

REFLECTING ON OUR

FESTIVAL OF LEARNING



CONTENTS

Introduction

About London Funders 2

Foreword 3

Themes

Collaboration 4

Community 24

Equity 34

Place 58

Process 65

ABOUT

About London Funders

London Funders is the network for funders and investors in London's civil society. We are the only place that brings together public, private and independent funders to build a better London by taking action on what matters to our city and our communities.

From the arts to zoos, and from Barking to Barnet our members invest in every aspect of London's life. They support the capital through grants, commissioning, social investment and more, as well as directly to Londoners.

We're here to: enable a movement of members to have strong and trusted connections, based on shared values and ambitions; to facilitate and lead collaborative programmes where only working together can achieve the change that's needed; and to drive a learning culture, where shared data, intelligence and insight leads to better decision-making and action.

FOREWORD

Over the course of two weeks in May 2022, we brought back our Festival of Learning – a celebration of all things learning where we shared reflections on the past year as well as our hopes and ambitions for the future.

Broken down into the five themes of the Festival (collaboration, community, equity, process and place), this booklet provides an overview of the ideas, lessons and insights that were shared across the conversations, presentations and questions that were covered over the two weeks. With over 30 sessions, 500 members attending and 60 speakers from London's funding and community sectors, the Festival covered a huge amount of topics – from what role funders play in the capital's social justice ecosystem to how we work with the capital's communities to shape funder practice.

We not only had the opportunity to gain local insights – from Barking to Hounslow, but we also heard international contributions with funders from New York and Montreal sharing their learning with our members.

To ensure that we captured everything that was talked about at the Festival of Learning, we commissioned independent consultants Dr Sylvia McLain and Elizabeth Enfield to attend and write-up the key findings from every session. As well as providing summaries of presentations, they have pulled out the big questions for funders to consider as we deal with the challenges on the horizon – from the climate crisis to the increasing inequality we're seeing in London.

The ambition for our learning programme is to ensure that of all the positive changes funders made during the pandemic “stick”, and that we look to the future with renewed confidence and ambition. The Festival of Learning is an important part of this, and we hope the lessons captured in this booklet leave you feeling reinvigorated, with insights and ideas to improve funding, so that together we can support and strengthen London's communities for a better future.

We hope that you enjoy the recaps provided in the pages ahead – which we have arranged thematically for you to easily focus in on the areas of most interest – and if you would like to pick up the points raised in any of the sessions, do not hesitate to get in touch with the London Funders team.



SECTION 1

Collaboration

TRUST FOR LONDON & THE GLA

Learning from the Citizenship and Integration Initiative: Enabling civil society, funders and decision makers to work effectively together in the social integration space

The Citizenship and Integration Initiative (CII) brings together funding from independent foundations to work closely with the Mayor of London to advance shared goals on social integration. It was born from a need to support those in London communities who have been affected by the hostile environment policies for migrants to the UK.

Speakers

Geraldine Blake

Citizenship and Integration Initiative Co-ordinator

Sioned Churchill

Director of Grants, Trust for London

Ella Johnson

Citizenship and Integration Project Health Advisor, Greater London Authority

Klara Skrivankova

Programme Director, Trust for London

At the CitizensUK 2016 mayoral hustings in London, Ijeoma, who came from Nigeria to the UK aged two, spoke about being detained at 15. Despite being a Londoner all this time, she was barred from going to university or from applying for citizenship for another ten years. She laid down a challenge for the mayoral candidates to help Londoners with insecure status. London Mayor Sadiq Khan responded to this challenge, leading to the birth of The Citizenship and Integration Initiative (CII).

The CII's main approach is secondment, placing members of civil society into the Greater London Authority's (GLA) social integration team. Sioned, from Trust for London, emphasised CII's overarching principle of "the whole being greater than the sum of its parts", which maximises and focuses their efforts to achieve greater impact. This cross-pollination model leads to more effective programmes and more active, authentic policies. This strategy also makes the GLA more accessible and helps policy makers to better support London's migrant population.

Geraldine, who coordinates the CII, spoke about three shared goals of the CII:

- Participation – encouraging active citizenship and voter registration
- Equalities – supporting young Londoners’ and Europeans’ legal rights
- Relationships – creating a hospitable environment

Under each goal, policy and practice gaps were identified. Secondees, with specialist knowledge about young migrants, voter registration and hostile environment issues, were then placed in the GLA. Some notable achievements of the CII are London Voter Registration Week (Participation), European Londoners Hub in 2018 (Equalities), and Hostile Environment policy impact research (Relationships). Impact studies of the CII partnership revealed the five ingredients of this successful collaboration – commitment, collaboration, courage, connection and capacity. This collective impact model leads to civil society and policy makers working better together to achieve more.

Ella, a secondee at the GLA from Doctors of the World, works across the health and social integration teams. She spoke about hostile environment policies that restrict people with insecure status from health care. Exacerbated during the covid-19 pandemic, it was difficult for some migrants and asylum seekers to obtain vaccines and general health care. Ella’s secondment was instrumental in helping the GLA to provide practical policy solutions to these problems.

All of the panellists emphasised that this two-sector collaborative working model could be used to solve other social problems. They emphasised the importance of both members of civil society and government authorities “getting out of their silos”, to ensure more effective support of the people who most need it.

Points for reflection

- Where can you “look for learning”? How could you use the CII’s “greater than the sum of its parts” model to have greater impact for the communities you serve?
- How do you “get out of your silo” and work towards learning from other sectors?

CRIPPLEGATE FOUNDATION/ISLINGTON GIVING
& THE LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON

The highs (and lows) of collaboration

Islington Giving is a restricted fund of Cripplegate Foundation, all overheads and administration of Islington Giving are covered by Cripplegate Foundation so that all money raised through Islington Giving goes straight back out to the community groups they fund. The speakers at this workshop reflected on both the positives and the difficulties of working together to effect greater change within Islington.

Speakers

Shabana Aslam

VCS Funding and
Commissioning Partnerships
Manager – VCS Development
Team, London Borough
of Islington

Anne Shewring

Director of Programmes,
Cripplegate Foundation/Islington Giving

This session was an honest discussion between Anne and Shabana who reflected on their cross-sector collaboration, most recently a groundbreaking ten-year partnership between Islington Giving and Islington Council. Anne, from Cripplegate Foundation/Islington Giving explained that the goals of this ten-year partnership between Islington Giving and Islington Council are to better support residents and to effect systematic change in the way that both the council and the charity deal with pressing issues happening locally. There are two main elements of this partnership: increasing resources and developing programmatic elements leading to systemic change.

The first challenge, according to Anne, was to figure out how they can fit into the council's structure – the council's priorities change more often than it does for a foundation. Anne noted that their timing wasn't always aligned – with changes at the council and council departments being comparatively more "siloes" than

at Cripplegate/Islington Giving. Shabana agreed but also noted that this opens up opportunities, especially with respect to including different council departments in the discussions. This leads to a joint approach to solving problems, ultimately leading to more structural changes in Islington.

Shabana talked about the Community Chest Programme which funds smaller grass-roots organisations that do not have core funding. The grant panel included representatives from the council, from Cripplegate/Islington Giving and community partners, adding lived experience to the panel. An added benefit, Anne furthered, was that staff visited the applicant organisations, allowing the charity to build local connections and trust. This also gave Cripplegate/Islington Giving a better idea of the needs in Islington.

This collaboration also has a Resident's Support Scheme, which provides emergency support, including furniture,

grocery and heating vouchers for those in need. For this scheme, the foundation provides an important bridge to the council, again giving the council a better understanding of what is needed in the community. Shabana noted the benefits of the foundation supporting this scheme as they can also serve as a critical friend to the council.

Another benefit of this collaborative model, according to both, was the emergence of a shared belief and vision. Both noted that the council has been traditionally “transactional” whilst the foundation is more relational. The cross-pollination of these views can be helpful in affecting a systemic change in both sectors.

Shabana particularly emphasised the building of relationships, which are difficult to evaluate, but of great importance to serving the community. Interestingly, a better understanding of how the council works helps Cripplegate to better fill some gaps in need from the community. They established the Make it Happen fund, which gave out £500 grants and did not include the council so that they could move quicker.

Points for reflection

- How do you evaluate impact in these partnerships?
- Could you use this collaborative model to enhance the effectiveness of intervention in other areas?

CAMDEN GIVING & LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

“Is Anyone In Charge Around here?” – Collaborating on community-led participatory grantmaking

Taking a participatory approach to grantmaking, Camden Giving and London Borough of Camden explored how collaboration works between local citizens and the local authority. Using the “We Make Camden Kit”, these two organisations used community-led grant panels to award funding to Camden residents.

Speakers

Hafid Ali

Community Partnerships Team,
Camden Council

Vanessa C Browne

Panellist, Camden Giving

Caroline Mawer

Panellist, Camden Giving

Natasha Friend

Director, Camden Giving

Anna Wright

Cabinet Member for Promoting
Neighbourhoods and Communities,
London Borough of Camden

Hafid began by asking local councillor Anna about enabling social actions and the risks this brings. For “We Make Camden” to be successful, the “we” means a change in culture for the local authority, Anna said. She also described the journey for the council in sharing power with its citizens. She felt that encouraging active participation always leads to greater gains. Hafid agreed and added that it was “transformative” for citizens to have a say in what happened in their communities.

Camden Giving raises money from businesses and then recruits panels from Camden communities to award grants. “We Make Camden” is an extension of this model in partnership with the local council, who also provide funding. “If there is anyone in charge”, Natasha commented, “it is the citizens”, and Camden Giving’s role is to facilitate. Importantly, this model includes outreach to Camden’s citizens to identify their needs and encourage them

to apply for funding via the “We Make Camden” scheme. In the past year, from a budget of £176k, 92 grants were awarded to 48 citizens.

This model is not without risks. The council, though initially worried about how to measure where their money was going, has learned to be more flexible about uncertainty and risk.

The panel is diverse, including many people with lived experience of Camden and who deeply understand the local needs. Who the panel funds, according to Hafid, “is very much a group decision”, aligned towards getting the best possible result. Vanessa, a panel member, added that the range of different experiences on the panel led to increased transparency.

Zia, who runs the Highgate Black Women’s Wellness group, is a recent grantee. Zia, who had been rejected for funding many

Points for reflection

- Could organisations include more lived experience in grant panels to better serve their recipient communities?
- What input could you use from communities that you serve to help decide what your organisation funds?
- Can you become more flexible and fund more “higher-risk” grants to lend greater support?

times previously, felt that this citizen-led panel was more equitable. She thought the traditional “top-down” approach was usually “*condescending*” because those at the top had no clear idea about the real needs of the community.

Caroline, from the local council, identified some council goals such as opportunities for Camden youth, and providing nutritious, sustainable food for all. She also emphasised the importance of Camden citizens having a say over their futures and that their ideas needed to be supported to make for a better community.

THE FORE & SUMERIAN PARTNERS

Financing that grows with you – how funder collaboration is fast tracking social impact

This session focussed on how funders can work with smaller charities and social enterprises to provide not just money but also advice and skills in order to help them deliver and grow.

Speakers

Mary Rose Gunn
CEO, The Fore

Chris West
Partner, Sumerian Partners

Dr Asha Patel
CEO, Innovating Minds

Mary Rose Gunn, CEO of The Fore, explained that while smaller charities (with a turnover of less than £1m) account for 96% of the overall market this is not reflected in their proportion of income. In 2018 smaller charities received less than 20% of funds, making it hard for them to grow.

The Fore aims to help these smaller organisations get hold of the money they need to scale up their projects by matching them with potential investors. One of the key points Mary Rose made was that they are not just about helping with grants for individual projects. They consider unrestricted grant funding, which will support an organisation as a whole. Helping with skills and training is another side of this coin.

Speaking alongside Mary Rose, Chris West from Sumerian Partners pointed out that these smaller organisations have the ability to tackle some of the deep-rooted social issues in the UK. However they are often unable to realise their full potential because of the challenges in trying to grow.

Sumerian provides flexible finance designed to help overcome these challenges and cater to the longer-term needs of an organisation. One of the social enterprises which has benefited from this collaborative partnership is Innovating Minds, an organisation that supports the mental health needs of children and young adults.

The session heard from CEO and clinical psychologist, Dr Asha Patel. She founded Innovating Minds in 2016 but her vision was hampered by the fact she was delivering much of the work herself. A grant from The Fore allowed her to bring in a relationship manager, build new links with schools, increase tenders and ultimately employ more people.

