



YOUNG LIONS COMPETITIONS

22-26 JUNE 2026

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COMIC RELIEF DIGITAL BRIEF

Don't support the movement, be the movement.

Background

Comic Relief exists to build a Just World Free From Poverty. For 40 years, it has used the power of popular culture and humour to inspire generosity and support locally led change. Through initiatives like Red Nose Day (a massive televised event using comedy and entertainment to raise charity funds), millions of people have taken part in moments of collective action proving that when everybody does something small, big change is possible.

But culture has shifted.

A new generation expects participation over passive support, transparency over tradition, and cultural relevance over legacy. They don't engage with institutions in the same way – they engage with movements they can shape, remix, and share.

For Comic Relief to remain relevant, it must evolve from something people support...into something people actively take part in.

The challenge

The Challenge: The Red Nose has historically symbolised collective action through humour.

But what should it symbolise today?

How can Comic Relief transform the Red Nose into a participatory symbol of modern activism for Gen Z?

Reimagine what the Red Nose stands for in a world where young people believe change comes from communities, not institutions, and make it something they want to use, share, and shape.



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KEY ASK:

Create a social-first digital campaign idea that:

- repositions the Red Nose as a cultural symbol of participation, not just fundraising
- sparks active involvement, not passive awareness
- lives natively in digital culture (platforms, behaviours, creators)
- has the potential to scale into an ongoing movement, not a one-off moment.

Target audience

While Comic Relief is UK-based, this generation's attitudes toward institutions, activism and participation are globally shared. We have an internal audience called toe dippers who we would like to target with this messaging:

Toe dippers are often in their 20s or 30s and usually don't have children. They are highly engaged in digital culture. When it comes to giving, however, they are still forming their habits around charities and how they would like to give/get involved.

Toe dippers care deeply about fairness, justice and equality, engaging when something resonates with their values or lived experience. They are moved by authenticity and connection and want to see clear alignment between brands and their principles. They primarily get involved with a charity when it reflects their values and culture.

For this group, Comic Relief needs to prove its values by joining the same conversations that they're in. They respond to real stories, ethical influencers, and celebrities who feel like genuine advocates rather than corporate faces. For them, sincerity outweighs spectacle, and visible impact is essential. Mostly digital-first and the lightest TV watchers of any group, ease and relevance drive engagement.

They prefer comedy that is witty, dry, and satirical – love irony, and political or cultural commentary, and the occasional surreal twist.



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Less likely to give financially – to move them closer, Comic Relief needs to appeal to their activist nature and make participation feel relevant and distinctive.

As a group, they have middling to low trust in traditional charities. They care about Justice, equality and causes that are urgent, real, hopeful. They are often champions of inclusion.

Good fits: Mental health/social isolation/access to creative spaces/youth homelessness

Bad fits: abstract global causes/anything 'safe'/creators as saviours.

Insight

Gen Z doesn't join charities. They join movements they can shape.

They don't want to be told what to support. They want to participate, co-create and see their actions contribute to something bigger than themselves.

If the Red Nose becomes something they can use, remix and activate, it can move from a symbol of donation to a symbol of collective action.

Strategy

To succeed, the idea should:

- shift from broadcast to participation. Move from telling stories → enabling people to create and share their own
- make the Red Nose usable in culture. Turn it into something that can be worn, shared, remixed, or activated digitally
- design for social behaviours. Think duets, remixes, challenges, UGC, creator formats –



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not just content

- reward and amplify participation. Make people feel seen, credited, and part of something bigger.
- show visible impact. Demonstrate how individual and collective actions add up to real change.

Key message

Don't support the movement. Be the movement. Wear the change.

Personality

Comic Relief began with a personality that was irreverent, bold, and captured the energy of counter-culture and punk of the '80s. However, as the brand has aged, it has become seen as more fun and optimistic than radical and punk. Bold, brave, honest, irreverent, punks, genuinely funny, credible, cool, proudly British. Born from British counter-culture, but culturally fluent and globally aware.

Campaign dos and don'ts

- The idea must be executable with or without paid media.
- Must include Comic Relief branding (supplied assets).
- Must be achievable within a £250,000 style production budget and timeline.



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- Must demonstrate impact and participation.
- Must demonstrate a clear POV.
- Must be clear in what you expect the audience to be doing in 1/6/12 months

Competition submission requirements

Each team will be submitting a digital case board format entry that showcases their digital campaign. This must include:

1. **a digital presentation image** (jpg/jpeg) – a visual overview of your work, concisely summarising the brief.
2. **a four-part written submission** – to give more context to your work. This includes:
 - a. **background** (150-word limit) – situation, brief and objectives
 - b. **creative idea and insight** (150-word limit) – describing the innovations in the work and potential of the idea for industry impact
 - c. **strategy** (150-word limit) – explain the data gathering and target audience (including consumer demographics, individuals and organisations), approach and relevancy.
 - d. **execution** (150-word limit) – explain the implementation, timeline, placement and scale.
3. **OPTIONAL:** digital supporting content – a maximum of 3 digital uploads that may support your entry in the Jury room. Only include if it is necessary and relevant.

[END OF BRIEF]



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Appendix

