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Her Majesty The Queen to award Commonwealth young people with first ever Queen's Young Leaders Award

Her Majesty The Queen will present the inaugural Queen's Young Leaders Awards to exceptional young people from across the Commonwealth at a ceremony at Buckingham Palace on Monday 22nd June.

The Award winners have been recognised by The Queen for taking the lead in transforming the lives of others and make a lasting difference in their communities.

Before receiving their Award at Buckingham Palace the winners will meet the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron at 10 Downing Street, visit the UK headquarters of global social networking company, Twitter and meet with senior executives at the BBC World Service.

This year's Award winners are aged between 18 and 29 and are working to support others, raise awareness and inspire change on a variety of different issues including; education, climate change, gender equality, mental health and disability equality.

Dr Astrid Bonfield, Chief Executive of the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust said: "We are very much looking forward to welcoming the first Queen's Young Leaders to London on the 22nd, for many of whom it will be their first visit to the UK. It will be such an honour to witness these exceptional young people receiving their Awards from Her Majesty The Queen for their incredible work in their countries and across the Commonwealth."

Following the ceremony on the 22nd June, Award winners will spend four days in the UK to take part in a residential development programme as part of the Award prize. The programme includes workshops at Cambridge University, meetings with UK businesses leaders, and visits to life changing social action projects, finished off with a final celebration at the top of The BT Tower on Friday 26th.

The Queen's Young Leaders Programme was established by The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, in partnership with Comic Relief and The Royal Commonwealth Society in 2014, in honour of Her Majesty The Queen's 60 years of service to the Commonwealth.

If you or someone you know is doing inspiring work like this year's Queen's Young Leaders, from 7pm on Monday 22nd June you can apply or nominate someone for a 2016 Award at www.queensyoungleaders.com.

To see a full list of Award winners and Highly Commended runners up, and read more about their stories please visit www.queensyoungleaders.com.

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For more information contact:

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Notes to editors

The Queen's Young Leaders Programme

The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, in partnership with Comic Relief and The Royal Commonwealth Society, has established The Queen's Young Leaders Programme in honour of Her Majesty The Queen's 60 years of service to the Commonwealth at the time of her Diamond Jubilee. Guided by the values of the Commonwealth Charter, the goal of the Programme is to enable young people to step up as leaders and improve the lives of people across the Commonwealth.

Award details

Each year from 2014 to 2018, 60 exceptional young people will be selected to receive a Queen's Young Leaders Award and become 'Queen's Young Leaders' – one for every year that The Queen had served as Head of the Commonwealth at the time of her Diamond Jubilee.

As part of the Award, winners will receive bespoke mentoring and online learning provided by the University of Cambridge. Award winners will attend a week-long residential programme in the UK in June, when they will receive their Award at Buckingham Palace from Her Majesty The Queen.

Criteria to win an award:

- ** Nominees will have proven experience of working to improve their communities locally, regionally or at a national level and will show evidence of their achievements
- ** Nominees will be aged between 18 and 29 for the year of the Award and be citizens of a Commonwealth country
- ** Nominees will demonstrate evidence of their leadership qualities
- ** Priority will be given to individuals who have overcome challenges to achieve their goals
- ** All nominees will need to be supported by a suitable referee.

The Partners

The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust

The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust is a charitable foundation, established in 2012, to mark and celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's 60-year contribution to the Commonwealth. The Trust has received donations from governments, corporate partners, trusts, foundations, community groups and individuals from across the Commonwealth, and its programmes work in alliance towards eliminating avoidable blindness and to empower a new generation of young leaders. With a five-year timeframe in which to deliver successful programmes, the Trust's aim is to leave a lasting legacy, owned by the whole Commonwealth, to honour Her Majesty The Queen. For more information go to: www.jubileetribute.org

Comic Relief

Established in 1985, Comic Relief is a major UK fundraising and grant making charity which uses the power of entertainment to create long-lasting change. Its vision is a just world, free from poverty. It strives to make this vision a reality by supporting poor, disadvantages and vulnerable people in the UK and across some of the world's poorest communities to change their own lives for the better. Discover more at: www.comicrelief.com

Royal Commonwealth Society

The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS), founded in 1868, is a network of individuals and organisations committed to improving the lives and prospects of Commonwealth citizens across the world. Working through a range of educational, civil society, business and governmental networks, the RCS addresses issues that matter to the Commonwealth citizens. For more information go to: www.thercs.org