Further investment from Sumerian Partners led to a radical restructuring of the company. All of the services are now provided online, making them both more accessible and affordable. Dr Patel described finding the right investors as a bit like Internet dating. *“You have to go out there and kiss a few frogs, you may feel you are getting somewhere and then suddenly it all goes cold.”*

The introduction by The Fore to Sumerian Partners proved an instant match and enabled her to scale up nationally – and make a real difference in peoples lives.

Points for reflection

- Many smaller organisations face obstacles in accessing finance and receive a disproportionately low amount of the total funds available
- The key is not always just about finding the money but finding the right funding partnership
- Helping social enterprises grow is key to securing their futures and allowing funders to recoup their investments

HYDE FOUNDATION

Lessons from the cross-sector collaboration supporting people claiming Universal Credit

The Hyde Foundation is Hyde Housing’s social investment arm and has been at the forefront of developing technology to provide support to Universal Credit claimants. This session looked at how, tasked with creating remote support for individuals struggling and failing to make claims online, they set about first understanding the root of the problem and then creating a solution.

Speaker

Maggie Houghton
Programme Manager,
Hyde Foundation

46% of Universal Credit applicants need help with their online applications, and 25% abandon the process altogether. Given that the mass transfer to Universal Credit – paused during the pandemic – recently started again, and 4,000 people are expected to apply every day over the next three years, this support is vital.

Working in collaboration with a digital agency, Hyde was introduced to a concept called “design thinking” based on the principle that half the process is understanding the problem.

Maggie demonstrated how she and her team created a vast library of past “user personas”, including staff. These were used to guide the team in creating a product with the needs of users at its core.

The aim was to identify the “pain points” in the process for applicants as well as helping front line staff better manage their side of the process.

Once issues had been identified, various solutions were road tested and the result was a digital tool known as the UC Helper – “a friendly companion in the process”. Its key features include being phone friendly, data light, requiring no sign in, and simple easy-to-understand directions. Maggie emphasised the content had been kept to an absolute minimum – about a tenth of that found on the government site.

Sandra, an early user of the tool, said she had been really frightened about accessing the Universal Credit system but using the UC Helper had given her lots of confidence and she had spread the word to all her neighbours.

Since Universal Credit applications are made through a range of organisations, further development was carried out so the tool could be customised and put into operation by any advice organisation. This means applicants can benefit wherever they live or choose to start their claim.

A capacity for universal updating was also added so that, whenever changes were made to application process, if the “mother version” of the tool is updated all other versions are updated at the same time.

Maggie stressed how immensely proud they were in helping develop a tool, which is already being used by numerous advice organisations.

Points for reflection

- The importance of really understanding the problem you are looking to address before even starting to think about solutions
- The value of encouraging the participation of end users throughout the process of creating anything designed to meet their needs
- Maximising impact by thinking of ways in which a product can be used as widely as possible

THE LONDON PROGRESSION COLLABORATION

Lessons from addressing the unequal distribution of progression opportunities

This session shared the learning from the pilot phase of the London Progression Collaboration, an initiative set up to address the unequal distribution of opportunities for progression into and in work in the capital.

Speakers

Anna Ambrose

Director, London Progression Collaboration, Institute for Public Policy Research

Stephanie Mestrallet

Vice President, JP Morgan Chase Foundation

Forogh Rahmani

Senior Manager, Skills & Employment, Greater London Authority

Anna outlined the background to the project, a feasibility study conducted in 2018/19 when nearly a million Londoners were working below the minimum wage. At the same time, London was experiencing a shortage of skills particularly in the critical areas of construction and technology.

Since this study was carried out, the pandemic and cost of living crisis has exacerbated many of the issues it highlighted. Helping businesses create apprenticeships serves the needs of both sides. This is what the London Progression Collaboration (LPC) was set up to do in collaboration between the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), JP Morgan and the Greater London Authority (GLA).

For most low-paid earners, the only way to increase their income is to get a new job. At the same time this group is least likely to be able to access training or development. A 2020 report by the Social Mobility Commission found that apprenticeships were one of the most effective means of boosting social mobility for workers from poorer backgrounds. The same report concluded that the people who really needed these were not getting them.

The feasibility study identified two key factors undermining the potential of a strong and sustainable apprenticeship programme:

- A lack of support for smaller businesses to offer apprenticeships
- A risk of London seeing large amounts of the apprenticeship levy remaining unspent

The apprenticeship levy was introduced by the government in 2017. It requires businesses with a wage bill of over £3m to pay 0.5% of this money into a ring-fenced levy which, if not spent, goes to the Treasury. Companies that are not able to spend all of their levy can choose to use up to 25% to fund apprenticeship training schemes in smaller organisations.

The LPC offers practical support to smaller business wanting to set up apprenticeships. It has also created a levy transfer brokerage service, matching donors with recipients and facilitating the movement of cash between larger and smaller organisations. Since launching in 2020 it has supported over 850 new apprenticeships and secured over £10m in levy transfer funds.

Forogh said the initiative had benefited the GLA by creating real opportunities for Londoners, while Stephanie said it aligned with JP Morgan's priorities around economic inclusion. For the LCP, working with these two established organisations lent both credibility and expertise.

Points for reflection

- London has both a large number of extremely low paid workers and a lack of skills in vital services – apprenticeship schemes can help tackle both these issues
- The LPC has enabled more apprenticeships by supporting small businesses and creating a levy transfer brokerage service

LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION

Collaborating with charities to improve service user inclusion

In this session participants were presented the findings of a project initiated in the wake of the pandemic.

Speaker

Emma Tregear
Grant Manager,
Lloyds Bank Foundation

Focusing on 12 charities in parts of London and the South East, the aim was to see how Lloyds Bank Foundation might improve service user inclusion with the help of a consultant. A key part of the project was individual charities sharing experiences in order to learn from each other.

At the outset, they were asked to consider what counts as service user involvement, how organisations incorporate this into the planning and design of services, and how users can be represented in the governance structures of their organisations. All the charities involved worked with vulnerable groups and individuals. As a rule, they first made contact when they were in crisis and with complex needs that had to be met. Because of this, the process of involvement in the organisation itself needed to be carefully managed and timed.

Common insights were that building trust and confidence in an informal way to start with was key in involving users later in more formal ways. Typically, this involved coming together over the making and sharing of food. More relaxed gatherings gave staff a better chance to really hear their users' concerns, which worked better than more direct questioning.

When the pandemic made gatherings in a physical space impossible, some of the charities facilitated online groups as forums for sharing concerns about covid-19 and the problems caused by lockdown.

The next steps were engaging users on panels and forums. This experience often leads to long-term involvement with charities and organisations in a more formal way. For example, the insights of the youth ambassadors of the Kent Refugee Action Network have become increasingly sought out by organisations like the Police. Voices in Exile contributed to research on the impact of the pandemic on Black and minoritised communities and people's concerns over vaccines.

As well as providing opportunities through training and volunteering, improving access to paid roles was also deemed important. Many of the charities have former users on their payrolls or boards. Others offer paid youth ambassador work.

Issues that arose from the project included lack of funding for service user inclusion and the need for users to prioritise their own lives and recovery first. It also revealed that, while all the charities were doing a lot in support of service user inclusion, none had a formal policy. Support in creating a formal policy and assessing its impact was desirable.

Lloyds Bank Foundation identified that, while they are increasingly interested in drawing from those with lived experience, they don't always take into account how much work needs to be done to support this in a meaningful way.

Points for reflection

- The gap between the desire to improve service user inclusion and the creation of formal policies aimed at achieving this needs to be addressed
- How do you balance prioritising the often-extreme needs of some of service users with greater involvement in the charity itself?
- Can you provide extra financial support to help improve service user inclusion in a meaningful way?

ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDERS NETWORK

Acting on the climate crisis – why, how and the role for funders in London

“Think of a young person you care about and work out what age they will be in 2050, an important year for climate change”.
This session, on the impact of funders in tackling climate change, began by trying to make participants think of the issue in a less abstract way. “Thinking about [my sons’] future drives a lot of the work I do.”

Speakers

Radhika Bynon

Portfolio Manager,
Impact on Urban Health

Nina Sofaly

Co-Chair of Environmentally
Responsible Working Group,
City Bridge Trust

Jane Cabutti

Growing Philanthropy Director,
Environmental Funders Network

The environmental funders network was founded 20 years ago to improve the effectiveness and amount of environmental philanthropy. Although funding for the environment now amounts to around £200m a year in the UK, only about 2% is spent on climate change. Given the urgency of the need to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, this is low.

In London, the impact of climate change has been evidenced in frequent storms, heat waves and heavy rain. Forecasters predict that, without the Thames Barrier and work to reinforce it, by 2050 large areas of the capital could be underwater.

Climate change disproportionately affects marginalised communities; those on low incomes, those from minorities, and those with disabilities and health issues. The people who contribute the least to climate change are the ones most affected by it as they are most likely to live in poor housing and least likely to be able to protect their homes against flooding or rising energy costs. *“Funders need to recognise the threats that climate change pose to virtually every charitable aim and that inequalities will be embedded further if we don’t take action now.”*

Philanthropy has already made a difference. For example, it helped drive the creation of the low emission zone in London that is now being replicated in cities across the country. But funders can do more: by widening their current grant criteria, supporting new projects, and supporting grantees with bolt-on funds to help them become more sustainable themselves.

Nina Sofaly, from the City Bridge Trust, said that although they had paused some of their environmental funding in order to deal with the immediate impact of the pandemic, they had since funded an environmental study to pinpoint areas in which they could act on the environment.

Radhika Bynon, from Impact on Urban Health, which works specifically on dealing with health inequalities, said they have already created a climate action fund to support local communities becoming directly involved in climate change projects. *“One of the key factors affecting London is air pollution which is responsible for 4,000 deaths a year. While we do work on air pollution we’ve decided we need to do more.”*

The panellists all agreed that one of the biggest challenges for funders is to prioritise climate change over austerity, the impact of the pandemic and other issues which are critical right now.

Points for reflection

- Climate change poses a threat to virtually every charitable aim
- Unless climate change is tackled, inequalities will become exacerbated and embedded
- Funders must not lose sight of its potential impact while dealing with any current crisis

THE GLA & HOMELESS LINK'S IMMIGRATION
ADVICE FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS FUND

When services link up – what we've learned from being bolder in our collaborations

Beh Soro came to London in 2018 after fleeing persecution in his home country. He applied for asylum and, after a failed claim, ended up sleeping rough. The South London Refugee Association helped him find somewhere to stay and support him with his asylum claim. He was subsequently granted leave to remain in the UK.

Speakers

Belinda Moreau-Jones

Head of Grants and Investments,
Homeless Link

Rebecca Dillon

Grants Manager, Homeless Link

Sophie Beech

Homeless Migrant Project Manager,
South London Refugee Association

Beh Soro

Client, South London Refugee Association

Fernando Suarez

Immigration Navigator, Thames Reach

"I will always have so much love for the SLRA who did so much for me. Since getting in touch with them I have been able to put my life back on track and discovered that even if you don't have the right papers, no matter where you are from or what race, you still have a voice."

Beh's personal testimony illustrated the success of the Immigration Advice for Rough Sleepers Fund launched in April 2021. Funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and managed by Homeless Link, it supported seven different grantees working with homeless and immigration services across London. Homeless Link's grant manager, Rebecca Dylan, outlined its key aim: to help foreign nationals sleeping rough obtain secure immigration status and move them away from the streets. To this end, they increased free immigration service advice, and promoted collaborations between charities working across both areas.

"One of the challenges of working with rough sleepers is the risk they will disengage, especially if dealing with multiple services. Fostering direct links between these services helped maintain and make the process easier."

The South London Refugee Association's (SLRA), project manager Sophie Beech said her organisation's work was often hampered by providing isolated advice. *"We need to support clients through the long immigration casework process but often have people dropping out because they are sleeping rough or dealing with language issues."*

Working in partnership had allowed the SLRA to focus on immigration advice, knowing other agencies were dealing with other needs. Throughout the project year, they supported 153 clients. 33 now have secure immigration status and 117 had moved off the streets. 104 clients engaged

with community and language support groups while their casework was ongoing.

Ben Sebok, from the homeless charity Thames Reach, said one of their biggest challenges was the high support needs of their clients. These often involved substance misuse or mental health issues. The project had allowed them to recruit an “immigration navigator” to travel around London and help engage clients with local outreach teams. His team had found it harder to build connections with law firms willing to adapt their immigration fee structures to suit the charity’s limited budgets.

All participants stressed the need for front-loaded funding to give time to build these key partnerships. Overall, the need for collaboration across sectors was perhaps best summed up by one of the project’s successful outcomes, highlighted up by Sophie Leech:

“Putting time into training partner organisations in identifying immigration issues not only increased referrals but increased their quality too. A very thorough referral means we can move on with cases much faster.”

