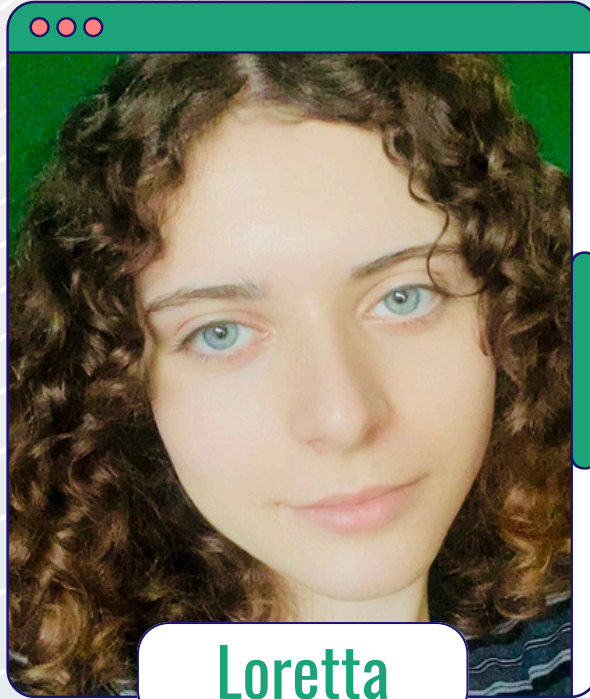


# Meet our YOUTH PANEL



Loretta

From an early age I have loved visiting museums and art galleries. It's hard to point to exactly when I developed my interest in history, but if I had to guess, it would most likely be when my mother and father first showed me our family's photos, ranging from the Victorian period all the way to today. I was fascinated by these images and it inspired me to look deeper into my family history and the history of other items my family owns. This led to me discovering an old copy of a Latin to English dictionary which had been used by a young boy in the 1870's. Finding this awakened my love of history and the arts in general and I began to seek out and buy the oldest books I could get my hands on. I was amazed by how much personal history could be discovered from such small objects, whether the book was a prize in a competition or a gift from the engraver themselves, there is always so many secrets to uncover.

I believe that the biggest challenge that museums face when targeting younger people as an audience is the availability of information provided by the online world. How can you persuade young people to leave their homes to find the same information that is only one search away? Another problem faced by modern museums is that they are generally viewed as aimed at polar opposites: young children or the elderly. This pushes away those stuck in the middle as they assume there is nothing of value to them.

I joined the Harris' youth panel as I wanted to provide my perspective on issues and decisions that would directly affect the Harris itself. My love for history and art has also influenced me to join the panel as I have always been interested in the inner workings of museums themselves. I believe I can make a difference because of my dedication to the arts and history. I want to help further the Harris and provide a safe and encouraging environment for young people in Preston and the Fylde.



**Olivia & Emily**

**Why did you join the Harris' Youth Panel?** My sister – she seemed to enjoy it (she used to be part of the Youth Panel). I took inspiration from her.

**Do you feel that what you have done/are doing for the Harris will help issues that other young people face when they visit museums?** I think it will improve it to a certain extent but I am always aware that more could and should be done.

**What makes you as an individual fit for the position of youth panel member?** I have a great appreciation of the arts and have been lucky enough to attend many museums throughout my life so far. This has been an integral part of my appreciation of history and art now that I am a teenager, and I feel that without these experiences I would not be as interested in the things that I am today. I believe this means I can be a helpful and valuable member of this panel as I understand how important museums like the Harris are in a young person's life.

**Do you feel as though museums are sufficiently appreciated by young people and accessible to them?** I don't believe that museums are as open to younger audiences as they could be. More specifically teenagers like me often feel as though museums are more aimed at older audiences.

**What inspired you to develop an interest in museums and art?** It began with my grandparents and the stories I was told about the war (as I am sure many of you can relate). These stories made me question how I perceived human behaviour and my beliefs and led me into looking through museums and listening to old and modern culture and history. Since then I have never looked back. Some people who really inspire the way I view and perceive the world are: Vivienne Westwood; Boudica; Alan Turing; Emmeline Pankhurst, to name a few. I learned about all these people through museums. Museums shaped and still shape my world view as a teenager and I think everyone deserves that.

**What do you believe is the biggest challenge that museums that are trying to target younger audiences face?** When young people envision a museum, they don't feel as though it is a place for them because of the academic connotations. I want to redefine the way young people in my area see museums, I want them to be a representation of historical progress and an opportunity for future progress through knowing.

