Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

Social Partnership | Democratic Engagement | Co-production | Enterprise and social economy | New models of meeting priority needs | Innovation | Learning

London Borough of Camden

Camden Community Wealth Fund

Camden Community Wealth Fund is a £30 million social investment fund with people in Camden helping to decide how we invest the money. Starting in 2025, an initial £4 million will be invested in Camden organisations to reduce inequality and transform the quality of life for people in Camden.

In the past few years, Camden has come together in new and inspiring ways to tackle some of the most pressing issues facing the borough. In 2022, we published We Make Camden – our vision for the future of Camden. It set out what we want to collectively achieve and lead together and was developed in collaboration with residents, partners and community leaders.

Camden Community Wealth Fund's ambition is to play a pivotal role in bringing businesses, as well as residents and partners, on the We Make Camden journey. We recognise that financial decision-making has historically been confined to 'experts', often overlooking the perspectives of those directly affected by it. With the Camden Community Wealth Fund, we want to shift this dynamic.

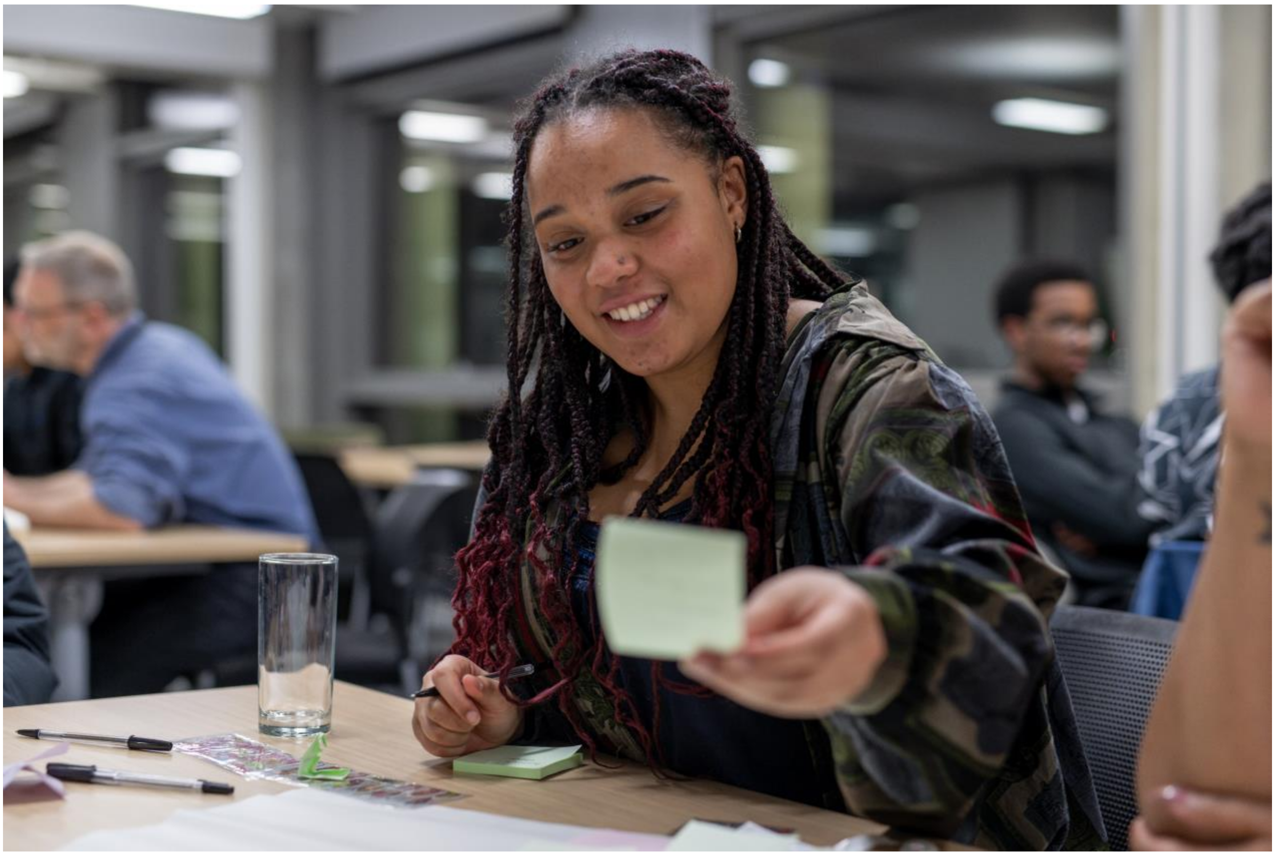
In 2025, we launched a pilot phase to test and learn from two distinct participation approaches to investment. The pilot phase focuses on two of the We Make Camden Missions:

- Young People: Every young person has access to economic opportunity that enables them to be safe and secure. We set up a £2m **Youth Fund** to support this mission and learn about deep, regular participation of young people in investment.

- Diversity: Those holding positions of power in Camden are as diverse as our community – and the next generation is ready to follow. We set up a £2m **Diversity Fund** to support this mission and learn about participation at scale.

The Youth Fund

In January 2025, we recruited a panel of 15 young people who live, work or study in Camden and have lived experience of some of the barriers to access economic opportunities. The Youth Panel met regularly over the course of 2025 & early 2026, working closely with investment officers, partners and entrepreneurs themselves, to co-design an investment strategy and eventually recommend investments to the Council.



The Youth Panel co-designed the £2m Youth investment fund

The Diversity Fund

Alongside the Youth Panel, we launched the Diversity Panel in June 2025. The ambition of the Diversity panel was to involve people in Camden at a scale we never had before. We wanted to test a participatory model that could meaningfully combine:

- **the benefits of involving people at scale** – reaching a wide range of people who interact with Camden and its businesses daily,
- **and the benefits of deep deliberation** – giving thoughtful consideration to the difficult trade-offs of investment, looking at the impact for Camden, the financial risks, and the money that we expect to get back into the Fund.

