

Organisational analysis and impact review

Q1-2

FY 22-23

The 
Community
Foundation

Connecting people who care
with causes that matter

Community Foundation for Northern Ireland Our 5 Year Strategy ~ 2019-2024



In a society where everyone can prosper and live in peace; the Community Foundation encourages and supports those who want to give and empower the local community to effect change.

Over the next 5 years we aim to achieve: -

- £30m raised to support local charities
- A stronger, more sustainable, more innovative community sector
- Local communities who have been helped to find their voice and use it
- Safer, stronger, confident individuals and communities who can move forward leaving the past behind them
- A safer NI for people living on the edge

Our Theory of Change



Describes the change we want to make and the steps involved to make that change happen.

The Community Foundation has impact on grantees (through funding approaches etc) and beneficiaries, (through the activities that they fund).

We also have direct impact on social problems and on making communities, local areas and Northern Ireland a better place to live in, move to, and/or return to, through our grants plus and programme work.

Our long term goals:

- Communities have realised their potential to change, leading to a more peaceful, shared, prosperous and socially just society
- Donors have invested more in communities and contributed to delivering a more just and equitable society
- Communities, particularly those on the margins, have been supported to have a voice and influence policy over the issues and decisions that affect them

External voice

The 
**Community
Foundation**

Knowledge and practices

Enabling Factors

Funding and programmes

Connections and collaborations



Our Team



We are lucky to have a fantastic team of staff who are passionate about making a difference to local people in Northern Ireland and who live our values of Generous, Thriving and Together.

We have introduced a hybrid working model, with staff working some days in the office and some days at home. Our staff feel that this provides them with a good work-life balance. We are committed to flexible working and prioritising staff health and wellbeing.

Our team is still growing and we have welcomed some great new staff to the Foundation over the past few months.

Funds and programmes



Between **April 2022 and September 2022** we received
665 grant applications (137 fewer than FY 21-22)
140 of which were from new applicants

Total amount requested
£36.4 million

418 grants awarded
(405 in FY 21-22)

Total amount awarded
£4,767,298 (FY 21-22 £18,788,854)
£502,085 of which was awarded to new applicants

We processed 662 grant applications
(791 in FY 21-22)

Approval Rate
65%

(54% FY 21-22)

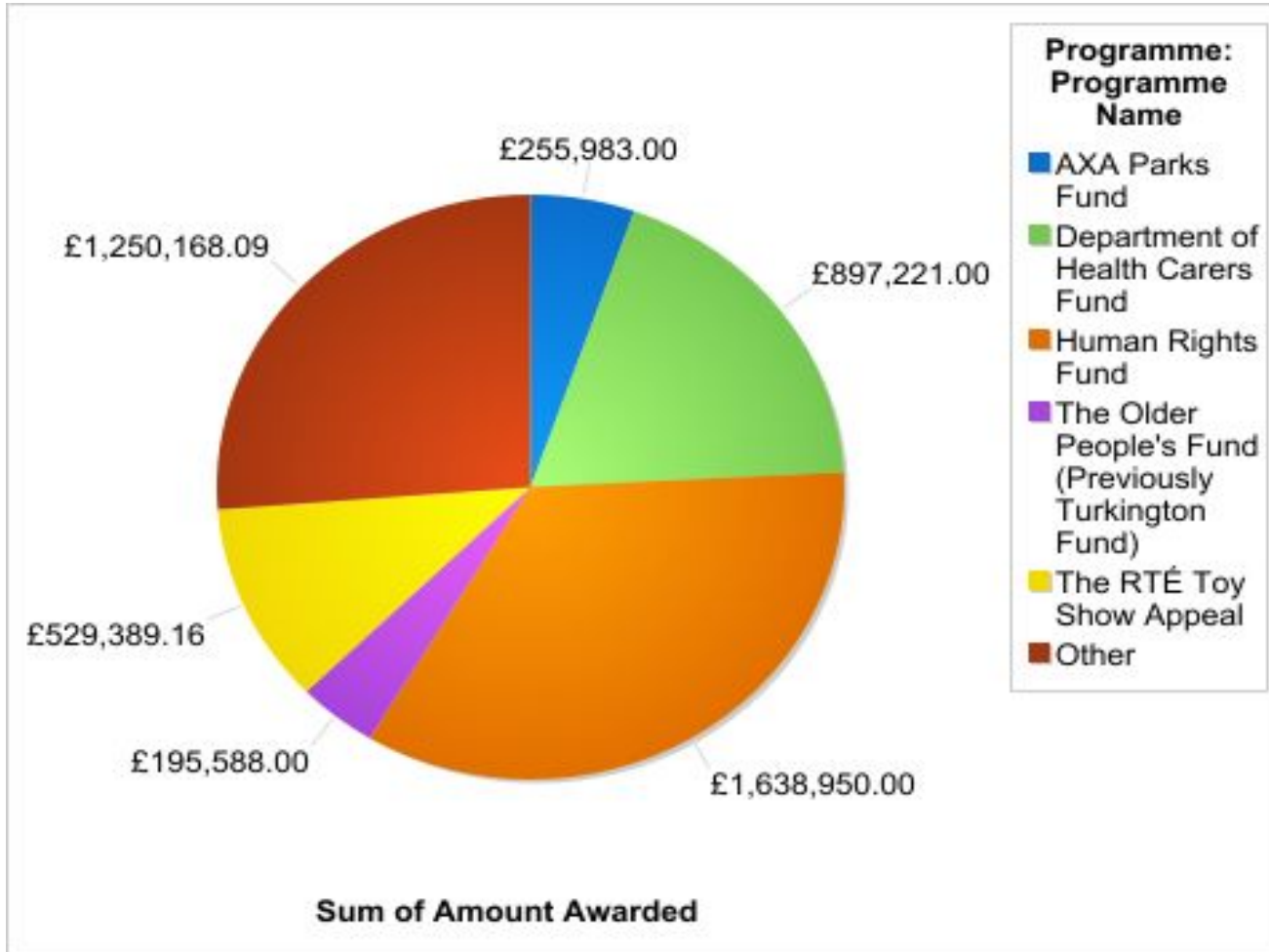
435
communities
and
communities of
interest
supported

