Life changing opportunity for thousands of young people across the globe thanks to new and renewed hotel industry support for the Youth Career Initiative

Thousands of young people around the world will have their lives changed for the better thanks to the commitment of YCI’s hotel industry partners and foundations.

Addressing the pressing global issue of youth unemployment new funding totalling more than £200,000 (approximately $300,000 USD) was secured for the Youth Career Initiative (YCI) in 2015 to help young people with limited prospects receive life-changing training and mentoring to help them move onto employment or further education. YCI is a transformative employability programme for young people, working with hotel partners in more than 15 countries around the world.

Now, thanks to new and renewed commitments from the Burba Hotel Network, Hilton Worldwide, Hyatt Gold Passport®, Marriott International, the IHG® Foundation and The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation, YCI can expand according to the five-year growth plan established in 2015.

Alberto Canovas, Head of YCI said, “We’re honoured and delighted that so many foundations and hotel partners have committed to support our work with unemployed youth who have limited socio-economic opportunities. It is through the generous support of these and our current funders that we are able to help many more young people receive opportunities they would otherwise struggle to access.”

Anne Gunsteens, Executive Director at The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation said:

“The Foundation has been happy to support YCI for several years and in that time we’ve been proud witnesses to its growth and ability to impact so many lives for the better. We’re pleased to be able to continue our support of the programme and are excited to see YCI’s ambitious growth plans for the future.”

Kate Gibson, a trustee of the recently launched IHG Foundation commented:

“Through collaborating with a number of beneficiaries including YCI, we’re bringing to life our purpose to help make communities around the world better places to be for all. The work of YCI in tackling youth unemployment and helping survivors of human trafficking to rebuild their lives is a vision that we share, and through supporting this continuing work we’re helping to build more sustainable communities across the globe.”

YCI works with non-profit organisations and hotel partners who mobilise their properties to offer a six-month training programme to local youth. The programme provides students with transferable life and work skills that improve their employment opportunities, as well as empowering them to make informed career choices and positive life decisions.

YCI also works with survivors of human trafficking and other young people who are unlikely to have a viable route into legitimate employment or be able to improve their situation without external help. One of these young people is Eunice, a survivor of human trafficking and YCI graduate from Nairobi, Kenya who said:

“To some extent I had lost hope in life, but YCI came at the right time. Now, I can see my dreams coming true.”
Notes for editors

Youth Career Initiative is a six-month employability programme offered to youth with limited opportunities across the globe, including survivors of human trafficking.

Over 3,000 young people, including 60 survivors of human trafficking have graduated from YCI to date. This new funding will help YCI towards achieving its ambitious growth targets over the coming years.

YCI is currently a finalist in the WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards People category, winners to be announced in April.

For more information about YCI and for case study examples of graduates around the world, visit http://www.youthcareerinitiative.org/. A full list of funders and supporters can be found here.

YCI is an initiative of the International Tourism Partnership.

ITP drives responsible business in the hospitality industry by engaging with the world’s leading hotel companies.

ITP is an initiative of Business in the Community.

BiTC is the Prince’s Responsible Business Network. Our members work together to tackle a wide range of issues that are essential to building a fairer society and a more sustainable future. We are a business-led, issue focused charity with more than 30 years’ experience of mobilising business. We engage thousands of businesses through our programmes driven by our core membership of over 800 organisations from small enterprises to global corporations.

For more information on ITP and our programmes visit http://tourismpartnership.org/.

For media/ further information, please contact:

Alberto Canovas, Head of YCI Alberto.Canovas@bitc.org.uk
Barbara Powell, Strategy and Funding Alliances YCI.strategicaliances@bitc.org.uk
Devika Jina, YCI Communications and Reporting Coordinator Devika.Jina@bitc.org.uk