

Case Study 2026



LAUNCH Competition

*Young Social
Entrepreneurs*

Introduction - Health Inequalities

Not everyone has the same opportunities to live a healthy life. Things like where you live, your family's income, your school, and even the air you breathe can affect your health.

In London, some communities struggle with poor housing, food insecurity, unemployment, and access to healthcare, leading to lower life expectancy and higher rates of disease.

Health inequality means that some people have a much higher risk of poor health simply because of where they live or their financial situation. Life expectancy isn't the same for everyone, a man living in Hampstead could live up to 8 years longer than a man in Tottenham, even though both places are in North London. Similarly, children from low-income areas in North East London are three times more likely to require dental surgery or tooth removal compared to those from higher-income areas.

But why does this happen? It's linked to the social factors of health—things like education, income, housing, and access to healthy food. If a young person lives in a damp, overcrowded flat, struggles to afford nutritious meals, and has no safe outdoor space, their health will suffer more than someone who has a comfortable home, exercises regularly, has access to fresh air and nature, and sustains a balanced and nutritious diet.

These problems aren't just about individual choices—they're the result of social and economic conditions which are all made worse by living in poverty.

This challenge is about creating a social enterprise that helps address these issues. By tackling one (or more) of these factors that influence health, you will be able to improve people's quality of life and long-term health outcomes.

Your task is to devise a social enterprise that helps address these issues.

You must:

1. **Pick a specific area** or borough in North London that you want your social enterprise to respond to—this can be your own area or an area you conduct some research on.
 2. **Pick one Core Challenge** that your social enterprise will respond to—these are detailed below.
 3. With a hypothetical budget of £5,000, **devise a social enterprise idea**, using the Project Proposal Form, to explain how your idea would work.
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North London: Contextual Information

In the last 5 years, two major crises have impacted Londoners' health and wellbeing, with knock-on impacts for many years to come. The COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis which followed soon after, both disproportionately affected specific groups, including those on the lowest incomes and those in insecure work. The impact of these crises can be seen in London's health inequalities data, for example obesity is 10% higher in deprived areas than in less deprived areas. Housing, income, education, and systemic inequalities have a profound impact on health outcomes in North London.

London has significant inequality, shown by Kensington and Chelsea borough which has the largest wealth inequality gap in the country and 1 in 4 children are living in poverty there. The cost of living crisis is making things even harder. Some groups are struggling more than others—**almost half of single parents** in London can't afford basic essentials because they only have one income to rely on. **Black and minority ethnic families** are also more affected, with **1 in 3 living in poverty**, compared to **1 in 6 white families**.

North London is one of the most diverse areas in the UK, home to people from many different backgrounds, cultures, and religions. In boroughs like Newham, nearly 70% of residents are from Black, Asian, or other Minority Ethnicity communities, making it one of the most multicultural parts of the country, likewise Harrow is one of the most religiously diverse boroughs in the whole country, with more than 70 different religions represented. People here speak over 130 languages, follow different faiths, and bring a rich mix of traditions. This diversity enriches the cultural fabric of the city but can pose challenges in accessing healthcare and social services, especially for residents who do not speak fluent English. It also explains the need for culturally sensitive health care services which considers the needs of each community, for example a woman from a religious community may want to only be seen by a female GP.

Please choose a specific area or borough in North London to focus your research on. This will allow you to tailor your idea to the unique needs of the community living there.

Below are some sources that you can use to get your research started:

Trust for London	Greater London Authority (GLA) – London Datastore	Kings Fund - Health Inequalities in London
<i>A leading charity that provides data and research on poverty and inequality in London.</i>	<i>Offers a variety of statistics on health, inequality, and living conditions in London.</i>	<i>Provides research and analysis on health inequalities across London and its boroughs.</i>
https://trustforlondon.org.uk	https://data.london.gov.uk	https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/topics/health-inequalities
The Institute of Health Equity	London's Official Health Report by the London Borough of Camden	London Borough of Harrow – Health and Wellbeing
<i>Offers reports and data on the social determinants of health and health inequalities in London.</i>	<i>A borough-specific report that focuses on health challenges and inequalities in Camden (a borough in North London).</i>	<i>Annual reports on the status of public health in Harrow, another borough in North London.</i>
https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org	https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/0/Camden+HWB+Strategy+%28Feb+22%29+v6.pdf/6084f08a-9dde-db2b-6f37-fa5c766cd4e8?t=1647945138445	https://www.harrow.gov.uk/health-leisure/annual-public-health-reports

Please read the following 4 **Core Challenges**

Challenge #1: Access to Quality Nature

Poor access to nature can make conditions like diabetes worse because it means people aren't getting enough exercise or fresh air. When communities, especially in poorer areas, don't have places to be active outside, they are more likely to live sedentary lifestyles. This lack of exercise increases the risk of obesity, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes. This lack of exercise, worsened by poor diet and limited healthcare access, leads to a vicious cycle where health inequalities increase, particularly for people who already face challenges like poverty or limited access to healthcare.