Awards 1st April to 30th September 2022

The 
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Grants awarded by programme



**Average
grant
£11,377**

External voice

Knowledge and practices

Activities

Funding and programmes

Connections and collaborations



Encouraging generosity

- Continued endowment and revenue fund income generated
- New first time funds included the Belfast City Council, Queens Jubilee Fund, the Brian Conlon Fund, McAleer Fund and the AXA Parks fund. Further funds secured include Comic Relief, British Red Cross, RTE Toy Show and three legacy pledges
- A Five year Climate Action / Food Sustainability Programme was agreed in partnership with Lottery and Derry City and Strabane District Council. The programme will include scaling up our growing programme with local families and is the first Climate Action and Leveling Up funded programme in NI
- We organised an All Island Fund Convening in September with CFI
- Philanthropy Fortnight completed in May 2022 with a series of events and a social media campaign
- Andrea Kerns and Marcus Cooper were appointed to the team as Admin and Events Officer and Fund Development Manager respectively. Brown O' Connor were appointed for Policy support
- During the period all social platforms, broadcast and print media saw an increase in reach, engagement and followers
- We commissioned research into digital needs and skills in the sector and increased our voice in relation to cost of living

People on the edges

DEI Fund: The Foundation opened its first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Fund in September seeking to support local groups explore DEI within their own management structures and how this impacts on their services, activities, practices and policies to the wider community in which they operate. The fund is part of the Comic Relief Social Change Programme and we will review the fund in Q4 to determine the merits or otherwise to continue with this support.

DEI Grant Analysis: As part of the DEI Action Plan we committed the Foundation to examining the reach of our grants to a range of minoritised sections of our community. Through a 10% sample of Health awards and a 10% sample of all other awards made in the 21/22 Financial year testing was done focussing on Ethnic Minorities, LGBTQIA+ community and disability. The analysis demonstrated that our application form was not allowing CFNI to determine factors such as management committee diversity and the diversity of the core beneficiaries. This is not to say that both had not got a diversity reach, but the Foundation was not in a position to make definitive statement one way or the other. Amendments have now been made to the application forms which hopefully will allow for a much more detailed information being available for the sample analysis of our 22/23 grant awards. Thanks to members of the Grants and Finance teams for their help in this analysis process.

DEI Training: Menopause Awareness Training has been organised and will take place in November..

Irish Travellers: Living History Travelling Museum was held in Omagh on 21st September. Over 100 school children attended a range of events including storytelling classes, tinsmith exhibition, traditional brown bread tasting and time to explore the wagon. The general public then has the opportunity to visit the museum from lunchtime.

