The international network aims to explore the very urgent issue of the barriers to and often fractured pathways of disabled young people's access to paid employment. The network is made up of leading researchers and stakeholders in the field of disability, health and paid work.

The Network-Expertise

- The network will bring together for the first time academics and NGO expertise from social policy, economics, labour market studies, psychology, rehabilitation, public health and health geographies using the latest academic, policy and experiential evidence in a way that maximises knowledge exchange between academia, government and disabled people's organisations.

Network-Core Activities and Members

- A five country six core member network
- UK-Universities of Leeds and Durham
- USA-Cornell University
- Germany-Humboldt University
- Czech republic-Charles University
- Netherlands-TVO, Amsterdam University

Core members

- Leeds University-Alan Roulstone & Sarah Woodin
- Durham University-Clare Bamba, Jon Warren
- Cornell University-Susanne Bruyere and colleagues
- Humboldt University-Lisa Pfahl and colleagues
- TNO, UA-Edwin De Vos and colleagues
- Charles Prague-Jan Siska and colleagues

Expertise

- Alan Roulstone, Sarah Woodin -Social Policy, Disability studies, Supported Employment
- Clare Bambra, Jon Warren -Health geographies, public health, ADL effects
- Susanne Bruyere, colleagues -Vocational rehabilitation, organisational practice, ADL effects
- Lisa Pfahl -sociology, labour market barriers, Labour market segregation, gendered spaces
- Edwin de Vos, labour market economics, active inclusion
- Jan Siska -Inclusive education, transitions, pedagogy

Affiliates and Advisors

- Experts in Independent Living, Social Barriers, Disability and Employment -Lorraine Gradwell, MBE, Sir Bert Massie, CBE
- Experts in Youth Issues and Exclusions -Prof Tracy Shildrick, Prof Robert McDonald, Prof Roger Smith, Dr Scott Yates,
- Experts in disability, employment programmes -Dr Se Kwang Hwang, Dr Barbara Harrington
- Experts in disability, health and adolescence -Prof Jan McLaughlin, Dr Ed Fountain-Coleman
- Experts in public health discourses and policy-Dr Kayleigh Garthwaite

Activities

- Formative and Summative Symposia-UK
- Country Seminars-USA, Netherlands, Czech Republic
- Focus Groups with Disabled Young People, Country Project Visits
- Key NGO stakeholder Interviews
- Publications
- Policy and practice engagement
- Large grant applications, at least 2-Leverhulme, NSF, ESRC

Timetable

- Network Began September 2013
- Formative Symposium-September 2013 (completed)
- Country Seminars-March-May 2014
- Stakeholder Interviews-May-July 2014
- Bids-autumn 2014-spring 2015
- Summative Symposium-circa December 2014
- Network ends-February 2015

Projected Insights and Outcomes

- To better understand the complex interplay of factors in the paths to paid work
- To meld inter-disciplinary insights
- To take observations from above and below-to include people who are experts by experience
- To build larger research alliances that can help cross-fertilise country insights and transferable lessons
- To better link NGO, academic, policy, practice and service user insight

Insights from the formative symposium (Durham, September, 2013)

- That barriers and facilitators have to be viewed ‘in the round’
- Wider active inclusion measures important
- Education a key variable in employment success
- Organisational commitment and policy is important
- Role of family, community, peers, key influencers
- Readiness and employability discourses not as helpful as might at first seem the case
- Many disabled young people want to work
- Embodied concerns and identity formation important

Thank you

a.roulstone@leeds.ac.uk