1. **Influencing the impact of the Fund at scale**

To enable a wide range of people living, working and studying in Camden to influence decisions on the Diversity Fund, we first recruited a large online panel. A total of 1,500+ people came forward to take part. We worked closely with our partner the Sortition Foundation to randomly select a 1,000-people diverse panel, the largest they had ever selected.

While most digital participation focuses on crowdsourcing or prioritising ideas, we wanted to make sure that online participants had a chance to also discuss the topic at hand with each other.

We used the online participation platform called PSi (People Supported Intelligence) to enable the panel to discuss two critical aspects of the fund:

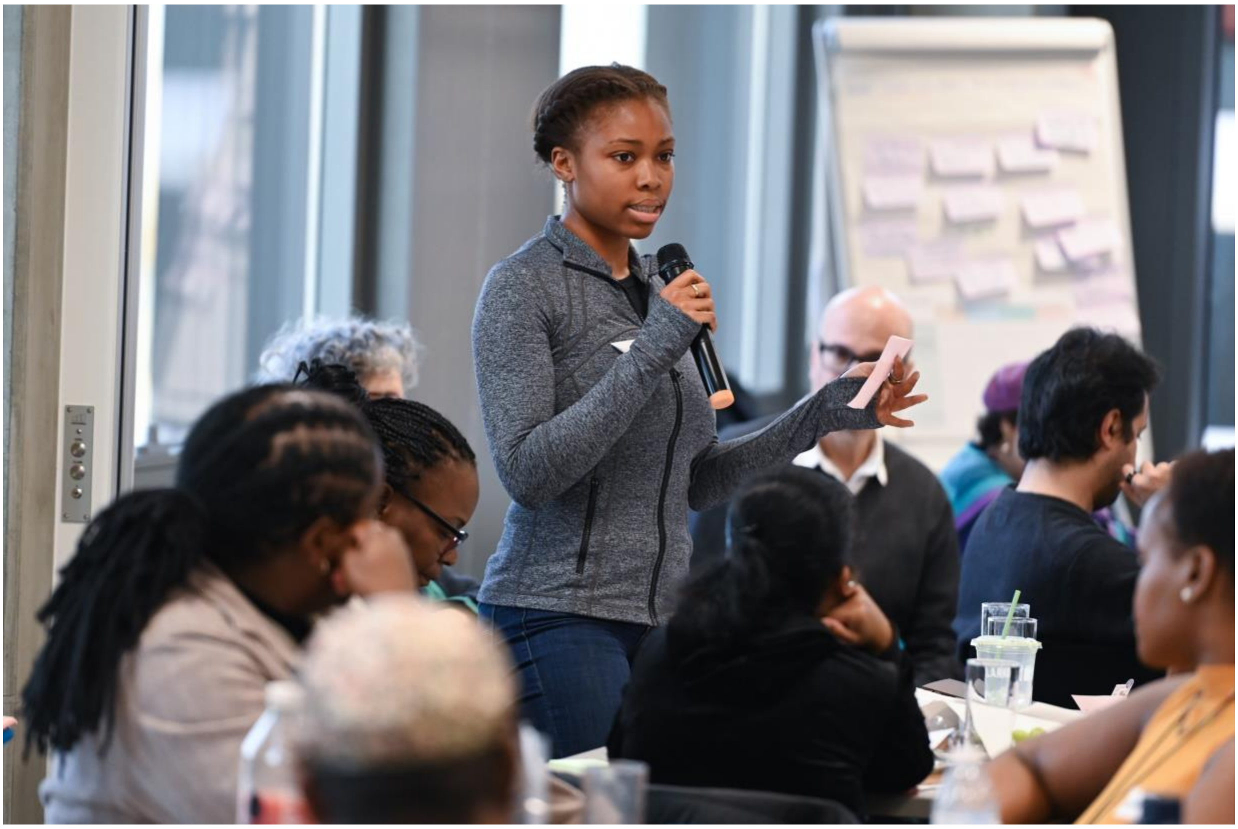
- one for residents to crowdsource, discuss and prioritise impact goals for the fund,
- one for entrepreneurs to share the type of financing they preferred.

A total of 500+ participants took part in these online conversations that formed the backbone of the investment strategy.

2. **Deep deliberation to co-design an investment strategy**

Following the online discussions, we recruited a group of 50 people from the online panel to come together in person to develop the Diversity Fund's investment strategy. The in-person panel met over three Saturday sessions to:

- learn about investment,
- meet entrepreneurs and investment experts,
- consider online conversations' insights,
- share their lived experience,
- discuss and consider different options for the fund,
- before agreeing a strategy for the fund.



The in-person Diversity Panel came together to co-design the investment strategy for the £2m Diversity investment fund

The in-person panel was supported in their deliberations by our team of investment & participation officers alongside our partner Involve.

"I really appreciated the diversity I saw and the opportunity to contribute in such an accepting space that worked really hard to foster a creative and informative environment." ***In-person panel participant***

In December 2025, the investment strategy for the fund was signed off by the Council and the fund is launching on February 4th 2026 at our We Make Camden Summit, an annual event which brings together local organisations, institutions, businesses and engaged residents in Camden.

Both the online & in-person panels will continue to help shape investment decisions in 2026, helping to decide which businesses receive investment. Beyond the pilot phase, our ambition is to continue to boldly involve residents in the Camden Community Wealth Fund.

For further information contact:
Amélie Pollet
Principal Participation Officer – Camden Council
CommunityWealthFund@camden.gov.uk | https://camdencommunitywealthfund.co.uk/