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Glimpse launches the People's Podium National Lottery funds travelling platform to amplify community voices and stories of hope in the age of Covid-19

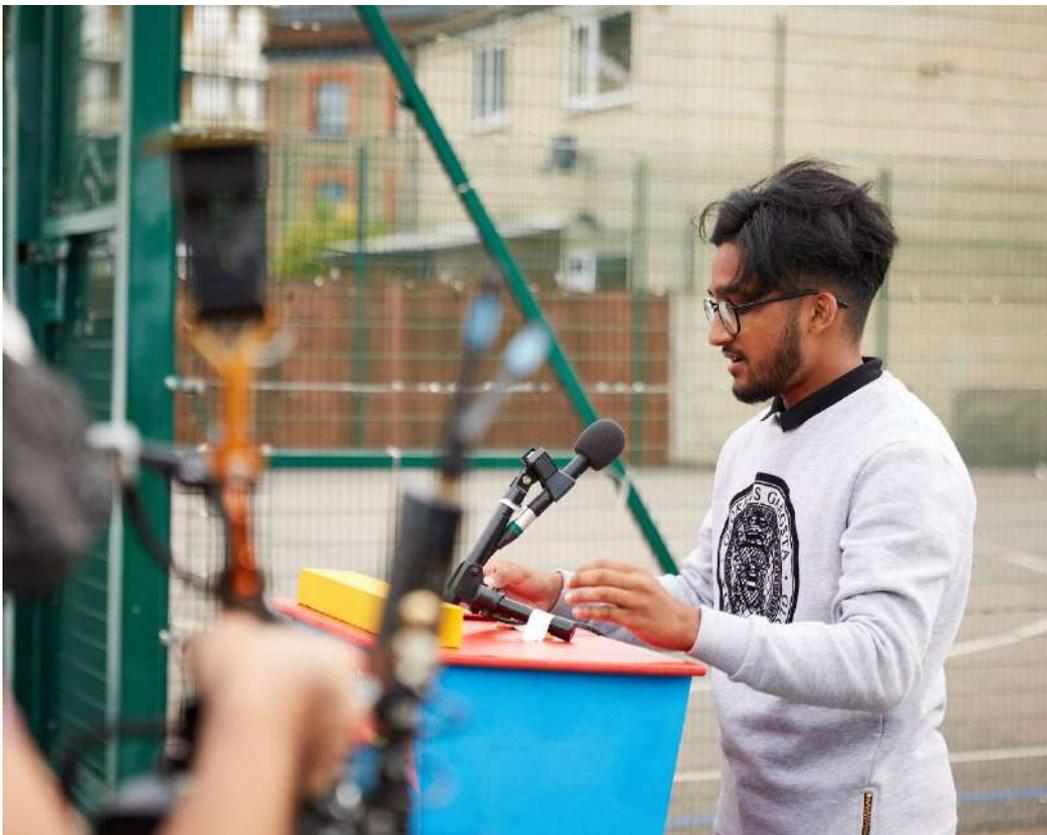


Based on a politician's lectern, the People's Podium gives a voice to the people.

In a few short months, the world transformed. Daily life turned on its head. Our vocabulary changed; phrases such as 'social distancing', 'shielding', 'bubble', even 'heroes' acquired new meanings. 'Lockdown' began with a line-up of people in power standing behind their lecterns, addressing the nation, issuing updates, rules, guidelines, slogans and ever-more alarming statistics. This top down approach has continued ever since.

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Among all this noise and confusion, it became harder for many of us to stay positive, and the voices of normal people simply getting by in a pandemic were drowned out by a deluge of often confusing, sometimes contradictory, messages from government and media. The experience of national lockdown made it clear that talking to our neighbours and reaching out to our local communities mattered more than ever, but, for many, it felt as though those in power weren't listening to what ordinary people had to say.



Thanks to the support of the National Lottery, the People's Podium will travel across the UK.

In response, Glimpse – the global creative collective campaigning for positive change – has launched the People's Podium, a platform designed to give normal people their turn at the lectern, a chance to share their thoughts on the pandemic, and their hopes for life after it. It's a simple but radical proposition: give young people and adults the tools and confidence to speak up about the issues that matter to them.

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Take your place on the People's Podium

Powered by volunteers until now, the People's Podium has been awarded funding from the National Lottery Community Fund, which distributes money raised by National Lottery players for good causes and is the largest community funder in the UK. This support is enabling the Podium to visit three more locations in the country, reaching more people, enabling more voices to be heard, and helping fulfil its ultimate aim of empowering local people to have a real impact on their lives and communities.

A newly launched microsite showcases the ideas and debates sparked by the People's Podium debut in Tower Hamlets, ahead of its upcoming arrival in three new locations across the country; people can have a say where the podium goes' via the website form at <https://www.peoplespodium.uk>.

In each of these places, Glimpse aims to collaborate with local community groups to run workshops that help people explore and share their experiences of lockdown and tease out their hopes for a better world. Speeches and statements will be filmed, and Glimpse plans to create a short documentary to be screened at UK film festivals, as well as asking the participants who they would like to hear their speeches – whether that's a local MP, a community leader, a celebrity or just their own family.