**Why did you join the Harris Youth Panel?** Because I always remember the Harris being a pivotal part of my childhood and when the opportunity arose, I felt as though I would be an integral part of the operations of the panel.

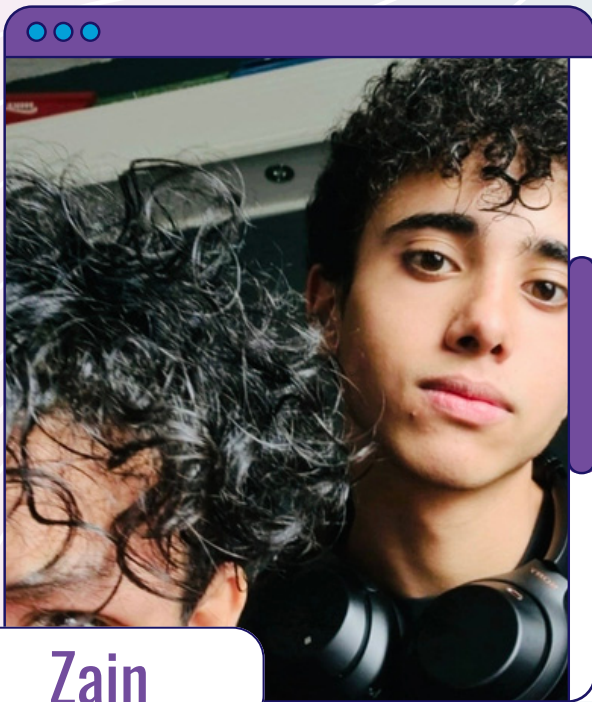
**Why do you believe you can make a difference?** I believe that anyone can make a difference and that everyone does but personally I feel that my passion and dedication to the arts gives me a fresh, unique perspective which is progressive, and progression is change.





Tam

I joined the Harris Youth Panel as I like the Harris building and I'm excited to see it open. I'm 16 this year and I would like to improve my self-confidence. I believe that the youth panel will help me do that. In the future I would like to be a doctor as that has been a lifelong dream. I have an appreciation for poetry and enjoy reading and writing poems. I love history and art that depicts kings and queens as I like looking at their clothes.



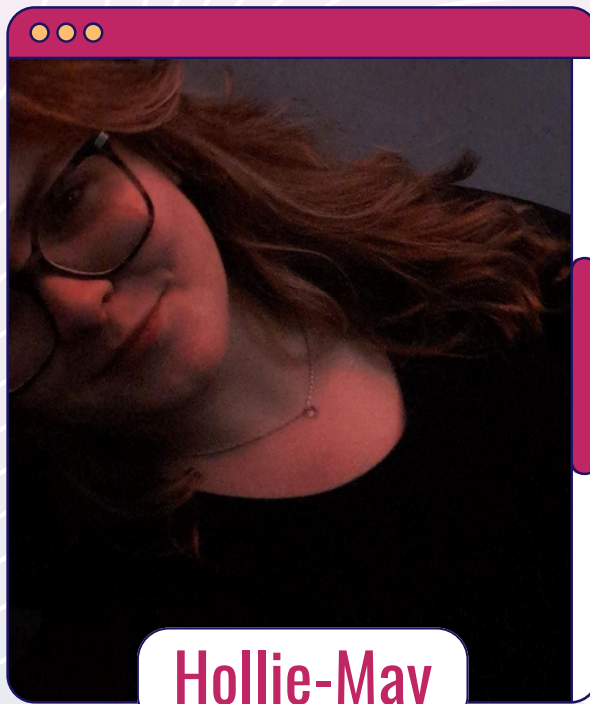
Zain

**What inspired you to develop an interest in museums and art?** I've always loved learning about history, and museums are a great way to do that. Art and architecture leave lasting imprints that help us learn about time periods, hence my passion for them. Historical figures like Pericles and Leonidas have always sparked my interest.

**What do you believe is the biggest challenge that museums that are trying to target younger audiences face?** A possible reason is that young people tend to pass off museums as a very academic place, which may dissuade them from visiting, due to perceived expectations that come with that idea.

**Why did you join the Harris Youth Panel?** I joined the Harris Youth Panel because it was an opportunity to expand my interests into something useful that could benefit so many young people who want to explore art and history, but dislike the intense academic atmosphere present in many museums.