Nearly a quarter of green space in London is private and not accessible to the public. Access to green spaces is crucial for good health, but many communities in North London face barriers to enjoying nature. Exercise and outdoor activities are linked to better physical and mental health, but air pollution and poor housing conditions are major barriers. For example, BAME communities are more likely to live in areas affected by air pollution and climate change, which worsens health inequalities. A report found that between 2017 and 2019, around 700 children were admitted to hospitals due to asthma caused by poor air quality, accounting for 7% of asthma admissions in London.

Challenge #2: Food Security and Malnutrition

Food insecurity and poor nutrition are major issues for many families in North London, affecting both physical and mental health. Without access to affordable, nutritious food, children and adults are at greater risk of developing diabetes and other chronic conditions. Malnutrition can also impact growth and development, making it harder for young people to concentrate and perform well in school. Lack of proper nutrition can lead to poor academic performance and long-term health problems. Many families in low-income areas rely on food banks or surplus waste programs to meet their needs, but these options don't always provide balanced meals. Models like growing your own vegetables or community gardening projects can offer sustainable solutions to improve access to healthy food. These initiatives not only promote better nutrition but also encourage self-sufficiency and reduce reliance on emergency food services. Addressing food security can improve health outcomes, reduce inequalities, and help people live healthier lives.

Challenge #3: Mental Health Crisis

Mental health issues are a growing crisis in North London, with some boroughs experiencing some of the highest rates of serious mental illness in the UK. Stress from poverty, social isolation, and discrimination makes things even worse, especially for young people. However, there aren't enough mental health services to support everyone who needs help. Many communities in North London are culturally diverse, but mental health services don't always reflect this. Culturally appropriate support, such as services that understand different languages, traditions, and experiences, is crucial to making sure people feel safe asking for help. Additionally, accessing mental health support can be difficult due to long

NHS waiting lists, and many people can't afford private care, particularly when they have other financial priorities. Without adequate care, many people suffer in silence, leading to worsening mental health and further health inequalities.

Challenge #4: Education

Education plays a huge role in health and future opportunities. Without access to quality education, people are more likely to end up in low-paid, insecure jobs, making it harder to afford housing, food, and healthcare. In North London, educational inequalities mean that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds often don't have the same opportunities as others. This can trap families in cycles of poverty, leading to higher stress, worse health outcomes, and shorter life expectancy. For example, living in poverty may mean a child struggles to have enough to eat or access basic school supplies, while behavioral issues can arise from stress or lack of support at home. Schools and training programmes that offer better support, mentoring, and skills development can help break this cycle, improving both education and long-term health.

By understanding these challenges, you can start thinking about how your social enterprise could help make a difference. Could you create a mental health support programme for young people? A business that makes fresh, healthy food more affordable? A scheme that helps people in low-income areas get better job opportunities? The health inequalities in North London are complex, but with the right ideas, they can be changed for the better.

How Social Enterprises Can Improve Health and tackle inequalities

“A social enterprise is a business that makes money but reinvests its profits into solving a social problem—in this case, health inequality. Unlike charities, they don't rely on donations. Instead, they make a profit while doing good.”

Social enterprises solve social problems in creative and sustainable ways. In this challenge, you will develop a social enterprise idea that helps reduce health

inequalities in North London. You'll need to think about how your business will make a difference, stay financially sustainable, and grow over time.

Here are some real examples:

The Bike Project	FoodCycle
<i>Fixes old bikes and gives them to refugees, helping them travel cheaply and stay active.</i>	<i>Turns surplus food from supermarkets into free, healthy meals for people in need.</i>
	

Social enterprises can help reduce health inequalities in many ways, such as:

- Affordable, healthy food for low-income families
- Mental health support for young people
- Exercise programmes for people in areas with little access to sports facilities
- Training and employment opportunities to help people out of poverty

Your challenge is to come up with a social enterprise idea that helps improve health in North London. You should focus your project on a specific area in North London, think about how your idea can create real, lasting change - perhaps for the community you live in.

Your idea should include:

- **How it works** – What does your business do? Who does it help?
- **Why it's innovative** – How is it different from existing solutions
- **How it makes money** – A social enterprise isn't a charity—it should be financially sustainable. You'll have a hypothetical budget of £5,000 to plan

your idea, but the winning team will receive real funding to bring their social enterprise to life!

- **How it grows** – Could your idea expand to other parts of London or the UK?

Be creative, be bold, and think about the impact your idea could have. Your social enterprise could be the key to making North London a healthier, fairer place!