Points for reflection

- Cross collaboration between agencies and streamlining services make a real difference to clients, speeding up casework and improving results
- Helping train partner organisations was an important part of the process
- Finding a way to ensure that the work, which has already shown results, continues



SECTION 2

Community



LEARNING INSIGHT

Participation, why not?

Cameron Bray, Learning and Participation Manager at Barking & Dagenham Giving, explains how adopting participatory grantmaking helped shift power in their local community, and what funders interested in doing the same can do.

In the past two years, Barking & Dagenham Giving has distributed over £250,000 using participatory methods. This number pales in comparison to the sums distributed annually by some reading this but having been a team of two for most of our existence we're proud of it. It also only tells half the story because the act of participation is itself hugely beneficial to our community, even beyond the money we pay people to take part.

Your organisation may have already looked at participatory grantmaking and may have even decided it's not for you – now or ever. We're not here to convince you otherwise but we would like you to consider *how* your organisation could be made more participatory even beyond your grantmaking. Participation is not a binary and we don't think there is a perfect model of participation. Rather, there are a number of ways it can be used and incorporated into any charity, improving outcomes for communities, those of us working for funders, and the wider contexts we work in.

When we talk about participation, we mean someone having the power to allocate resources – with this understanding, participation should be baked into your systems and processes rather than tacked on at the end. People know the difference between being given real power and having their input treated as a box-ticking exercise by an organisation before it does what it was always going to do.

Currently, our organisations wield power and shape the future of communities through our funding – where do we get our legitimacy from? How might we secure it and build better relationships with communities?

For us, we have established a Community Steering Group to drive the investment policy for our new endowment fund and we are also in the process of turning our website into a place where our community can weigh in on our governance and policies.

We have also adopted a policy of radical vulnerability which sees us being open and honest about the limitations that we face. We think this serves two main purposes:

- It shows a level of respect towards those we engage with, and trust that they will show us the same level of respect (and in doing so, create a stronger relationship that moves beyond funder/grantee)
- It provides a measure of accountability in that if we have said we can't do something because of X (e.g. lack of resources) and someone can help us solve the problem of X, then our community has the knowledge to demand action.

This approach has seen us make inroads into communities that we were previously told did not engage, and turned local skeptics into powerful champions of participation.

As yet, we are not able to quantify the impact that participation makes but our new learning & participation strategy outlines exactly how we intend to go about gathering this data. We can, however qualify it with our decision-makers coming from a diversity of backgrounds, with most never having participated in their community before finding us. They always provide constructive criticism as to how we can better our processes but uniformly report positive experiences, describing our actions as giving them a “feeling of hope” and demonstrating that we “understand the demand in [my] community”.

So instead of asking BD Giving why we are always looking to be more participatory, we'd prefer to be asked “Why not?”

THE GLA

Making funding accessible to all – The Building Strong Communities Fund

The Building Strong Communities fund is part of the London Recovery Board, set up in the wake of the pandemic to enable communities to recover from the impact of covid-19.

Speakers

Amanda Lamb

Third Sector Project Manager,
Greater London Authority

Ailsa McWilliams

Director of Services and
Development, Inclusion London

Dilwara Kutan

Panel Member, Building Stronger
Communities Fund

Amanda started off saying that many smaller charities and grassroots organisations were either unaware that they can access more statutory types of funding or found the process too challenging.

The focus of the Building Strong Communities (BSC) fund is to make grants as accessible as possible to smaller charities by removing barriers. £915,000 is available to fund around 160 projects over a two-year period. At the time of the Festival, the first round of applications was going through approval stage and the first projects were expected to start from July 2022. Most of these are small enterprises that will help Londoners lead recovery in their own communities, amplify unheard voices, and increase feelings of belonging and connection with and across local communities.

Fund managers worked with equity partners to increase their reach into the target communities. They also brought community members into their advisory groups and collaborated in getting the message out about available funding. Particular attention was also paid to designing the grant application process and making it as easy as possible.

An initial eligibility quiz, for example, would quickly let applicants know if the application was worth pursuing. Limiting the number of supporting documents in the early stages then helped speed up the process. Allowing application deadlines to fall after a weekend also gave community groups, where members often had other jobs, more time to submit bids. In addition, information sessions were held, and dedicated helplines and video call conferencing options established once the fund had gone live. Associated documents were also made available in accessible formats.

Ailsa, Director of Services and Development at Inclusion London (one of the equity partners) said these added layers of support made a real difference to people in getting through the application process. She cited this as a real step in the right direction towards ironing out some of the structural inequalities that led to certain communities remaining marginalised.

Dilwara, a community panel member from Redbridge, described how increased knowledge of and access to funding had enabled groups providing vital local support during the pandemic to continue their work. She said being on the panel also gave her valuable insights into the whole process of funding applications, how they are considered and the criteria for approval. Her comments underlined how targeted grants, made simple, can help bring smaller grassroots organisations into the funding fold.

Points for reflection

- Smaller charities and grassroots organisations are often unaware of funds available to them and how to access them
- Working in conjunction with equity partners and community members can help broaden the reach of funders and encourage applications from smaller groups
- An easy and accessible application process helps encourage these smaller organisations to apply

CITY BRIDGE TRUST, THE GLA & ROSA

Valuing Voice(s) – working with communities to shape our funding practice

This session focused on the lessons from two grant programmes: the GLA’s Civil Society Roots 3 (CSR3) and Rosa’s Rise fund. Both are supported by City Bridge Trust (CBT) who wanted to fund London communities that are disproportionately impacted by injustice and inequality.

Speakers

Aasha Farah

Funding Manager, City Bridge Trust

Sam Grimmett-Batt

Funding Director, City Bridge Trust

Bethany Caunter

Community Engagement Officer,
Greater London Authority

Shabira Papain

Founder, People Street

Tony Dallas

CEO and Founder, Success Club

Naami Padi

Consultant Grant Assessor, Rosa

Caroline Crawford

Grants Manager, Rosa

Bethany, from the Greater London Authority (GLA), spoke about CSR3, a pot of £1m allocated for applicants from ten London boroughs that historically have received less funding. CSR3 specifically targeted organisations with 51% of their staff and trustees from the supported communities. This fund focused on capacity building, strengthening community networks and used a pre-application process – the “ideas camp”. Using community consultants, CSR3 helped applicants better understand the funding process, from grant writing to helping with access. The “ideas camp” increased the number of new or previously rejected applicants.

Shabira of People’s Street said she attended the ideas camp partly out of curiosity, to see if GLA was really invested in “*walking the walk*” with respect to inequalities. She was also intrigued by the active process of getting funding to excluded groups. Tony of the Success Club agreed and added that he liked the shared vision between different communities who could band together to increase their impact.


Shabira said she felt the opportunity to learn from other people’s wisdom about how to apply, the language to use and other topics, was highly beneficial. Bethany added that this was also helpful for the GLA to realise what additional support the applicants needed. Tony was struck by the strength and resolve of his fellow attendees and their desire to effect change in their communities. Bethany and Shabira agreed that “humanising” the process yielded added value, with the funder and applicants meeting face to face. Tony pointed out that pre-application workshops was a “*win-win situation*” with community groups getting to meet funders in-person and funders, in turn, “*getting more for (their) money*”. Bethany added that the cost to the funder for this pre-application process was not high, but it did require a time commitment.

Caroline from Rosa, the only UK funder dedicated to funding small grassroots organisations which champion and support women and girls, spoke about the Rise Fund. This fund arose from how the

Points for reflection

- Can your organisations use a “pre-application” process to reach new applicants?
- Can your organisation move towards a more “top down/bottom up” approach to ensure that including minority communities is not just a “tick-box” exercise?
- What other ways can you embed community voices at every point in the funding process?

pandemic disproportionately impacted Black and minoritised women and girls. Using a “critical friends” group, including Shakti Women’s Aid and BelEve, the Rise Fund supports Black and minoritised women’s organisations to become more robust in leadership and strategy. The Rise Fund has included these women at each stage, in the working group, in the assessor team and on the decision panel. Naami, a Rise Fund assessor, felt the peer-to-peer conversations between her and the applicants were invaluable to creating better results, echoing Tony’s sentiments of CSR3’s “ideas camp”. Naami also highlighted the logistical challenge of the one-to-one process and stressed the importance of funders valuing feedback from their communities to ensure that they can stay engaged.



BARKING & DAGENHAM GIVING

What we've learned from putting our community at the heart of our investments

Last year, Barking & Dagenham Giving launched an innovative project to put local people at the centre of its funding decisions. This discussion forum heard from many of the people involved in that continuing journey.

Speakers

Geraud de Ville
Chief Executive,
Barking & Dagenham Giving

Steve Green
Trustee, Barking & Dagenham Giving

Lara Norris
Senior Consultant, The Curiosity Society

Monica Needs
Head of Participation and Engagement,
London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

Kemi Oloyede
Barking & Dagenham Giving
Steering Group Member

**Members of the B&D
community steering group**

Geraud de Ville gave a little background to his organisation, which since 2020 has distributed over £250,000 in grants. In 2021, the council transferred a community fund using levies raised from new developments in the area, and a steering group of local community members was formed to play a central role in deploying those funds. In partnership with the Curiosity Society, a charitable training organisation, a six-month programme was designed to educate those community members in all aspects of fund distribution – from managing risk to impact assessment.

Kemi Oloyede, one of those community members, said she found the experience daunting at first. But, as the programme unfolded, it gave her real insights and skills, which she could use in other areas, even her own personal life. Lara Norris, from the Curiosity Society, described the process of helping to demystify some of the complex ideas behind social investment as a hopeful and joyful process.

“You always worry that you are making decisions for people rather than with people,” Steve Green, B&D Giving’s trustee said, underlining the importance of closer community engagement. Monica Needs, from the council, echoed this sentiment but explained that in practice it was not always straightforward:

“The council is not often best placed to hear those voices because, frankly, a lot of people don’t want to talk directly to us. This is why the authority decided to work through Barking & Dagenham Giving.”

Working with the community steering group in turn gave Barking & Dagenham Giving a very strong mandate for its subsequent investments. Early uncertainties about the process were quickly put aside and the “*disjoint*”, Kemi felt, that had existed between the community and the council began to be ironed out.

A particular challenge was to relay the views of those in the finance industry, whose language is often filled with jargon, into a way that everyone could understand.

Doing this, Steve Green said, had made the charity’s investment policy a much stronger document.

The greatest risk at the outset was that the steering group members might feel they were there purely in a box ticking capacity. But, almost immediately, Lara Norris told the conference, they took on board key complexities and trusted that they could make a difference. She highlighted that “*if you could bottle this whole way of working it could be revolutionary for so many people around the country.*”

Points for reflection

- Training and “upskilling” members of the community is vital if they are to feel truly involved
- The language of finance is actually quite simple but the financial sector is often guilty of making it appear complex
- The community steering group was designed to bring people in and out so that it does not become fossilised or captured by a single set of views



SECTION 3

Equity

LONDON FUNDERS & FRIENDS

Lessons on building a more diverse sector

The 2027 programme partners people who have lived experience of working-class communities with the grant-giving organisations that fund those communities. In this session, four 2027 associates met to discuss their experiences and insights within their new roles in community grant-giving organisations.

Speakers

Kayzi Ambridge
Funding Officer & 2027 Associate, The National Lottery Community Fund

Kian Goodsell
2027 Impact Associate, Seafarer's Charity

Kelvin Ha
Associate Funding Manager and 2027 Associate, City Bridge Trust

Daisy Hall
2027 Associate and Campaign Manager, The Childhood Trust

Alisha Pomells
2027 Associate and Funding Collaboration Coordinator, London Funders

The 2027 programme places lived experience associates into UK grant-making organisations to increase diversity and representation from the communities these funders support. This session brought together four 2027 associates, with London Funders' own 2027 associate, Alisha Pomells, to discuss three main themes: what they have learned, why programmes like 2027 are needed and how organisations can recruit and retain diverse staff.

Kelvin started off the discussion by emphasising how his lived experience has been instrumental to influencing funding strategies and outcomes. This was echoed by Kayzi, who further emphasised that lived experience outside the charity sector is highly transferable to understanding the funding landscape. Kian highlighted that his understanding of the monetary pressure and other difficulties the potential applicants face allows him to build bridges between funder and grantees. Daisy echoed this, adding that her experience also helped applicants in navigating the power dynamic that exists between funder and grantees.