Thriving after the conflict

- The third round of the **Leadership Programme** continues to progress. The cohort have almost completed their accredited training and are finalizing their submissions for their Leadership in Action Projects.
- Planning for The **Nothing About Us Without Us 2022 Annual Dialogue**, which is aimed at illustrating how decision makers should engage women on issues that affect and matter to them, such as their health and wellbeing is well underway. The event will take place on 16 November. We are excited to see the event, which has been co-designed by women from across our partnership programme with Social Change Initiative and St Stephen's Green Trust, come together. Various stall holders and workshops will take place at the event which is being chaired by BBC Health Correspondent, Marie Louise Connolly.
- Tensions remain high in many communities with ongoing legacy, Brexit issues etc

Building sustainable communities

- **New Voices Programme:** Phase 2 proposal approved by Garfield Weston which runs the Programme to August 2024. There are three distinct elements of the Programme which commencing with mentoring/training, Meet The Funder and Capacity Building Grants. New additions to the Programme include Application Form iteration and making a pitch to the assessment panel. Work for next quarter will be to recruit groups and mentors for full Programme start in January 2023
- **Climate Justice:** Working group established and has been working through Terms of Reference and the underpinning principles of our work. As the plan will need to be revisited to align with new strategy, ongoing work will focus on actions that enhance our own internal knowledge of the subject which will include sourcing of appropriate training.
- **Micro-Community Investment Fund (with BOI):** The fund continues to generate interest from a range of smaller community groups seeking support for activities that make their communities even better places to live in. An additional focus area was added to the Fund to acknowledge the positive contribution within the community which supports the challenges that people face in light of the rising cost of living

Innovation & voice

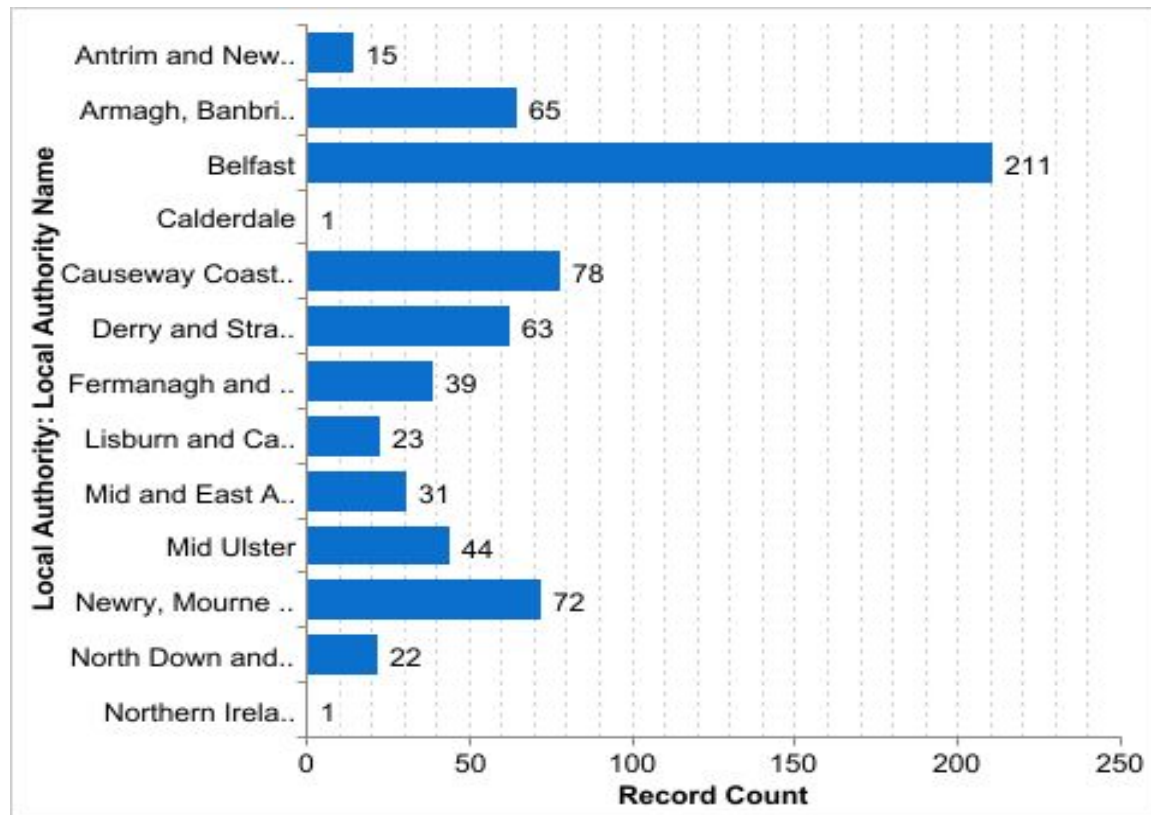
Techies in Residence programme.

