

Best Young Wellbeing Advocate

Winner //

ANTONIO FERREIRA

This award honours an employee under 30 years old who has taken it upon themselves to promote better mental wellbeing. This can be within or outside of the organisation.

António Ferreira is using lived experience to challenge mental health stigma and create more honest conversations around young men's wellbeing, recovery, crisis response and resilience.

From Lived Experience to Advocacy

A multi-award-winning mental health activist and public speaker, António uses his own experiences of mental illness, relapse and recovery to show that wellbeing leadership does not require having everything figured out.

His advocacy spans young men's mental health, Black men and mental health, student wellbeing, recovery and crisis response, using public speaking, campaigning and community engagement to help people feel seen, heard and less alone.

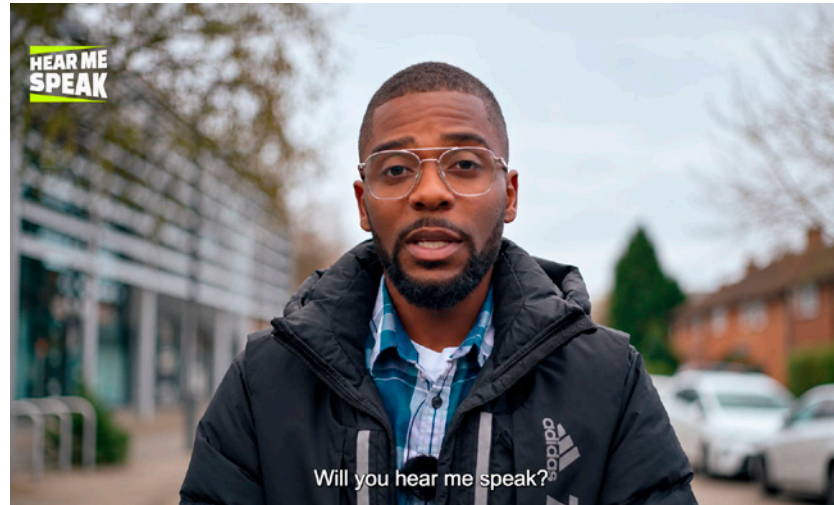


Wellbeing leadership does not require having everything figured out.

Through HearMeSpeak, António has also championed the role of lived experience in shaping how police and public services respond to people experiencing mental health crises. His work combines personal storytelling with a practical commitment to improving the way people in distress are understood and supported.

Results & Impact

António's impact comes from making mental health conversations more authentic and accessible. Rather than presenting recovery as linear, he openly acknowledges setbacks



Hear Me Speak Campaign Video

and periods of absence, showing that these experiences do not erase the value of advocacy or leadership.

His work has earned recognition from senior figures including Alison Lowe OBE, Deputy Mayor for Police and Crime for West Yorkshire, who commended his work advocating for change in crisis intervention and safeguarding. Mental Health Innovations CEO Victoria Hornby describes him as "thoughtful, skilled and inspirational", highlighting the combination of lived experience, passion and insight he brings to his advocacy.

António demonstrates that young wellbeing leadership can be imperfect, deeply human and still create meaningful change – using his own journey to help others speak, recover and feel less alone. ■

Judges' comments

- + This is a strong nomination that demonstrates authentic, values-led wellbeing advocacy rooted in lived experience.
- + Really powerful testimonials.
- + This is vital work.

Shortlisted

- Louise Lyons-Appiah
Beyond
- Patricia Pauli
Haleon