Interestingly, the panellists discussed having "imposter syndrome", despite the value of their lived experience. They uniformly felt that this experience actually helped them to liaise better with people in the community who also have "imposter syndrome". The associates highlighted that the language funders use can often present a barrier some applicants find difficult to overcome. Having members of a grant-making team that have experience on both sides of this barrier can help overcome this. The power dynamic between the funder and an applicant also presents a barrier and Daisy spoke about how these relationships can be emotionally taxing for the communities who are very reliant on the funding they receive. The panellists all emphasised that developing relationships with the community, using regular check-ins with grantees and application support are all centrally important for funders so that they can achieve a greater impact.

All of the panellists emphasised the need for greater transparency. They also highlighted the need for organisations to develop better, more dynamic relationships with their communities. The panellists

observed that the pandemic resulted in more flexibility and fluidity between funders and their applicants, building much needed trust. They hope that these changes are maintained after as we recover from the pandemic.

How organisations can recruit and keep people that have lived experience was also discussed. The panellists felt it was important to help lived experience staff with the language barrier presented by the sector, as they will likely be unfamiliar with the language of the organisation. They also emphasised the need for organisations to invest time and support to better integrate lived experience staff into the organisation's culture. The panellists uniformly felt that having people with lived experience throughout all of the roles in an organisation – from trustees to support staff – is important for serving their communities. Funders should remember the most important people are the communities that they serve, not the organisation's infrastructure.

Points for reflection

- What plans do you have in place to keep and recruit employees that have lived experience of the communities you serve?
- How will you prioritise listening to your recruits who have lived experience?
- How will you make sure that what you have learned from lived experience recruits is permanently incorporated into your organisation's culture and structure?

GRANT GIVERS' MOVEMENT

Ethics in philanthropy

The Grant Givers' Movement (GGM) is a collective of grant makers working within the sector. GGM has published data gathered from a survey of people working in the sector about Ethics in Philanthropy. From this, only 8% of respondents thought their foundations were doing enough to combat inequity. Over 70% thought that foundations needed reform. This session was an informative discussion around improving practice within the sector for increased transparency.

Speakers

Ciorsdan Brown

Grants Manager, FILE Foundation

Ama Marchal

Grants Officer, Old Dart Foundation

Hannan Ali

Funding Manager, City Bridge Trust

The Grant Givers' Movement (GGM) was born from the recognition that many people working within the sector often go unheard. The GGM challenges the status quo by mining the experiences of those working within the sector. They have published an Ethics in Philanthropy report, which presents the results of a survey of 166 people in a range of different philanthropic roles across different foundations.

They used a 48-question multiple-choice survey. The questions were derived from a "jam board" session drawn from GGM members about the ethics in philanthropy. In the "jam board", they discussed questions such as whether foundations were a *"tool for good vs. a tool for power,"* if investment practices were ethical and whether *"philanthropy should exist in 100 years"*.

70% of respondents thought that foundations needed reform. Around 80% believed that foundations benefited from harmful practices in the past and that these foundations should pay reparations. However, interestingly, most of these

respondents could not specify the origin of their foundation's wealth. This, according to Hannan, *"signifies that organisations need to have greater transparency about the origins of their wealth"*.

The survey respondents thought their foundations lacked transparency – only 41% felt their trustees were recruited fairly. Trustees with the least recruitment transparency were thought to have the most power within their organisations. The report also revealed that respondents felt that foundations were more accountable to their trustees and senior staff rather than to communities that they are meant to serve. Only 15% of respondents cited communities as the foundations' priority. Further, only 8% of the respondents thought their foundations were doing enough to tackle inequality. Many respondents noted that the bulk of equity work is done by those who just happen to have an interest and is not mandated from the top. This lack of support is thought to be a "key barrier" to progress. The respondents also felt that foundations were poor at dealing with whistleblowing, harassment, and bullying issues. According

to the survey, many foundations had no policy in place for dealing with these issues. Respondents were also concerned with the power imbalance that exists in foundations which is centred on a lack of transparency.

On a more positive note, the GGM report highlights some initiatives which are improving transparency and addressing inequality practices. The hope is this report will help improve funding practices become more transparent and equitable practices and that good practice will become embedded within the sector.

Points for reflection

- Can you have a role swap scheme?
This might allow a greater level of empathy and understanding between people in different roles
- What can you do to be more transparent about your wealth and investments as a foundation?
- How might you deal with reparations to a community that your foundation has in the past harmed in some way?

LEARNING INSIGHT

Reflections from Resourcing Racial Justice

Nusrat Faizullah and Farzana Khan from Resourcing Racial Justice reflect on what they've learnt from providing investment to Black and global majority communities.

Resourcing Racial Justice [RRJ] was set up in 2020 during the first wave of covid-19 as a radical alternative emergency-response fund and disrupting intervention. It set out to resource anti-racist groups “on-the-ground” and sustain racial justice work, at a time of ever-deepening crises that disproportionately harms and impacts Black and global majority communities.

Chronic divestment from racial justice work means both our strategies to address systemic racism and our communities are set up to fail. Ranging from being overworked and burnt out from responding to frontline needs, to enduring the heightened escalating trauma from oppression as well as the rigour of trying to build alternatives in hostile conditions. Even in the face of the pandemic highlighting the disproportionate impact on Black and global majority communities due to structural oppression and failure, resources weren't moving towards communities most in need.

While we hold a position that “the revolution will not be funded” we also strategically understand the reparative responsibility of philanthropy to mobilise its resources to where it is most needed and contribute towards a vision of social and economic justice. Ordinary people

should not have the primary responsibility to resource structural change when philanthropic capitalism means the funding worlds sits on billions, avoids taxation and generates enormous profit via investments. Alongside this, structural racism actively prevents resources moving to radical racial justice work making this an issue of economic justice and democracy too. UK philanthropy has a historical precedence to not address racism beyond diversity or connect to its colonial legacy, for example the Charities Commission doesn't legally recognise “race” as charitable. The sector is operating from a logic that racial justice work is “risky” and “too political”, thereby racialising risk and our communities.

At RRJ we used the strategy of raising and redistributing resources from funders demonstrably committed to racial justice work and who signed up for longer accountability programme with us. This was to prevent us from becoming a conduit to move money and absolving funders from their own responsibility doing this necessary anti-racist work. A total of £1 million was raised from funders ThirtyPercy and Lankelly Chase, plus £100k+ from the RRJ crowd-funder to redistribute. Alongside ThirtyPercy and Lankelly Chase, John Ellerman Foundation and Polden and Puckham also contributed

to cover RRJs operating and administrative costs. In a five-week period we received over 1,400 applications from unregistered groups, community based organisations, established charities, new projects, artists, ecosystem builders from around the UK many of which were applying for funding for the first time. We made 58 investments ranging for £3,500 to £50,000. We wanted to get funding to unregistered groups and individuals, focusing on the strength and potential of an idea rather than a polished application, while also providing funding for sustainability and not just for new projects.

Over the past two years, beyond finance we worked to build a multi layered strategy to strengthen the power of racial justice work as a multi systems approach touching on many of the key players and sites for making social transformation. This included but is not limited to:

- Mobilising resources in a time of continued crisis and building transferable models, systems and approaches to do this and share with others
- Building greater transparency between philanthropy and movements to democratise power dynamics

- To rethink and reframe what resourcing could look like in nuanced ways beyond DEI and performative gestures
- Introducing and applying the framing of accountability and transformation to funders as a strategy for racial justice
- Strategically trying to build a powerbase amongst movement and racial justice leaders and groups from the grassroots and frontline
- Strategically creating connections between allies and other key players in a vision and strategy for resourcing racial justice more broadly and long-term
- Working on visioning economic justice rooted in racial equity and justice

A key component of this was supporting and sustaining our awardees beyond the fund and monetary investment. We wanted the process to be built from a place of trust and as light touch as possible. Whilst we couldn't change the processes and laws we needed to operate in, we worked closely with awardees to incrementally make change and build transparency around systems that appeared to be inevitable.

The RRJ fund has now closed and the RRJ community are finalising the wind-down of this innovative project while building tools and resources to equip and catalyse the work of resourcing racial justice going forward with peers across movements, fields and sectors. To keep mobilising resources towards repair, justice and liberation, our Learning and Legacy website and reports will be shared in early summer, which open sources our model whilst also celebrating the broader racial justice movement.

Below lists a few of our learnings:

Understanding Philanthropies role in the ecosystem – including racial, social and climate justice repair and responsibility

Funders see themselves as a conduit for dispersing funding when a more critical and honest understanding is that they maintain existing structures. Continuing to progress as they are only advances the colonial and capitalist project, which by its nature inherently harms Black and global majority people.

The funding world cannot ignore the weight of its role and responsibility to resource visionary and revolutionary work proactively, whilst also working to dismantle these structures of oppression. In a time of escalating crisis, we do not have time to misallocate resources and not understand the role we all have to play. This means getting behind the most radical efforts doing this work and absorbing the challenges and risks that come with that so frontline groups and people don't have to.

The philanthropic sector needs to understand there is no one way to resource racial justice work

When we approached this work we recognised that we were contributing to a multitude of efforts to work towards social and racial justice and routinely we were reminded that there was no one way. From resourcing rest to prevent burnout of our most radical activists and organisers, to sustaining longer term visions for racial justice. Within this approach, an effort needs to be invested in the nuances, impacts, needs and strategies across the multiple ways that racism affects our communities across intersecting oppressions e.g. class, disability etc.

This also speaks to the point that there isn't a homogeneous understanding of what racial justice work means and this needs to continuously be shaped by Black and global majority people, not defined by funders. RRJ continues to be only one effort to deepen how we do this work, as well as understand what racial justice work is.

Moving Risk and Responsibility away from Racial Justice Work

Racial justice is always seen as deeply political and risky. It is the notion of risk that is both used to maintain racism but also to exclude radical and progressive work. Our work increasingly became about not just redistributing resources towards racial justice but building transparency around the risks to our communities that becomes the barrier in accessing charitable funding. Rather than passing this on we are starting to understand how we can become responsible for holding this risk and undoing these structures. Many of the unregistered groups we have funded have already told us that our funding has helped them to secure mainstream funding for the first time as we have managed to reduce the risk connected to them. However, they are still subject to scrutiny and funders trying to deradicalise their work by forcing them into outdated models of charity, that dilute our impact and effectiveness.

SHEILA MCKECHNIE FOUNDATION

It's all about power

How can we grow the voice of Londoners with experience of poverty and inequality, building their capacity to influence social change? This was one of the key questions the Sheila McKechnie Foundation's "Power Project" wanted to answer.

Speakers

Sue Tibball

CEO, Sheila McKechnie Foundation

Sarah Thomas

Head of Power and Participation,
Sheila McKechnie Foundation

The background, Sue Tibballs explained, was that while many people use their first-hand experiences to drive social change, and organisations are keen to include them, there are also negative consequences to this.

"It can limit the way in which someone is perceived and that in turn further restricted their role in bringing about change. Taking someone with lived experience into parliamentary or board meetings is very powerful. But for that person it can seem as if their life is being used purely in service of the organisation." Additionally, those with "lived experiences" often found the language of social organisations off-putting and funding hard to access.

This raises some uncomfortable questions about the legitimacy of the sector and the organisations within it:

- Why do social sector organisations not look or sound like the communities they exist to serve?
- Are they in danger of losing their power and agency unless they do?

"It's all about power", a guide to thinking about power to achieve deeper solidarity for social change, was produced after two years' research, which involved over 300 contributions from across the sector.

Presenting some of its key points, the Sheila McKechnie Foundation's Sarah Thomas told attendees:

"We want to introduce a new way of thinking about power as something which is fluid and dynamic, a network of relationships which is in itself neutral but has the ability to create or resist change."

Sarah outlined two main tools for change:

- A power lens – through which to examine both traditional and more dynamic power structures
- Conversations – about the way power works and how it can be transformed for positive effect.

There now exists, she concluded, a rare opportunity to create new beginnings and to find ways to work in greater solidarity with the people whose lives they aim to improve, shoring up the social sector's legitimacy in the process.

In a brief post presentation discussion, the point was made that one of the ways organisations are already acting to create a new power dynamic is by employing people with "lived experiences" within their organisations. Paying for their time or expenses was another way of professionalising their contributions.

Points for reflection

- Inclusion of representatives with lived experience can limit perceptions and in turn limit their roles in effecting change
- Unless it tries to forge deeper solidarity with the communities it aims to serve, the social sector risks undermining its own legitimacy
- Organisations need to start to examine and discuss their own power structures as well as find ways to create a more fluid power dynamic

LEARNING INSIGHT

A change in funders' attitude towards BAME organisations?