Working with local facilitators, Glimpse are inviting community members to a bespoke workshop designed to build confidence, provide an opportunity for self-expression and foster a spirit of unity within local areas. For Glimpse, the process of getting people together to speak is as important as the content of their speeches, and one of the principal aims of the project is to enable people to speak who typically aren't given a platform to do so.

"We're used to being told about where our country is headed by important people. But what if we opened that question up to everyone? We want to combine imagination and poetry with politics and power. The People's Podium is about making sure that hope still has a place in our consciousness."

– James Turner, executive producer, People's Podium, and co-founder, Glimpse

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Coming to an area near you?

Visitors to the website can register their interest in bringing the People's Podium to their locale. Glimpse will use this information to help determine the future of the project, with a view to coordinating further tours should public demand merit.

#PeoplesPodium

A Glimpse of hope



Glimpse are a global network of creatives who want to use their skills for good.

Founded in 2016 by James Turner and Zac Schwarz, Glimpse encompasses a global network of more than 2,700 skilled creatives and communications professionals united by a desire to create positive, impactful work with social or environmental

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benefits. Their previous self-initiated projects range from filling the ad spaces of Clapham Common Tube station with pictures of cats, to Choose Love, the international pop-up store where people can buy items for refugees. Like these, the People's Podium is the result of a process of collaboration and consensus, in which 58 members of the collective volunteered their time, skills and ideas to inspire and shape the project.

"The pandemic gave all of us an opportunity to think about what matters most in our lives. It also showed up the things that weren't working for people, the cracks in our system. We heard from politicians each day, but not from normal people experiencing the day-to-day reality of the crisis.

We thought now could be a good opportunity to think about leadership, and who gets a platform to speak. In times of crisis and uncertainty there is the possibility of reinvention, of shaping the future. We realised that hope was a powerful frame, that the podium could provide people with a platform to imagine what could emerge from this crisis."

– James Turner, executive producer, People's Podium, and co-founder, Glimpse

The project was one outcome of a wider creative investigation in which Glimpse members were challenged to spark a conversation about what really matters to us as a society and how to bring this to life in a provocative way. The image of the Prime Minister stood at his podium against his wood-panelled backdrop became emblematic in the early days of lockdown. Glimpse members wondered what might happen if normal people were given the same platform.

Collaborating via Zoom, the People's Podium project split into three teams; one to design and build the podium; one to coordinate locations and participants; and one to focus on project content and develop a film – all on a voluntary basis, working around existing work commitments or while on furlough from their day jobs. For the design, Glimpse recreated the form of the PM's podium, but employed bright colours and bold patterns to reflect the positivity of the project's message and celebrate the depth and diversity of the UK's cultures.

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Amplifying unheard voices



The People's Podium was first unveiled at a primary school in Tower Hamlets.

The People's Podium was first unveiled at Manorfield Primary School in Tower Hamlets, East London. Fifteen people took part in this trial run, eight of them school students, and seven adults including a teacher, a parent, a local reverend, a youth worker, a college spoken-word artist and the CEO of a Somali women's integration team.

With support from trained Glimpse facilitators, each of them wrote and presented a speech, sharing their hopes for the future and calling for support in making it happen. The topics they raised included Black Lives Matter, the conflict in Palestine, equality and fairness, women's rights, standing up to bullying, rewilding the city, the transformative value of kindness, and the power of young people to shape a better world.

"It was so transformative to see the young students step up to the podium and air their views. These students often feel unheard outside of the classroom but this opportunity has really emboldened them. I can see the difference in how the students act, and some have become more engaged in politics and news since the People's Podium came to our school."

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– Paul Jackson, head teacher, Manorfield Primary School

Participants' speeches were captured on camera, and edited into a short film to explain and promote the project.

Notes to editors

For more information about the People's Podium, images, films, and interviews with Glimpse founders James Turner and Zac Schwarz, please contact Emily Ward on emily@zetteler.co.uk.

About Glimpse

Glimpse takes the talent behind the world's best commercial creative and uses it to make the world better. Founded in 2016 by James Turner and Zac Schwarz, the Glimpse collective is a global network of skilled communications professionals united by a desire to create positive, impactful work with social or environmental benefits, free from the usual client constraints. Today, Glimpse's activities are split between the Glimpse Collective, which masterminds and executes its independent campaigns; Glimpse Works, which works with charities and similar organisations to help them spread their message, and Glimpse Studio, a training programme for commercial creatives to enable them to bring positivity and purpose to their work.

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<https://www.peoplespodium.uk>

About The Emerging Futures Fund by National Lottery

The largest community funder in the UK, the National Lottery Community Fund awards money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Since June 2004, it has made more than 200,000 grants and awarded over £9 billion to projects that have benefited millions of people.

Rooted in the belief that when people are in the lead, communities thrive, the fund is passionate about supporting great ideas that matter to communities and make a difference to people's lives. Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, its funding is open to everyone. The National Lottery Community Fund works with the smallest of local groups right up to UK-wide charities, enabling people and communities to bring their ambitions to life.

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<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/news/blog/2020-10-01/emerging-futures-fund-announces-2-million-in-grants-to-diverse-communities-across-the-uk>

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