6/7 projects are currently developing their digital platforms, conducting more tech development and conducting user testing. The Foundation has commissioned research on the digital needs of the sector in response to the digital transformation that has happened since the pandemic and following the evaluation of the TiR programme.

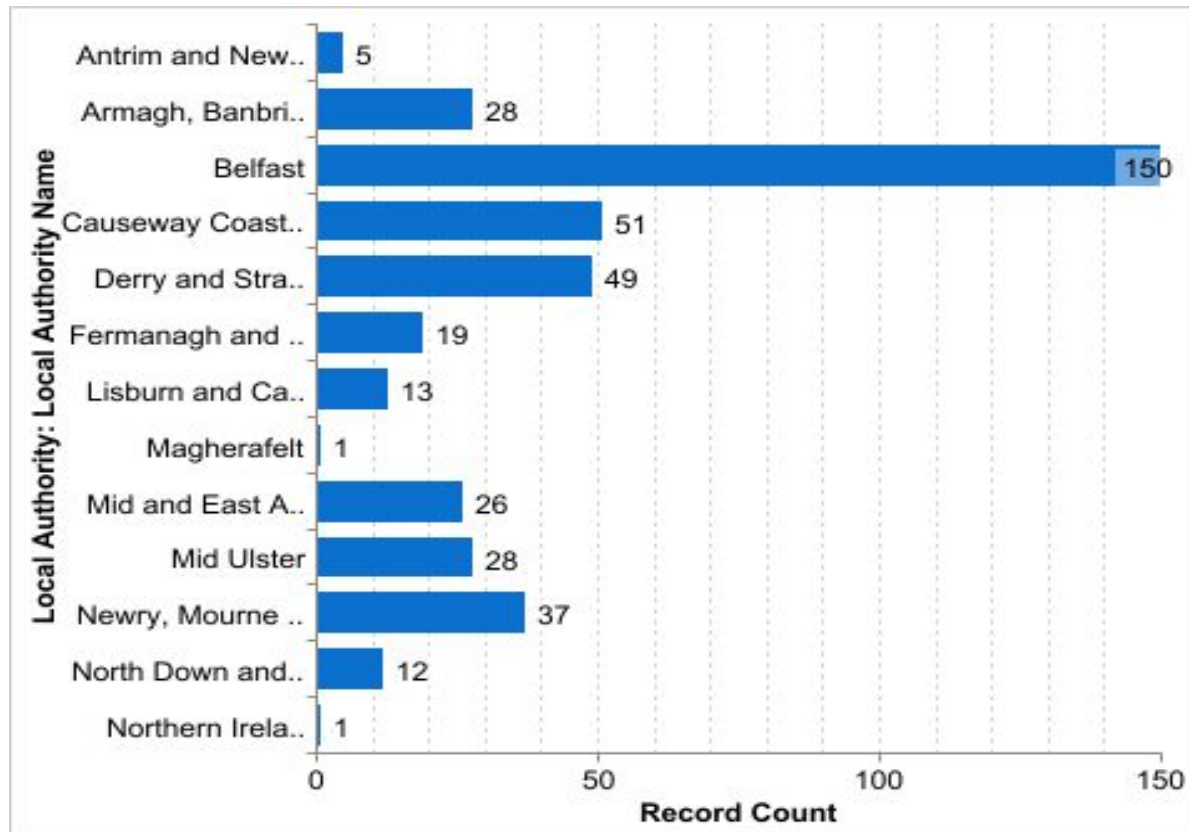
Housing and Homelessness The programme steering group met in June for a strategic review of the programme delivery. Following the review the Foundation worked with Housing Rights to plan and an conference style event that would bring together people working in housing and homelessness with people with lived experience of the issue to explore and discover the issue further. This event would see the launch of the 2023 Housing and Homelessness Innovation programme.

