

Guidance to Parents and Carers



The purpose of this document is to help parents and carers understand the benefits to their child joining the Thriving Through Venture 'Identities & Communities' Programme 2023-24.

JACK (2019) *"I just about got into 6th Form by the skin of my teeth ... I failed most of my GCSEs because I didn't care; I didn't know what I wanted to study; I didn't know what I wanted to do when I grew up."*

Of the many life-affirming moments Jack experienced on Thriving Through Venture's *Identities & Communities* Programme, he says *"after bringing my camera to The Gambia and capturing the community and life out there, I got home and realised that photography was the route I wanted to go down"*.



Thriving Through Venture (TTV) is a registered charity that supports young people between 16 and 18 years of age to build **their** confidence and self-esteem so that they can make positive choices and meet life challenges. The charity was founded in 2017 and has successfully run three programmes since this date. The charity currently works with four schools/colleges in Wiltshire and Swindon.

The programme runs from January – June 2024 and is aimed specifically at students in Year 12 who are starting their further education courses, A-Levels, or who may be doing re-sits of GCSE's.

Giving students the skills to sort out life choices

We know that making choices as students move towards adulthood is sometimes difficult and the complex range of possibilities and decisions can be overwhelming. To help students understand how they can best approach these situations and decide what to do, we have designed a programme that gradually builds the participants' life skills, and confidence through safely expanding their comfort zones, so they are prepared for many of life's challenges and the choices they must make.

Previous participants, like Jack, have attended with no idea about what they wanted to do next, and the programme gave them a different perspective on what they wanted to accomplish, how to focus and how to make it happen.

How participants are selected

Whilst it would be great to make this exciting opportunity open to everyone, spaces on this trip are limited and so selection is a pre-requisite. We specifically ask teachers, tutors and pastoral care specialists to focus on those participants that for various reasons, have been unable to recognize and take advantage of the opportunities that have been presented to them so far.

Students then apply to take part using the **Application Form**, available either from their teacher/tutor or on the website. (see link at the end) to state what they would like to achieve from participating in the programme. From here, Thriving Through Venture then select and invite between 3 and 6 people per school/college to take part in the programme.

Overview of the Programme 2023-24

The programme which runs from January – June 2024, consists of:



- **3 week-day evening sessions** (4.30 – 7.30pm) and
- **3 weekend sessions**, one of which is residential and
- **11-day trip to The Gambia** (22 May – 4 June (14 days including flight times)) to work in collaboration with a local community on common themes that interest the participants. *[The dates of the trip mean your child will be missing a few days of term. It is your responsibility to check with your child's school that they can miss these days. We work closely with the schools, so they will be aware of these dates.]*

Workshop dates will be available once your child's place is confirmed. Venues will be Marlborough or Swindon based. Participants, parents/guardians, teachers will receive full Joining Instructions before each workshop. We will endeavour to provide transport where possible, but it is the parent's responsibility to drop off or pick up their child or arrange for alternative transport for each locally based evening workshop or weekend.

The programme uses **Photography and Journaling** to explore a key theme or challenge from three different perspectives and to record their experiences of the programme's activities, which range from walks and talks, workshops, drumming, visits, cooking and eating, social activities and help and guidance on collaborative fundraising activities.

- **Identity** – Who am I?
- **Local Community** – Local volunteering and online linking with partners in The Gambia
- **Global Community** – Meeting and collaborative exchange of ideas with Gambian community and migrants to the UK
- **11-day, on the ground, trip to The Gambia** – explore a range of intercultural themes that interest Participants and that are common to communities in the UK and The Gambia

What makes these programmes successful?

All activities during the evening workshops and the residential weekends are focused on activities that gradually increase confidence and extend comfort zones through clearly defined objectives and supported with input from expert facilitators. The timing of the programme enables participants who are transitioning into further education or choosing potential careers to understand what makes them tick, what excites them and how to make positive decisions about their future direction in life.

The output of the group's experience is recorded in a photographic travel log which is a permanent and lasting reminder of their time they have spent together, and the self-evaluation framework reminds them of the life skills they have explored and practised, which they can refer back to.

What participants will gain from the experiences offered by this programme:

- a strong **sense of community** through collaborative working and fundraising.
- support from a range of professional experts to develop their **confidence, positive decision making and self-esteem**.
- the opportunity to make **new friends** from a variety of backgrounds and circumstances.
- an opportunity to **broaden their horizons** through interaction with different communities and travel to The Gambia.
- an understanding of different perspectives and approaches to **problem-solving** and challenges.
- a range of **valuable life skills** that will benefit them as they navigate future challenges and decision making.



How much will it cost?

Cost per participant	£1,800	Covers flights & full board accommodation
How are the payments broken down?	£1,300 in 2 tranches: £650 £650 + £500 = £1,800 TOTAL	8 December 1 February 2024 To be raised by the participant OR covered by parent if participant does not succeed in raising the funds. To be raised by 8 May.
Additional cost considerations		
Vaccinations		£260 (approx.)
Travel Insurance		£30 (approx.)
Gambia Airport Tax		£40
Spending Money		£50-£120

It will cost each participant £1,800 for the 6-month programme and trip to The Gambia. This contribution covers the flights and accommodation costs for your child. £1,300 is paid in two tranches: £650 by 8 December and £650 on 1 February 2024. The remaining balance of £500 is to be raised by the participant with the full support of their peers, the charity and their school. We expect all participants to work collaboratively to raise the additional £500 per participant towards the

remaining cost of the programme. Support will be given to the selected participants to help them achieve their funding goals in time for the trip. However, if the target has not been reached parents/guardians are liable for this cost for your child to go on the trip.

We appreciate that the cost-of-living crisis has made life difficult for some families and the charity will offer some support, but this will be dependent on charitable funding and gifts from other sources which we also work hard to achieve.

Find out more

If you want to find out more about this year's exciting programme and read about the impact previous programmes have had on young people, please visit our website.

Visit our website to find out more: <https://ttventure.org/>

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be pleased to answer your queries.

Contact us:

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