Ade Sawyerr, Management Consultant at Equinox Consulting reflects on lessons from their review of the funding going to BAME community organisations in Southwark.

The Government is finding that Black Asian Minority Ethnic, a term used to ensure that funding reaches beneficiaries in disadvantaged communities is not very much liked now that it has been shortened to its acronym BAME, to denote identity. Whilst no substitute terminology will replace this all-encompassing but ill-defined term, the whole issue of access to funding for community organisations from deprived communities has been brought into sharper focus.

The COVID pandemic exposed health inequalities affecting BAME communities disproportionately, but the emergency funding experienced revealed the struggle by mainstream community organisations to reach these communities. Southwark Council's response to the George Floyd murder was to initiate the Southwark Standing Together project that called for a review of funding to BAME community organisations.

The review by Equinox Consulting held discussions with councillors, commissioners, and community leaders and received responses from about 50 community organisations, some of whom

participated in a focus group as well. The review asked several questions of the respondents about the existence of structural barriers that affect BAME community organisations when they apply for funding and came up with some interesting lessons for funders.

Some of the questions emerging from the review go to the heart of why funding is provided by local authorities in the first place. What are their priorities? Is the funding only meant to deliver services to beneficiaries in deprived areas or is it to engender some level of community development activity? To what extent do funders monitor whether the funding they provide actually reaches the beneficiaries that they are meant to assist? Whilst it is recognised that there are more funding applications than funds available, what is the real basis for risk assessment and due diligence? We know that this often pitches smaller organisations with knowledge of the beneficiaries and effective solutions against larger organisations with a track record of delivery and efficient organisational abilities.

If indeed funders intend to engage in partnership with community organisations to resolve social issues that cannot be solved by the generalist approach of local authorities and the commercial approach by private sector companies, must smaller local-based organisations not be assisted to develop capacity so that they support their communities? Why is there no room to partner these smaller BAME-led organisations to co-create and co-deliver projects or fund specialists to help them in funding applications or development partners to help them run their organisations well?

These questions – some of which were asked by potential applicants – were largely unanswered by funders and perhaps that goes to the core of why there is some negativity towards applying for funding and why some of these groups have the perception of being excluded from networks and groups that enable other larger mainstream organisation to get funding. It's also difficult to counter this perception when most funders are not able to track whether their funds does in fact reach beneficiaries from Black and Asian Minority Ethnic communities.

What became evident in the analysis of the findings was that whilst the internal and external characteristics of small groups acted as barriers to funding, the attitudes of organisations and funders alike created further challenges.

This matrix of characteristics and attitudes captures some of the structural barriers that BAME community organisations face in accessing funding and summarises the major findings of the review (see the table below).

We concluded that most people from BAME communities did not want to be identified by the acronym BAME. The council recognises that many people from BAME communities reside in areas of deprivation within the borough and accepts that BAME community organisations may have a better reach within these communities and have also decided that the full Black, Asian Minority

Ethnic should be used, rather than the acronym. The council also agrees that the stringent approach to assessing applications and rigorous due diligence may best be replaced by collecting and analysing information on the successes of BAME applications to enable it to comply with its public sector equality duty. The lack of core funding has greatly aggravated the issue of sustainability of some of these groups, whose communities they represent lack specialist capacity-building.

We recommended that Southwark Council simplify the application process, adding more clarity and providing funding for specialist organisations to assist those applying for funding. We also recommended the collation of a register of community organisations with the protected characteristics and the adoption of a more nuanced approach to the assessment of funding applications

with more focus on the effectiveness of the projects in reducing deprivation and ringfencing some funding for community organisations from the BAME community. We also recommend that members of the BAME communities must be visible in the assessment process in line with the public sector equality duty.

The learning from this review suggests that changes in attitudes by both funders and organisations could result in better success at funding for BAME community organisations.

Southwark Council, along with Southwark BME community leaders, Equinox Consulting and Rocket Science examined these issues further in their session during the Festival of Learning (more details on page 50).

Barriers to funding for Black Asian Minority Ethnic Community and Voluntary Groups

Factors	Characteristics	Attitudes
Internal	Organisational characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small and difficult to get sufficient funding because starting from a low base • Lack of capacity to apply for funding • Struggle with compliance on governance issues • Multi-focussed trying to solve all the problems for the community at the same time • Still moving from the informal to the formal 	Organisational attitudes to funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult concept – need to spend a lot of time on fundraising • Difficult content – too much work in navigating the different funding sources • Difficult process – shouting and complaining will not always help • Negativity based on experiences with the disappearance of core funding and less competitive grants
Barriers	Other external characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of networks • Exclusion from formal and informal funding networks • Consortium working needs too much support • Perception of discrimination 	Funders' attitude to BAME groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stereotyping of certain groups, racist discrimination • Do not think they can manage the funds – too much due diligence • Too much scrutiny • Priorities may not be the same for BAME communities

THE GLA

Lessons from the Sport Unites Fund – designing equitable and innovative grant processes

This interactive session looked at the challenges faced in designing equitable and innovative funding processes and the lessons learned from the Mayor of London’s Sport Unites Fund. The fund was launched in 2018 with the aim of bringing people together and improving lives through sport. It has funded a variety of projects with a combination of single micro grants and larger continuing grants.

Speaker

Paulina Turcan

Senior Partnerships Officer,
Civil Society and Support,
Greater London Authority

P Paulina Turcan explained that the project had thrown up three key challenges:

- How to support organisations that struggle to get funded, despite delivering innovative work
- How to fund organisations that deliver the best work rather than the ones that invest in the best bid writers
- How to ensure funds help support organisational sustainability

Smaller groups often find it hard to portray what they do on paper and would rather speak to someone. The Sport Unites Fund had already addressed this by adopting a simple “expression of interest form” for small grants with a follow up conversation for successful applicants. The idea was to ensure people were not put off applying

by having to supply a lot of detail from the outset. Instead, the detail could be provided in the follow-up conversation, a process that was easier since covid-19 had made people more used to digital meetings.

Another attendee raised the issue of language barriers in these conversations but again, Paulina said it was mostly easier for people to express their intentions in conversation than in a larger piece of writing. The success of this approach had led to more applications from younger and grassroots organisation unused to formal types of bidding for grants. For larger funds, Sports Unites applicants followed a more traditional route, although community groups were asked to review the application forms in order to eliminate as much jargon as possible. Although

Points for reflection

- Simplifying the grant application process is key to bringing in smaller grassroots organisations
- The traditional written grant application may deter groups able to deliver some of the best services
- Making funding applications more equal and accessible at every stage of the process is key

they weren't able to do this in the current round of funding, Paulina recommended encouraging and training grant assessors with lived experience. This had previously proved extremely useful in creating a fairer decision-making process.

The most important lesson learned, Paulina concluded, was the need to look at every part of the application and decision-making process and try to make it more equitable at each stage. To this end, they had established an organisational and capacity development programme to run alongside the fund with the aim of supporting organisations beyond the work they were originally funded for.

CITY BRIDGE TRUST

Lessons from funded organisations on community and equity

The aim of this session was to learn how funders can work with the communities they serve in a more equitable way and to amplify the voice of funded organisations.

Speakers

Michelle Daley

Director, Alliance for Inclusive Education

Emma Kendall

Development Manager, Clean Break

Jen Durrant

Impact and Learning Officer,
City Bridge Trust

Melody Powell

Inclusion Champion Development Worker,
Alliance for Inclusive Education

Beverly

Member of Advisory Group,
Clean Break

Anna Herrmann

Artistic Director, Clean Break

Jen Durrant began by illustrating the difference between equitable and equal with an image of people trying to pick apples from a tree. In theory, everyone had access to the same apples, but some people were smaller than others and needed a leg up. Creating equity is about recognising that different people face varying obstacles to what they want to achieve.

Solicited views on what makes an organisation equitable included seeking out under-represented groups and pro-actively including them. This was something Clean Break, a theatre company working with women caught up in the criminal justice system, had tried to address by the creation of a Members Advisory group.

Beverly, a contributor to the group, which meets twice monthly, told the forum it was a long but useful process.

“If members are going to feel heard we have to take the time to build trust and allow everyone in the group to share their experiences. Things don’t simply happen overnight.”

Listening to service users rather than making assumptions was important, Melody Powell said, particularly when targeting young people. *“We need to work with them rather than simply decide what is best for them”.*

To ensure organisations act better on “intersectionality”, Michelle Daley highlighted the need for organisations working with disabled groups to ensure the experiences of users are not homogenised.

“Disabled people have a whole different range of experiences. Many funders focus on singular issues, where people rarely lead singular lives.”

Michelle also pinpointed some of the barriers to an equitable approach to accessing funding.

“In the field of disability, young people are left out of the decision-making process from such an early age that they simply don’t have skills others develop naturally during their life.”

This creates a definite disadvantage when it came to the funding application process.

Emma Kendall from Clean Break said funders were generally more invested in outcomes than the set up and it is the long-term work of the organisations that makes these outcomes possible. She highlighted a need for more unrestricted funding and flexible funding from funders. This was, many agreed, one of the positive things to emerge from the pandemic. Funders realised there needed to be more wiggle room with both fund allocations and project timeframes. Another plus was a greater willingness from funders to talk to funded groups in person. This helped to break down some of the traditional barriers between the two sides.

Points for reflection

- The importance of building grantee members into funders’ processes as much as possible
- A move towards core funding might help organisations deliver more over time, acknowledging that resilience building takes time
- Work is needed to remove barriers to funding since there is no point offering funding if those who most need it cannot access it

SOUTHWARK COUNCIL

Lessons from working in partnership to improve equity and reduce inequality

In the wake of the George Floyd murder and Black Lives Matter campaign, Southwark Council commissioned two reports: one to examine the issues of racial inequality in grant applications and another to examine how effective the councils grant investment is. This session looked at the lessons which emerged from these reports.

Speakers

Ade Sawyer

Management Consultant,
Equinox Consulting

John Griffiths

Founding Director, Rocket Science

David Reid

VCS Support Officer,
Community Southwark

Gisela Valle

Director, Latin American Network

Cedric Whilby

Director, Dare to Disrupt

Andy Matheson

Senior Commissioning Officer,
Southwark Council

Jess Leech

Resident Participant Coordinator,
Southwark Council

That the discussion was at times uncomfortable and impassioned underlined the entrenched levels of inequity that community members felt needed addressing further. Participants reported several significant challenges from the start of the process.

Ade Sawyer from Equinox consulting, which looked at the barriers to funding, reported one of the initial obstacles was in identifying BME organisations and getting them to participate, especially in the midst of the pandemic. John Griffiths, from Rocket Science, who looked at the effectiveness of Southwark's existing investments and grants, cited extreme poverty data. The council makes £4m of community investments annually but he said there was very little to show what kind of groups this money went to or how effective it was.

Amongst the community representatives attending, Gisela identified a disconnect between the day-to-day support community groups are given and the decision-making process. Cedric said the biggest challenge he faced was in believing that these reports were more than "box ticking" and likely to bring about any significant change. His views were echoed by David Reid, whose organisation provides a range of advice services to charity, community groups and individuals.

"23 years since the MacPherson report into the response to the Stephen Lawrence murder and several other inquiries since, it should not have required the murder of another Black man or a pandemic for local authorities to tackle issues of institutional racism."

Jess Leech agreed that it was important, not to simply have carried out the reports, but to act and keep shining the spotlight on the change that is needed. If these two reports were to make a significant difference participants agreed the following needed to happen:

- Structural barriers to BME groups needed to be removed from the funding application process and in some cases the entire models of funding organisations needed to be rethought
- Community members needed to be brought into the grantmaking decision process much earlier and these reports need to drive a further conversation with the local communities rather than lead to what Cedric described as “*more institutional amnesia*”
- The council needed a clearer strategic purpose for its community investment programme, co-produced with the community and making better use of data

On a positive note, the council had already invested in a new on-line grant management platform, with potential to collect and analyse data. This will help to switch some of the focuses of its investments.

Points for reflection

- Barriers and racism still exist on too many levels, many of them institutional
- The effectiveness of the grant programme requires a much clearer strategic purpose informed by better data
- The findings of these reports must not be lost but turned into actions which will address inequalities community members felt have existed for far too long

DEI DATA STANDARD

What we've learned so far, and where are we going next?

360Giving and The Social Investment Consultancy (TSIC), shared their experience of developing the DEI Data Standard. The Standard is a shared framework created by the DEI Data Group that aims to improve data collection on grants that are led by, target, or support groups experiencing structural inequity.