Civic Innovation Programme. (CIP) Project delivery is underway with all 7 projects. The Idir Strat agus Strat project brought together over 17000 language rights activities and gaeilge speakers to a public rally in May. They launched their language rights handbook which outlines the Irish language legislation [Download the handbook here](#) and following inaction by the NI govt to the rights promised in the New Decade New Approach agreement,, and a proactive campaign to Westminster, the Irish Language Act was legislated for by the British government.

Number of applications received per Local Authority



Approved applications per Local Authority



Top Council for receipt of applications: Belfast

Bottom Council for receipt of applications: Antrim and Newtownabbey

Top Council for successful applications: North Down and Ards

Bottom Council for successful applications: Antrim and Newtownabbey

The 
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440,503
anticipated
beneficiaries

Outcomes and Indicators

All of our applicants complete an application form and state anticipated outcomes and indicators. If successful, grantees are required to complete an end of grant report and provide detail of their achievements.

This year we have transitioned to a new impact measurement system. We are therefore in a position to articulate some more detail on the actual impact and outcomes of those projects that have completed within this financial year.

The following few slides outline the actual outcomes and indicators of these projects. In the new financial year we will be outlining this impact in more detail as more projects are completed and we intend to align the summary of these outcomes and indicators with our organisation's theory of change.

Our funding will achieve the following outcomes...



- Improved physical and mental well being
- Improvement of life skills, education, employability and enterprise
- Strengthened community cohesion and capacity
- Reduction of isolation
- Connecting people with the arts
- Transformation of access to public spaces
- Improved access to infrastructure and resources
- Promotion of human rights and equality
- Improved community leadership and advocacy
- Increased organisational capacity
- Increased community resilience
- Increased volunteering and social action
- Improved social networks
- Improved economic well being
- Increased participation in lifelong learning
- Increased educational attainment
- Reduced stigma and discrimination
- Additional support for vulnerable people
- Reduced food poverty
- Improved nutrition
- Preserved local heritage

Indicators

For those projects that have been completed our funding provided:

- 258,944 people benefitted
- 18.960 hours of activity
- 371 came off work related benefits
- 628 people using sustainable transport options
- 13 people improved their digital literacy skills
- 925 started on their pathway to employment
- 285 people took action in a campaign
- 1000 units of energy generated from renewable sources
- 2000 units of energy saved
- 2 new habitats created
- 12916 reported improved social networks

Indicators

- 11222 reported improved physical, mental and emotional well being
- 10655 accessed support as a result of a funded services
- 1128 was the number of activities developed to promote healthy lifestyles
- 4840 felt involved in the decisions that affect them
- 53 strengthened existing partnerships
- 4962 reported an increase in their knowledge and skills
- 100 households participated in environmental projects
- 85 new community facilities were created
- 19870 felt an increased sense of belonging in their community
- 3698 new hours of sport and leisure

Indicators

- 50 new households participating in environmental projects
- 2136 accessing support for the first time
- 354 new members of a group
- 289 people participating in gardening
- 704 people participating in creative projects
- 792 new volunteers
- 12 new work placements
- 837 people supported as victims of anti social behaviour
- 269 supported to achieve independent living
- 6192 felt less lonely

Case Studies

Encouraging generosity



Culmore Women's Friendship Project were awarded £5,000 to deliver a programme of social, befriending and skills development activities and also village enhancement and community projects for 30 women at risk of social exclusion in Culmore. The project has been funded under the Older People's Food and Fuel Fund.

The project aims to:

- To engage with women at risk of social exclusion
- To codesign and manage a programme of social and skills development activities
- To set up links with other women's groups and to visit and to learn from their successful work
- To hold weekly for befriending and project focussed motivational outcomes
- To promote collaboration with other local groups, e.g. heritage, crafts, gardening/horticulture
- To codesign additional village enhancement projects, eg library share boxes, picnic tables, community allotments
- To visit garden centres and village enhancement projects elsewhere

Building Sustainable Communities



'The Parent Rooms:

This is a story of development by the group which was originally supported by the Comic Relief Programme in 2019 under the name We Are Pangs. The group have as their main focus support for parents experiencing perinatal mental health issues.

From these small beginnings which gave the group confidence that their work was valued by a funder they continually developed their services in a way that is user led, sensitive and relevant.

