Shifting Power: New Frontiers in Youth Participation

Conference Key Messages Statement

Message 2:

Invest in Relationships,Time and Safe Spaces

Actions for Policy and Practice:

1 Invest in participation as an ongoing process, not a one-off consultation or engagement activity.

2 Create physically, emotionally and culturally safe spaces that enable all young people to participate confidently.

3 Regularly examine inclusion and representation by asking whose voices are being heard and whose are missing.

4 Design participation opportunities that are flexible, accessible and responsive to local contexts and diverse lived experiences.

5 Prioritise relationship-building as a core component of participation practice, recognising trust as the foundation of effective engagement.

6 Recognise and value the role of adult allies within organisations and participation structures.



"Stop being complicit in the silencing of certain voices by not raising concerns when you are given short deadlines" (academic, Padlet input)

"If young people can't come to the table can the table be brought to them" (youth participant, plenary session)