**Why do you believe you can make a difference?** I believe I can make a difference because I have the perspective of a young person who is interested in museums but didn't see them as a particularly welcoming place. My desire to change this coupled with my passion for art and history allows me to seek progression and positive change in museum spaces.



**Hollie-May**

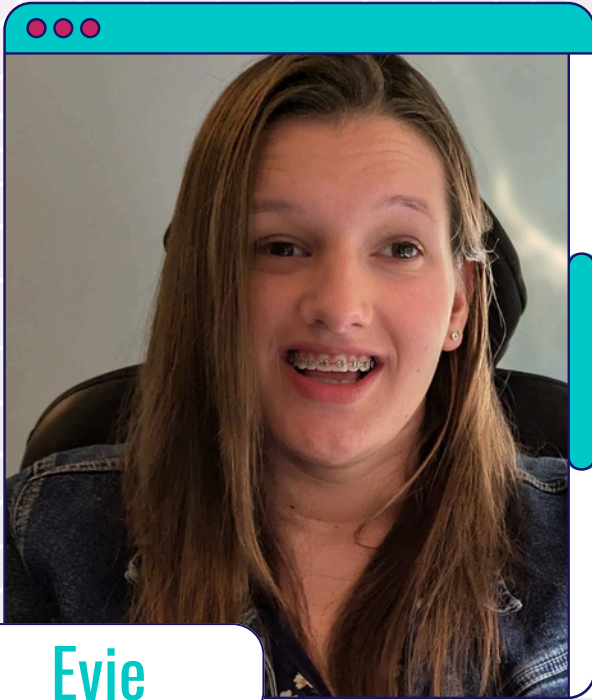
**Why I joined the Harris' Youth Panel:** My friend asked me to come, I didn't know much about it but I did know about the Harris. When I was younger I used to come to the Harris with my parents and I remember it being part of a nice day out.

I don't think young people have a good enough chance of knowing about art and fashion and things locally. The only museum local to people living in the area is the Harris so it's important that they know it exists. I hope that I am helping to create a safer environment for young people by making sure that there are safe places for them to go like the Harris. For me, safe places are educational; have people the same age as me there; have people working there who care about young people and have interesting things to do there to create good experiences.

**What I would like to get out of being a panel member:** It looks good on my CV for one thing. It is a good environment and for me this means no judging; you can say anything and be respected for that and there is no "right or wrong" way of doing things. Meeting new people is also a reason why I am a panel member.

**More about me...** I play electric guitar and the grand piano. I volunteer a lot! Here with the Harris youth panel and also with Preston Youth Zone. My volunteering hours go towards me getting an award called the Huttonian Award (I go to Hutton Grammar), which is about 100 hours of volunteering. This is an award which will help me to get other types of volunteering and it also shows my commitment to volunteering. Ideally I want to volunteer for the Dogs Trust - I love dogs! I have 2 dogs, a German shepherd and a husky/labrador cross. My love language is giving and I love to give! I also love poems: *"Nothing ever ends poetically. It ends and we turn it into poetry"* By Kait Rokowski.

I am 18 this year in November (2025) and I have been having driving lessons. I am excited about being able to drink legally and have a better social life without restrictions. I am looking forward to being able to make my own decisions.



Evie

I joined the Harris Youth Panel because I am really passionate about getting young people's voices heard. I am 18 and this year I hope I get involved in opening the Harris and making sure that young people with disabilities for all people - it is a wonderful platform for all young people. That and I am a proud Prestonian and I wanted to play my part in refreshing this treasured attraction.

My dream job is helping people with disabilities to have their voices heard at all stages in life, particularly about what they want to do in life. Also, I feel that me getting involved with this proves that people with disabilities can and will have a voice. I'm involved in lots of amazing projects that are centred around giving young people a political say and through that, I know that I will make a difference to what society expects from young people.

I like abstract art, anything that really takes my eyes on a journey. Museums and galleries need to become accessible and in all senses of the word. I also feel like a museum can be a corner stone of a community, but the sign posting to other organisations is essential to make sure that amazing venues like art galleries and theatres are valued.

## Join our YOUTH PANEL

If you are part of a group of young people aged 12-18 or know a group that might be interested in meeting up with the Harris Youth Panel to share ideas, experience, give advice or simply team up, please get in touch! Contact **Kyra** on: [k.milnes@preston.gov.uk](mailto:k.milnes@preston.gov.uk) or ring her on **01772 905412**.

You can keep up to date with what the Youth Panel are up to over on Instagram: [@youngharrispreston](https://www.instagram.com/youngharrispreston)