Speakers

Tania Cohen
Chief Executive, 360Giving

Bonnie Chiu
Managing Director,
The Social Investment Consultancy

The DEI Data Standard aims to:

- Improve experience/reduce burden on applicants
- Allow aggregation and comparison of data between funders
- Enable measurement of change over time

Launched in 2020, there are 25 organisations involved, including Big Issue Invest, Power to Change and Comic Relief. Tania, from 360Giving, noted that a standardised way of collecting data was imperative to address structural inequality. The intention is to inform, not to judge, and to help funders monitor their practices.

The DEI standard has a shared taxonomy approach, so that the data on equity is standardised and not a “tick box” exercise. There are three levels of application:

- Primary service users of the project
- Mission and purpose about the specific communities served
- Leadership – Trustees and senior managers

The DEI standard guidance included how to collect data in the application process and explaining to applicants why it was being collected, language on asking key questions and taxonomy choices, and allowing applicants to opt out of sharing their personal information.

The standard aims to capture all aspects of inequities, focusing on most of the characteristics protected in the 2010 UK Equalities Act. Socio-economic class was also added to the scope. A list of groups facing inequity, including migrants and disabled people, were determined through a consultation process with 20 representatives from the population and pan-population groups.

Points for reflection

- How to use this data to inform change and better equity practice?
- How to analyse the data and the meta data collected from the DEI standard?
- How to work towards more standardised equity practices?

The criteria used in the DEI standard are:

- 75% primary service users should be intentionally targeted from a particular identity that an organisation seeks to support
- Mission of the foundation should be explicitly stated in governing documents
- 75% of the board and 50% of the staff should be representative of the communities that they serve, through self-identification

For example, if an organisation supports disabled people, 75% of their board and 50% of their staff should be disabled. This approach will also allow for intersectionality to be addressed. The 75% mark was a point of contention, but the DEI group wants to aim high in order to effect change.

Some of the challenges of creating this standard included:

- Language still being debated – no widely agreed alternative to BAME
- Monitoring class is too complex for tick-box style forms
- Getting the right level of detail for meaningful categories to analyse
- Funders keen to capture diversity, but grantees wary about the burden of providing that information
- Greater divergence in implementation than anticipated
- Database development lengthy and difficult and need to deal with how to address the meta-data when some questions are omitted by funders

Despite these challenges, the data is being collected currently and will be published soon. Once the data is collected the analysis will be underway and 360Giving will be running workshops on how to use this data.

THE GLA

What role can funders play in supporting the social justice ecosystem in London?

The Greater London Authority (GLA), Trust for London and Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust have spent three years focusing on supporting equality-led organisations. Representatives from these organisations explored the lessons learned, future plans, and insights into working together to create a better funding ecosystem.

Speakers

Farah Elahi

Head of Community Engagement,
Greater London Authority

Ali Torabi

Programme Manager – Rights & Justice,
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Ugo Ikokwu

Grants Manager, Trust for London

The Civil Society Roots (CSR) fund facilitated projects that support a healthier social justice ecosystem through short-term “riskier” grants. The CSR fund is aimed at organisations that are tackling social justice issues, to help them create better infrastructure. According to Farah, one of the challenges was convincing the organisations that they were serious about funding strategic goals, not specific projects. Farah also reflected that relatively small amounts of money can make a big difference to small charities.

Ugo, from Trust for London, spoke about the £4m Racial Justice Fund (RJF), which is focused on Black and minoritised Londoners. This fund was inspired by Black Lives Matter and covid-19, which brought many systematic inequalities into focus. Work is needed to capitalise on the momentum created by these movements. Ugo emphasised that this fund is not for service delivery. It is for infrastructure. The RJF fund seeks to increase funds

and advocacy for supporting charities led by Black and minoritised communities.

Ali, from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT), talked about the Rights & Justice funding – which focuses on racial justice, migration and human rights. JRCT also funds advocacy and campaigning not service delivery. Due to austerity, many advocacy groups have disappeared or have been severely weakened. JRCT is piloting a participatory grant scheme with grassroots organisations, where the JRCT trustees have stepped back and redistributed power from the bottom up. Ali also spoke about how the pandemic influenced the need for funding around racial injustice issues.

All of these funders are keen to identify the “holes” in the pipeline between funding, advocacy and service delivery. “*Funders are part of the work, not separate from the work*”, reflected Farah.

Farah also noted that funders can be slow to react and needed to be more spontaneous, funders are a step behind what the system needs. Ugo thinks this will take a big shift in thinking, but that the seeds of flexibility have been laid by funders' response to the pandemic. Interconnectivity between people and systems are needed for this to work, funders ask this of grantees so should be asking it of themselves. The culture of learning, to solve problems, needs to be developed. Funders need to listen to those who are at the coal face *"if this had been done in the past"*, according to one webinar participant, *"we could have been more prepared."*

Points for reflection

- Where are the other gaps in the funding pipeline? How can they be filled with funding to create more effective organisations?
- How do we do things in a timely way, so we are not one-step behind current movements and community needs?

LONDON FUNDERS & THE CENTRE
FOR EFFECTIVE PHILANTHROPY

Lessons from across the UK and the US on funder support for Black and minoritised communities

This joint conversation was about lessons learned from funders across the US and the UK in supporting Black and minoritised communities, looking particularly at the origins of wealth in philanthropy, and how funders shift power.

Speakers

James Banks

Chief Executive, London Funders

Ellie Buteau

Vice President – Research,
The Center for Effective Philanthropy

Sufina Ahmad

Director, John Ellerman Foundation

Marcella J Tillett

Vice President of Programs and
Partnerships, Brooklyn Community
Foundation

Marcella spoke about Brooklyn Community Foundation's (BCF) commitment to racial justice "in a society founded on white supremacy". They consult local residents and leaders, focussing on understanding racial inequities and supporting healing and empowerment. BCF uses a participatory decision-making process because the "people closest the problems are closest to the solutions". 87% of their grants are held by people of colour.

Sufina spoke about the John Ellerman Foundation's (JEF) focus on improving accountability and transparency, moving from "a reactive space into a pro-active space" around diversity, equity and inclusion. They are having this conversation at all levels – hiring, investing, and grantmaking.

The Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) provides data and programmes for donors to be more effective. From their

analysis in 2021, 41% of US foundations had increased funding to black and minority communities. Data on boards found that more diverse boards support more diverse grantees.

Sufina spoke about JEF's work to uncover the source of their wealth. They want to do this transparently and share their response publicly to use a dialogue-based approach to, perhaps, paying reparations. Her advice is to "just do it" as this can only add to "the strength and richness of who you are".

BCT is doing similar digging, Marcella pointed out that "in capitalist societies there is no way to accumulate this amount of wealth without extraction, exploitation and harm". She added that there's not much accountability in philanthropy and discussing how wealth has been amassed is important if we want to talk about equity and justice.

The panellists discussed that representation is not necessarily enough to make grantmaking more equitable. Sufina emphasised making culture changes so that organisations listen more effectively to more diverse voices and that progression and retention are just as important as hiring. For applicants, it is also important that funders learn to be a more supportive partner. She advocated organisations identifying a “baseline” of funder practice in these areas and stressed that this is not a “one-grant” issue, but a systematic issue.

Marcella spoke about funders being excited about diverse recruiting, yet not giving these employees the space and support they need and not listening to their voices. This tends to tokenise people. At BCF, their racial justice working group looks at compensation and decision-making, working towards retaining those with lived experience. Marcella also emphasised that matching and coaching is needed, even if you have to go outside of the organisation to find this.

Ellie said that funders need to actively be taking steps to become more diverse. In the US there has been no real change in the CEOs who are people of colour, with 11% in 2018 and 12% in 2021. This same trend is seen in staff where in 2017 26% of US foundation’s staff were people of colour and 29% in 2021.

Ellie emphasised that change is possible, the pandemic showed this and has led to funders giving unrestricted support after years of not doing so. Marcella advised the need to be strategic and activate board members to push forward movement, even if it is just one idea.

Points for reflection

- How can the learning of the pandemic help with funding social justice issues?
- How can trustees be engaged to help push diversity?
- Consider investigating the origins of wealth to “right the wrongs” of philanthropic wealth



SECTION 4

Place

LOCALMOTION

Lessons on collaborating in place

LocalMotion is aimed at supporting communities in a more joined-up way and building collaborations for systemic change. Using a bottom-up approach, six funders and six places are developing a new model of working together more effectively.

Speakers

William Hoyle
Trustee, City Bridge Trust

Sam Grimmett-Batt
Funding Director, City Bridge Trust

Kathleen Kelly
Director of Collaboration,
LocalMotion

M LocalMotion comprises six funders who are invested in building a new bottom-up approach to funding. A key focus is affecting systemic change in the way that communities are funded. At its core, according to Kathleen, “relationships are systemic change” and this collaborative model is set to redistribute the power relationship between funders and grantees. LocalMotion is a work in progress and they are “*building the car as they drive it.*”

The genesis of LocalMotion was from the six executives of the foundations involved who wanted to work together with their grantees by “*building and maintaining trust*” between the funder and the communities they serve. Sam, from City Bridge Trust, added they ideally want to “*build the car so that anyone can drive it.*”

Crucially, LocalMotion includes trustees. This helps keep foundations and their trustees accountable, redistributing power by breaking the top-down structure so often seen in the sector. If trustees are included from the beginning, this ensures greater investment of those trustees. Trustees are often caught between tradition and innovation. William, a trustee of City Bridge Trust, noted that funders have an obligation to take risks. In addition to greater funder accountability, this model creates two-way relationship between the funder and grantee.

Having six separate funders is also beneficial as it makes this approach feel much less risky to these organisations. This is also an iterative process between funders and grantees, where they proceed “step by step” in order to redress mistakes and work towards having the highest impact.

This new model doesn't solely focus only on funds but also focuses on "tasks". According to William, building relationship networks is highly important. Sam added "everybody wants the money to make the most difference that it can" and these advocates believe that the systemic change introduced by LocalMotion will lead to a better and more effective funding model.

The speakers all highlighted several lessons for the future:

- Include trustees from the beginning: the two-way relationship leads to greater accountability
- Redistribute the power balance – the "learning together" aspect is beneficial to greater understanding between funder and grantee
- It's not all about the money but also about networks and developing trust

Points for reflection

- Can this model be extended to more coalitions of funders?
- Does this model encourage "big thinking"?
Can more complex problems be tackled?
- What are ways that organisations can include this model to develop new funding schemes?

RENAISI

Looking beyond London – UK and international perspectives on place-based funding

This session was a discussion between two panellists from organisations based in Montreal and New York about the lessons they have learned from collective funding models.

Speakers

Rotem Ayalon

Assistant Director,
Collective Impact Project,
United Way Centraide Montreal

Kerry McCarthy

Vice President For
Philanthropic Initiatives,
The New York Community Trust

The Collective Impact Project in Montreal unites eight foundations with local authorities. Using programmes designed by and for the community, the project pools its resources to decrease poverty and social exclusion. The New York Community Trust (NYCT) also uses a collaborative model, which allows the flexibility to address both short-term and very long-term issues, such as a 30-year push to correct funding inequality in New York schools. Kerry, from NYCT, emphasised the importance of having a “strong nucleus of support”, that funds need to evolve over time and that no one donor should control the funding process and “that foundations that are funding together are learning together”.

Rotem, from CIP, said their efforts are focused by using a collective impact model, which involves community round tables that includes members from different communities in Montreal. The CIP works with these communities to build their capacity and increase collaboration with funders. Capacity building is essential for funding as well as for sharing information around evaluation and learning. This model ensures that goals are collaboratively decided and that funding helps the collective not just individuals in the community.

NYCT creates non-profit community collaborative entities. For instance, NYCT fund artists from neighbourhoods not normally represented in New York-wide cultural initiatives by funding “town halls” so that communities could feed into the “master plan” of New York’s Commissioner of Cultural Affairs. This funding was essential in providing a conduit to local government from these communities.

A challenge is breaking down the power dynamic, which NYCT has tackled by engaging communities with funders. NYCT also focuses on capacity building and advocacy, such as services for all disabled children in all New York schools. In Montreal, CIP works with the municipal council of the city, which is not led by the government so it's more sustainable, to help with wider term changes. This ensures that Montreal is an "active" partner aligning to its neighbourhoods. Each partner knowing their role was essential and collaboration from the beginning was key according to Rotem.

Another challenge highlighted was donors letting go of "ownership". "*You have to be flexible*", said Kerry. Collaborative models take time and organisations have to have "*staying power*". Rotem also noted that explaining that change takes time (and they fund for this time) helped manage expectations. According to Kerry, if you go too fast to satisfy the funders, it fails to build trust with the communities so nothing ends up working.

