SOAS UnLtd Award Winner 60-Second Interview – Kiran Flynn

Project Title and Description
On Our Radar- The Right to be Heard

SOAS – What are you studying/did you study, involvement in societies/projects etc.?
BA. History
Co-organiser of 2013 SOAS ‘Gender Matters: Where are the Women’ event on 1 March

Date of graduation
1/7/13

Why did you decide to apply for the UnLtd Funding?
I work for a start-up communications rights organisation that works with people in developing countries, who are not usually represented in the mainstream media, so they can report on news and issues that are important to them. I think that, using similar methods, we can tackle the under- and misrepresentation of young people in media here in the United Kingdom.

How did SOAS help?
I met with Claire Hardesty who was enthusiastic, supportive and helpful.

What do you hope to achieve through your project?
Change in confidence, skills and outlook for six groups of young people from under-represented communities in London, Glasgow and Bradford. The young people will receive training and support in citizen reporting. I will be working using participants’ mobile phones as a safe, easy and accessible way to provide bite size news reports which can then be uploaded onto online channels and allow for citizens to have their opinions heard. Importantly, this project will have a mentoring aspect, where young aspiring journalists can get opinions, advice and a platform for their work.
Future plans?
One aim of this project is to test out different models of training and support in the UK. I hope to gain sufficient profile and credibility to be able to apply for larger grants in future. This could then enable the project to hire professional consultants and make bids for larger sums of money – any surplus from which will then be inserted back into training programmes, which will enable more of their kind to be carried out.

Any tips for students who want to start something?
Believe you can do it and have something valuable to offer. Talk over your proposal with the SOAS contact. Read the application form and guidelines carefully and proof read what you write. Show it to other people - don’t feel you have to do everything alone. Be realistic about what you can achieve with the amount of grant on offer. Network with other people doing similar work.