As the need for their services grew, the group realised that they needed better premises to be able to deliver such services in a way that enhanced the experience of parents and children. At a critical time in this journey the group got the opportunity to be part of Phase 1 of the New Voices Programme and were assigned to a mentor who engaged with them to develop their skills around a number of areas including making strong applications, group governance and sustainability

Developing these skills allowed the group to build a much stronger foundation and the confidence to go forward with ambitious plans for a new facility which came to fruition on Friday 5th August with the opening of "The Parent Rooms" at the Houben Centre on the Crumlin Road.

The group have always remembered the importance of that initial Comic Relief investment and also the critical support through the New Voices Programme which helped them "examine our vision and mission, create a regular giving programme, rebranding ...which will have a positive impact for many years to come...so once again thank you"

Innovation and Voice



Techies in Residence

Aurora Counselling worked with KIPPIE to develop the Kidz Express app. This app supports young people and their parents with evidence informed mental health resources and tools, whilst they are on a waiting list for services and support. Using the analogy of a train journey to relate to emotions, the Kids Express has developed a Family of Feelings and to date 2/7 Emotional train journeys. Each journey is equipped with a traffic light system and an inventory of resources. (suitcases) [Watch a demo of the Kidz Express App](#)

Future Schools Project

The Future Schools project was a partnership between Integrated Education Fund and Ulster University. The project aims to support school communities to explore sustainable solutions to primary school provision in their areas. The Future Schools Toolkit was developed as part of this project. It aims to act as a guide to all schools in NI to explore school sustainability, tools and approaches for effectively engaging communities to develop a shared solution, and the pathways and processes of area planning to support a collaborative sustainable solution. [Watch the Future Schools project video here](#)

Thriving after the conflict



On 25th May we held a joint residential for participants across all 3 years of our Grassroots Emerging Leaders Programme. In a comfortable, yet safe environment we explored a number of themes around leadership. With our Year 3 cohort we looked at what leadership means to me, inspirational leaders, challenges faced in the work we do, and how overcome, demonstrating leadership – how show up in leadership role, feeling “in the zone”, growing, learning and action.

While our Year 1 and 2 cohorts considered examples of when they’ve been ‘in the zone’, what happened? Where is there opportunity for me to do more of this? What challenges am I experiencing? How can I address these? What’s next for me? How do I encourage & support leadership in others?

As a group we also looked at *Strengthening our support systems: Building networks, relationships & making connections and Building resilience & solidarity* before reflecting on *how we look after ourselves whilst looking after others- making time for me.*

There was an appetite for more space for conversations and reflections and the Foundation is considering how this can be done- and possibly upscaled.



**Vital Issues
and Thinking**

- Mental Health continues to be an issue that is becoming more significant in Northern Ireland. It is anticipated that the ongoing evaluation of the funding will support the Foundation to feed into future plans and strategies and potentially influence the funding direction of other Trusts and Foundations.
- Applicant feedback continues to outline the need for funding for core costs, and we are pleased that many of the new funds we have developed are offering this support in the coming months. Our Comic Relief programme was hugely successful with most funding awarded in the first round.
- Our flexible approaches continue to be of benefit to our grantees and this has enabled applicants to reduce the level of information that they need to submit for our funds, however, it proves more of a challenge when assessing, if funds are heavily oversubscribed.
- We should continue to inform and encourage donors and funders of the need for flexibility and support for core costs where possible.
- The Grantee Network continues to be of interest to our grantees. We hope to build on this with a calendar of events and activities for the next year, to strengthen networking, knowledge sharing and dialogue among our grantees.



**Vital Issues
and Thinking**

- We may wish to consider our direction of funding over the coming twelve months and supporting the sector to reflect and learn from what has happened during the pandemic, and support costs to enable that space for thinking. An example fund that we have had in the past that enables that space is the Oak Transformation and Growth Fund and we should consider opportunities around establishing a fund that supports organisational development. This may also link to plans to develop a Tech Fund to support the sector. In the meantime encouraging donors to support this opportunity for development of the sector would be helpful. We will consider this as part of the development of our priority initiatives in our new strategy.
- We continue to be flexible with existing grantees to enable them to amend and re profile budgets as a result of increasing costs. As an organisation, and particularly as a funder, we have led the way in terms of responding to the cost of living crisis and we have participated in a number of conversations with other funders to discuss how we can all be more strategic and effective in addressing some of the challenges communities are facing. We hope that these conversations will help develop our plans in the new strategy to establish the Foundation as a key actor and thought leader in the grant-making sector.



The *elle*
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Connecting people who care
with causes that matter