Points for reflection

- How could you use the collaborative model to scale your funding to help entire populations in cities for poverty relief?
- How can we further the dialogue between communities and funders/donors to achieve better gains and more aligned policy?
- How can donors and individuals be helped to leave their ego at the door so you can work better in collaboration?



SECTION 5

Process

FOUNDATION PRACTICE RATING

Lessons from rating foundations on accountability, transparency, and diversity

In March 2022, the Foundation Practice Rating – which assesses UK grantmaking foundations’ performance in transparency, accountability and staff and trustee diversity – was launched. This is a joint project between Giving Evidence and 10 UK foundations led by Friends Provident Foundation. The rating is based on assessing publicly available information and is aimed at encouraging UK foundations to improve their practices in these areas.

Speakers

Danielle Walker-Palmour

Director, Friends Provident Foundation

Caroline Fiennes

Director, Giving Evidence

The Foundation Practice Rating (FPR) was born from Danielle’s frustration about the “slow progress towards better practice” among foundations, especially with respect to diversity and accountability. Friends Provident Foundation, supported by other funders, partnered with Giving Evidence to develop a rating system to assess foundations on their performance around diversity, accountability and transparency. The aim of the FPR is to create an incentive for change.

The FPR is underpinned by three main principles:

- Taking the perspective of the prospective applicant
- Creating a rating not a ranking
- Objectivity

The FPR used only publicly available information. The FPR is a rating – all foundations can potentially be in the top or bottom tier. To maintain objectivity, the assessment criteria were based on literature precedents and were subjected to a public consultation. Foundations were exempt from criteria that were not applicable to them, such as providing pay gap data for foundations that had ten or fewer staff.

For this year's FPR – the FPR will be repeated annually – 100 foundations were assessed: the top five (by giving budget), the 10 foundations funding the project and 85 randomly selected foundations from ACF's 2019 Giving Trends report and UK community foundations. The foundations had no knowledge that they were being assessed and no influence into the research.

Each foundation was given an overall score and individual scores on diversity, accountability and transparency. There were four rating categories – A to D – where A was the highest and D the lowest. Only three foundations achieved an "A" and there were 41 Bs, 28 Cs and 28 Ds. Diversity was the weakest pillar, transparency was the strongest, and accountability somewhere in between.

There was no correlation between foundation size (by giving budget) and performance. Foundations with fewer staff or trustees tended to score slightly lower than foundations with greater numbers of people, but there were still foundations with one or no staff that obtained Bs.

FPR research showed that relatively few foundations reported analysis, with only 20% of foundations reporting feedback from their grantees, and just 12% reporting what they would change as a result of this feedback. There were many instances of "do as I say and not as I do" where foundations require information from grantees – such as complaints procedures – yet they did not report this information about themselves.

The FPR has shown that foundations still have much work to do in all three areas but particularly with respect to diversity. Caroline from Giving Evidence offered some recommendations for how foundations can up their practices by providing multiple ways of contacting them, especially for those who are disabled, and by reporting openly the practices that foundations were engaging in.

Points for reflection

- How can you make your information more accessible to a broader audience? Good practice recommends presenting information in diverse formats so that a wide range of people can be reached
- How can you improve your reporting and actual practices in diversity? What real changes can you make to be more open to reach greater inclusion?
- How can you use the criteria of the FPR to spark change in your foundation? The criteria used in the FPR are publicly available here: <https://www.foundationpracticering.org.uk/criteria/>

Lessons on creating a resilient civil society

This session was a workshop, bringing London Funders' members together to work towards increasing both organisational and individual resilience of grantees, and learning how these two aspects of resilience can influence each other to build a more robust civil society.

Speakers

Geraldine Blake

Director of Collaboration,
London Funders

Beth Clarke

Programme Manager, Charities Aid
Foundation

Julia Mirkin

Funding Manager, City Bridge Trust

John Williams

Senior Research and Evaluation
Consultant, Renaisi

In a pre-recorded interview, Beth Clarke spoke about the Charities Aid Foundation's (CAF) Resilience Programme – an investment in ten small charities of £100k each over two years to develop organisational resilience. The funding, along with a range of support from the CAF team, enabled the charities to become more resilient, and helped CAF to understand the factors that led to this. Beth emphasized the importance of making time: individuals within organisations need to spend more time together, and individuals (such as the CEO) need their time “freed-up” for strategy and planning and for understanding and articulating their impact. Beth emphasized that the resilience of individuals is vital to organisational resilience.

Julia of City Bridge Trust (CBT) talked about their work to understand how best to support individual resilience within organisations and how “collective learning” was essential to building more resilient organisations. CBT had commissioned Renaisi to evaluate Responding to the Resilience Risk 2 (the second pilot programme to test approaches to building individual

resilience, focusing on one-to-one and group resilience support for front-line staff in homelessness organisations). John from Renaisi explained how they had tracked and evaluated individual resilience using two main elements:

- Participant surveys: two-week feedback survey and a monthly Connor-Davidson Resilience scale¹ (DC-RISC) where 0 indicates no resilience and 100 is full resilience. Throughout the programme, there were increases in the DC-RISC scores. Over the course of the programme the mean, or average, resilience score from these surveys increased gradually from 66.04 at the beginning to 71.69 after 22 weeks
- Interviews with key stakeholders across the programme: Feedback surveys and participant interviews revealed that staff were more confident in their interactions with service users, had learned new tools that could help them deal with trauma, and as a result were able to express more compassion

1. <http://www.connordavidson-resiliencescale.com/index.php>

There were several key themes that emerged from CBT work on individual resilience:

- Participation in one-to-one sessions had a higher impact than group work as individuals felt they could be more open
- Organisational support is key – lower organisational support leads to lower resilience scores for staff (e.g. not encouraging or making it possible for staff to take time out to attend resilience training)

The session then moved into three breakout rooms where participants discussed the organisational buy-in needed and how organisations could support their staff to be more resilient. Interestingly, similar to Beth's reflections, making time was brought up as the most important ingredient. The participants highlighted that, for grantees working in stressful environments, finding time for staff to reflect was difficult because delivery pressures do not disappear –

that is why it's hard for organisations to prioritise the resilience of their staff team without explicit funder support or permission to do so.

The meeting wrapped up with a lively discussion. Resilience, one participant noted, will look quite different for different organisations of different types or cultures. Participants also noted that funders need to think carefully about how they interact with their grantees and consider the impact of their own processes on the organisational resilience of grantees.

Points for reflection

- Funders should see themselves as partners rather than detached from the organisations they support
- Longer-term impact is key and this requires long term, flexible investment in the core costs of organisations
- Trust the process and listen to the organisations you fund

WHERE'S THE BENEFIT?

Designing monitoring and evaluation frameworks that deliver value

Evidence and analysis is important for funders to understand the effectiveness of what they fund and charities to reflect on how they operate. To be the most effective, expectations need to be aligned with evidence needs. In this interactive session, Jon Franklin of Pro Bono Economics, shared his insights into measurement practices.

Speaker

Jon Franklin
Chief Economist,
Pro Bono Economics

Pro Bono Economics helps over 600 charities measure impact. Jon highlighted the ways of measuring impact:

- Qualitative: understanding why and how an intervention works (case studies, etc.)
- Quantitative: structured numerical approach to measuring outcomes

Generally, charities are good at measuring qualitative impact and less good at measuring quantitative impact. There are five stages where evidence can help: setting strategy, evaluating applicants, the start of a grant, the end of a grant and periodic evaluation. Jon asked the webinar participants about how evidence was used in their organisations. 80% only occasionally or never used quantitative evaluation in setting strategy. Around one third ask the grantees to determine the impact information shared, and 40% define outcome measures for their grantees. Roughly 10% never do a periodic evaluation and 63% did this only sometimes.

Monitoring and evaluation frameworks for the grantees can range from “*trust based*” (low impact on the grantee) to “*measurement focused*” (framework imposed on the grantee) with “*light touch*” in between. There are advantages and disadvantages to each, and funders have to balance their monitoring and evaluation with their expectations and goals. For example, sometimes it is good to be adaptable with your grantees and strict reporting rules can impede flexibility.

Organisations must determine what they expect, and these expectations can be divided into three categories:

- Reporting to the board – monitoring and compliance
- Understanding what works to make future grant decisions
- Influencing policy and systematic change – impacting the outside world

80% of the webinar participants wanted to gain evidence on what interventions worked and 43% wanted data on which grantees were the most effective. 63% wanted evidence of compliance with grant agreements, 60% wanted data that they could report to their boards and 47% wanted to influence systematic change. Most participants were interested in a more “measurement focused” approach to gathering evidence around their grantmaking practices. To minimise the burden, Jon suggested a few new approaches:

- Using pre-existing data sets as a comparison – such as the Office of National statistics data on wellbeing, which is widely used and tested
- Having funders group together and decide on centralised outcomes for all or a group of organisations and develop their own control groups.

For either of these approaches to work, Jon emphasised that a very clearly defined set of outcomes was needed.

There was a good discussion between the participants addressing such issues as monitoring preventative measures, looking for external measures for pre-existing evidence and balancing overburdening grantees versus collecting rigorous evidence. Jon stressed that there is no right answer, and the correct balance must be achieved for each organisation.

Points for reflection

- How can you balance the needs of reporting with the needs of grantees?
- When is the right time for you to use qualitative vs. quantitative evidence?
- Can you group with other funders to develop new “control groups” to work towards being more globally effective?

NEW PHILANTHROPY CAPITAL

Making philanthropy more transparent and inclusive

This session focused on making philanthropy more transparent and inclusive. Open philanthropy can bring huge benefits – from greater efficiency and collaboration to more inclusion and equal relationships.

Speakers

Tris Lumley

Director of Innovation and Development,
New Philanthropy Capital

Jane Dodson

Open Philanthropy Programme Manager,
New Philanthropy Capital

The Open Philanthropy programme (OPP) is a prototype in development that Jane, of New Philanthropy Capital (NPC), hopes will be used globally. This programme is supported by various partners including 360Giving and Barrow Cadbury Trust. Starting with research and analysis on issues affecting people in financial hardship, NPC then plan to develop a “tool kit” for foundations, creating an open standard which will hopefully lead to greater transparency. Jane emphasised that the research will be open and the results will be shared throughout the process. The OPP is focused on addressing challenges collectively, to enable open mechanisms that have the potential to shift the power dynamics in funding.

Tris, of NPC, emphasised that “*open means transparent and inclusive*”. “Openness” is inviting views to inform an organisation. “Openness” is also an organisation sharing its outputs and intentions. The OPP will look at many different themes such as involving others in the funding design process, to build trust and relationships, and using evidence-based research to inform decisions.

The OPP will collate practices from across the UK. For example, Barrow Cadbury Trust is invested in “*sharing power upstream*” by working with its grantees to map how they should fund better in a certain area. This ensures that funding priorities are set collaboratively by the foundations and the communities they serve. The OPP will pull together good practices to create a tool kit. The overarching principles of the tool kit are:

- Review, plan and scan
- Design and deploy
- Transparency at all stages

The OPP aims to synthesise all possible perspectives, from applicants to funders. For their prototype programme, NPC started with a desktop review led by those most affected by financial hardship including disabled people, single parents and minority groups. They asked participants to identify gaps in funding. NPC also conducted interviews with policy makers. Thus far, they have convened focus groups and are working towards analysing the data. NPC covers the funding for each consultation stage, so that everyone can be included. The OPP is working towards producing a “living store”

to help funders find information about areas they want to fund. The whole process is done openly and iteratively. Early results show many gaps. For those in financial hardship, this is mostly due to services not being linked up. Jane stressed the need to empower grassroots associations and to amplify services that already exist.

NPC is working to share and learn about transparency practices internationally by participating in the Action Lab. For example, the Rodenberry Foundation is using a “+1 approach”, giving funds to existing grantees so that they can fund other applicants. This helps build the relationship between funder and grantee and includes the perspective of those in the field. Tris also flagged some other open initiatives taking place, through IVAR and the Foundation Practice Rating.

Points for reflection

- What suggestions do you have for what could be in an openness tool kit?
- How can your organisation work towards being more open and inclusive?
- How can you be more open in the design phase and share the learning at this phase openly? Could you include community evaluators to be more open?

LEADERS TOGETHER

Building a new narrative for leadership in philanthropy

Philanthropic institutions are highly unique, operating between public, private and the charitable sectors. In this session, leaders from the sector who are committed to making “transformative” progress towards learning, self-reflection and delivering diversity, equity and inclusion shared their insights on leadership.

Speakers

Sufina Ahmad

Director, John Ellerman Foundation

Farzana Khan

Co-founder and Executive Director, Healing Justice London & Resourcing Racial Justice

Derek Bardowell

CEO, Ten Years' Time

Amy Braier

Director, Pears Foundation

“Leadership is not often discussed” in UK philanthropy according to Sufina. She stressed that leadership is at all levels, not just the top. Sufina posed two questions to the other panellists:

- What does leadership mean to you?
- Why do you think leadership is something we need to discuss?

Derek felt the best definition of leadership was from the Grenadian revolution, where the revolutionaries stressed that leaders should be “servants of the people”, not masters – aiming to destroy the “class relationships in the society.” Derek thought leadership needed be discussed more openly because philanthropic leaders sometimes “hide behind the views” of their grantees. He felt it was important for leaders to be able to say the “difficult things” and that they should be challenged on their decisions. He also thought good leaders should work towards “living their values” and moving away from top-down leadership.

Amy said leadership is an action not a status, it is about “*what you do and how you do it*”. It is “*active, not passive*” Sufina observed. Amy continued that leadership is about vision and action and sometimes in the philanthropic world, unlike the business world, action-oriented leaders are underrated.

Farzana spoke of three aspects of leadership she felt were most important: building realistic feedback loops, the ability to “*absorb risk and nurture new realities*” and understanding “*positionality*” which needs to evolve to be sustainable. She also stressed, like Derek, that philanthropic leaders should have “*embodied leadership*” and work to become more trustworthy and accountable. Farzana also stressed the need for “*safe spaces*” in which people could have courage to make bold changes.

The panel discussed how leaders can safeguard against the pressure to be “*all things to all people*”. Amy thought leaders needed to be self-aware of their strengths and weaknesses, so they could fill the gaps with people who had different strengths. Farzana emphasised that building a solid framework could help with burn-out, so that one person was not responsible for everything – something several of the panellists felt was particularly difficult for minorities.

There was an emphasis throughout the discussion on moving away from the “*great man model*”, which lacks nuance towards leadership models which are more fit for purpose and can address complexity.

Points for reflection

- How can leaders be better supported to be more open and accountable?
- How can organisations build the capacity so that their leaders, at any level, can avoid burnout so that they are more effective?
- How can we broaden the discussion of leadership to work towards making systemic change?

CLARION FUTURES & ALMOND TREE,
GRANTS PLUS PILOT

Creating a business development support offer for community partners

“It all started in the first lockdown,” Matthew Parsonage of Clarion Futures told this webinar. “Our ways of working changed overnight, and we needed to set up an emergency fund to support community organisations which were suddenly essential to our residents.”

Speakers

Matthew Parsonage

Head of Communities, Clarion Futures

Robin Brady

Associate, Almond Tree Strategic Consulting

Julian Lomas

Director, Almond Tree Strategic Consulting

There followed a moment of clarity when Matthew realised that his housing association needed to start thinking about investing in these bodies themselves, rather than just thinking about individual projects. The upshot was a pilot business development and capacity building program, delivered in partnership with Almond Tree Strategic Consulting.

Robin Brady took participants through the various stages of this programme. This aimed to work out how Clarion could best support the small charities and social enterprises they worked with as they dealt with the effects of the pandemic. Working together they began to put in place a theory of change. This began with a high-level needs assessment, which was used to pinpoint the training and consultancy needs of the individual groups.

Initially, they had expected to be troubleshooting but ended up giving more training and in depth consultancy. The

overall goal was that the organisations providing essential services to Clarion users would remain viable and sustainable during and beyond the pandemic. Furthermore, they would put plans in place to reduce their reliance on Clarion's grant funding and improve their accountability to stakeholders.

“It is really crucial that you are not seen as a perpetual purse,” Robin stressed. “You want these organisations to be sustainable and resilient because of your investment in them.”

A total of 34 organisations supported by Clarion received 100 days of consultancy support in a range of areas including financial management, fundraising and volunteer management.

Julian Lomas made the point that a relatively small amount of consultancy time, as little as two days, could make a significant difference.

28 training sessions were also delivered covering key issues such as business planning and resilience, how to adapt during a crisis, and how to emerge from a crisis calmly. The outcomes were positive, particularly in helping organisations build and maintain networks and in developing strategies to better adjust to external circumstances, like covid-19.

For Clarion, Matthew said the positive response from their partners had in turn enhanced their reputation, which would help deepen relationships over time. Moreover, Clarion had learned much about how its partners operate and engage with their residents.

What began as a response to a crisis brought on by the pandemic had ultimately led to new ways of supporting their community partners, which would benefit their residents in the long run.

Points for reflection

- Lack of access to relevant expertise can hamper growth in smaller charitable organisations
- Training and consultancy both have their value as types of non-financial support
- The programme improved Clarion's understanding of its partners and the way in which they operate, deepening their relationships in the process

INSTITUTE FOR VOLUNTARY ACTION RESEARCH

How power dynamics are emerging in voluntary sector research

The Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) has noticed how power dynamics show up in various ways across charities, funders and public agencies. In this interactive session the representatives from IVAR discussed the power relationships within these sectors.

Speakers

Houda Davis

Senior Researcher, IVAR

Sonakshi Anand

Senior Researcher, IVAR

Keeva Rooney

Researcher, IVAR

Sonakshi began with a presentation on IVAR's programme on connecting health communities, which is focussed on supporting voluntary organisations and people with lived experience of cross-sector health care partnerships. Focussing on health inequalities, IVAR provides a support package to help steering groups, in the voluntary sector, for local authorities and for the NHS, to lead actions addressing inequalities. For example, this programme worked in North Yorkshire to address the significant number of people who have difficulty in accessing essential health care due to a lack of transport. Involving diverse voices in the decision-making processes has made a difference. This allows a safe space for those with lived experience to have their views addressed and added to the solution. Further focussing on physical health, communities identified that Black and minoritised women were underrepresented in coaching. This led to a "female champion" project aimed at attracting more ethnically diverse women into coaching. It takes time and money to redistribute the power dynamic, but it is "definitely worth it", Sonakshi reflected.

Keeva gave a presentation about making the application processes more open and trusting. This is a part of IVAR's Open and Trusting Initiative which has been committed to by over 100 UK funders. They spoke with 22 charities that found applying for funding rewarding but dealing with constant rejection was frustrating. From this the charities identified five things that funders could do:

- 1 Continue the open and trusting processes instituted during the pandemic
- 2 Be more transparent with eligibility criteria and the decision-making processes
- 3 Consider different requirements based on grant size
- 4 Ring-fence funding for specific communities
- 5 Create more open-dialogue opportunities

Six key principles were highlighted to help funders to be more open and help ease the power relationship between funders and applicants. Including “*accepting risk*” (newer organisations are often excluded because of risk) and “*paying attention to how the process feels*” (this builds empathy that can break barriers for new applicants). Keeva said there was relatively little push-back from the participant funders, except for around unrestricted funding, which some saw as problematic. Meaningful engagement of people and humanising these processes can help breakdown power imbalances between organisations and the communities they serve.

The discussion included how to deal with unconscious bias in funding and how diversity and inclusion play out in terms of power dynamics. All participants agreed that there was still much work to do, but that working with trustees to put equalities on the agenda, or challenging trustees and staff on language, was helpful in moving forward and working towards a better balance of power.

Points for reflection

- How can you best include people from the communities that you serve in the decision-making process in order to redistribute power?
- Even if you cannot interact with your grantees regularly, what can you do to make sure that they still have a voice?
- How can you challenge your trustees to be more equitable?

TRUST FOR LONDON

Consensus or conflict? Insights from a funders’ perspective on the role of consensus building and co-design

In 2018, the Commission on the Future of Social Security, which aimed to fundamentally change the way benefits systems are designed, was born. Formed of members who all had personal experience of the benefits system, the project produced solutions to inequalities within it. It highlighted issues involved in shaping policy with the direct involvement of people whose lives are affected by it.

Speakers

Austin Taylor-Laybourn
Grants Manager, Trust for London

Dr Michael Orton
Senior Research Fellow,
Institute of Employment Research,
University of Warwick

“This project involved a shift of power, putting those with lived experience centre stage” – Austin Taylor-Laybourn explained that this was a risky process but that too often those who design policy were ignorant of the lives of the people it was supposed to serve.

A grant made by Trust for London to the University of Warwick enabled the establishment of the Commission, composed of 16 former or current benefit claimants. A public call was made for solutions to existing problems within the benefits system. Members were trained to codify responses to these and produced recommendations published in The Plan for a Decent Social Security System.

This model of working created issues of trust and conflict arising from members’ different experiences and personalities. *“The process was organic and sometimes messy”* Michael said, who was part of a supporting secretariat to the Commission. *“It involved a step-by-step approach where nothing was pre-determined. Instead, a process of reflection led to a decision, then seeing how that worked and moving slowly forward.”*

For funders, this way of working involved a fairly significant leap of faith, especially if the project was going to do more than pay lip service to the involvement of service users. *“It meant really listening to what individuals had to say, hearing their*

concerns and priorities. And allowing the conversation to develop from that, rather than any preconceived notion of what it should be about.”

The commission resulted in two main achievements:

- The successful delivery of solutions-focused consensus building project led by people with lived experience
- The publication of a white paper that set a new agenda for issues on social security

All involved felt it had been a success but at the same time it threw up a significant issue for funders. “They want to know what has been achieved with their grant,” Michael explained, “the immediate success of this project can be measured in terms of laying the foundations, without which further changes won’t happen. But the challenge is that big change does not happen quickly. They could take 15 or 20 years to bring about.”

Points for reflection

- Supporting experts by experience in enabling engagement takes time and money but has the potential to produce much better results in the longer term
- Measuring success is problematic when creating building blocks for changes, which may not come to fruition for many years
- Considering way of making the Commission self-sustainable in the future through consulting and other professional opportunities for members

LEARNING INSIGHT

Why we need to understand the who, what and why of philanthropic wealth

The Grant Givers’ Movement – a collective of grant makers working within the sector – share their reflections on what’s needed to push for philanthropy that’s led by the values of equity, transparency, and accountability.

The lack of transparency regarding the origins of wealth is an open secret in the philanthropic and grantmaking sector. Philanthropy is no stranger to criticism with recurring debates on perpetual endowments, effective altruism, social investment, methods of governance, and back-scratching egoism. Recent events have exposed the reality of inequitable power dynamics at play, both within foundations and with funded groups. Structural racism continues to pervade grantmaking practice. Now, more than ever, grantmakers and grantseekers are asking the question: How can we #ShiftThePower? A lot of this boils down to understanding the who, what, and why of philanthropic wealth.

In March this year, we called on grant giving organisations to #KnowYourWealth and do the following:

- 1 Publicly declare the origins of their wealth on their website and social media and to own this history.
- 2 Ensure that the origin of their wealth is considered in how and to whom they grant their funding to.

We released a report capturing the perceptions of 166 individuals working in the grant giving sector seeking to find out more about #EthicsInPhilanthropy. The majority of respondents, who varied in experience and job roles, could not identify the ultimate origin of their organisation’s wealth – however – 80% of respondents agreed that where organisations were found to have benefited from wealth created through harmful or exploitative practices, they should make reparations.


In the long term, respondents dreamt of a future beyond philanthropy, where the redistribution of wealth and inability to accumulate vast sums in the first place

would effectively render philanthropy redundant. But in a world where inequity persists and where this “utopia” seems further away than ever, respondents instead spoke of the shorter-term goal of a grantmaking sector which was instead truly led by values. The values of transparency, accountability, and equity where grantmaking power is decentralised away from the traditional model and into the hands of communities. Respondents spoke of “trust” and “genuine collaboration” and an energy to “learn” from communities and incorporate this learning into grantmaking practices.

Many people come into the grantmaking sector excited to learn and motivated to “do good”, but we know that many quickly become disenchanted by the environment and feel powerless to influence change as a result of hierarchical structures. An issue that was highlighted through the survey was the feeling that investments continue to be shrouded in mystery. Investment strategies are full of jargon, inaccessible to non-investment staff, and many noted that their strategy and/or policy document was not publicly available. There is no

easy way to understand what exactly endowed foundations are invested in. The report highlighted the continued lack of accountability the grant giving sector has towards the communities it serves, and the ongoing lack of transparency surrounding trustee recruitment that continues to perpetuate inequity. The lack of progress in this area of philanthropy in some ways mirrors the wider political climate, with the “denial of institutional racism” being presented by the UK government itself in its report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities in 2021.

We urge everyone to play a part in raising awareness of transparency and accountability issues whether through a financial, legal, or ethical lens. We also recommend that whilst increasing organisational transparency, we should all share our learnings – and our mistakes along the way – to ultimately repair the fractured society we live in.





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