



Walking the talk

**A guide for funders on how
we evaluate our policy and
practice influencing work**

June 2016

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Facilitated by:





Introduction from contributors

***Walking the talk* was produced from the experiences and evidence gathered by people from seven funders in Scotland with facilitation from Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS).**

The aim was to produce a practical resource to help us and other funders:

- › **Explore** how we as funders use evidence to influence policy and practice outside our organisations, and
- › **Evaluate** the difference made by our influencing work.

We worked as a 'learning set' between February 2015 and March 2016, **combining our expertise and experience** along with formal research, to produce this resource. We drew out practical lessons and approaches that we felt were relevant for other colleagues in the funding sector. We compromised to create common learning and ideas.

The process of working together generated lots of learning for us. We haven't written down everything but the key points include:

- › As funders, we want to learn, share and make our work more inclusive.
- › Funders come in different sizes and forms and, as such, we take different approaches to influencing policy and practice.
- › It's not easy to agree the right words to use. We acknowledge that we might not reflect the language that other funders use.
- › Despite a wide representation of funders in the group we are aware that we may have missed things that are relevant for other funders.
- › We should take a flexible and adaptive approach when evaluating our policy and practice influencing work.



This guide is about understanding how to influence policy and/or practice rather than about evaluating funders' main work of giving out money. *Walking the talk* is not a blueprint. We simply hope that other funders find it a useful starting point for their influencing work, should they wish to influence, and we fully welcome suggestions for further adaptations to the content.

Learning Set Members:

- › **Big Lottery Fund**
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- › **Carnegie UK Trust**
(Tara Murphy)
- › **Inspiring Scotland**
(Eilidh Watson, Kirsty Gilchrist)
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We would like to thank colleagues outside the learning set that took the time to respond to our consultation.



Words we use in this document

This guide tries to use simple, clear, jargon-free and easy to follow language. When using specialised words in the text we provide a description. However, there are a few words that appear multiple times across the document, so we thought it would be helpful to define them from the outset.

These definitions are what **we** mean in this document. You may use these words differently in another context.

Learning set: We are using this term to mean the group of us – funders – facilitated by Evaluation Support Scotland. We met 6 times over 12 months following a broad agreed agenda. We shared ideas in order to identify our own knowledge; learn from each other, and work together to produce this resource.

Policy: A written statement designed to achieve a change in action or behaviour. It encompasses legislation and more. In our case, we are also specifically meaning activities that people in national and local government do by which they translate their vision into actions to achieve desired outcomes. The process of developing policy is called policy-making.

Practice: The actual application or use of an idea, belief or method to achieve desired outcomes. In essence: work that third sector and public sector organisations do to achieve outcomes.

Outcome: The change or difference we make through what we do.

Project: We use this word to mean the work we fund or support – and sometimes the people leading that work. Other words used by funders include ‘interventions’ and ‘programmes’, or just ‘charities’ or ‘organisations’.

Beneficiaries: The people or communities who funded projects work with. Other words used by funders include ‘service users’, ‘clients’, ‘participants’, ‘community’, ‘citizens’ and ‘people’.

Evidence: The available body of facts or useful information that can help an organisation make better decisions, provide better services and raise standards. We have a wide definition of evidence. Evidence can be generated from people’s experiences, projects and/or formal research.

Please see **section 8** for all the different types of things we mean by evidence.



What is this guide and who is it for?

This guide is firstly for people who work for independent funders.


It is also relevant for people in Scottish Government, local government and public bodies who fund and/or commission services or make policy decisions. It could also be of interest to other third sector organisations that want to influence policy and practice themselves.

Not all funders want to influence policy or practice. (Although they do all want their funding to make a positive difference to people and communities). However, increasingly, many of us are using learning and evidence not just to improve our internal practice, but to influence policy and practice in the outside world. This document is NOT about evaluating our direct grant-making. It is about evaluating the particular activities that some funders might undertake to influence policy or practice.

Our drive to improve practice and influence policy comes from the difference we want to make, or our mission and values. We want to improve the lives of people and communities and to ensure that the funding we distribute makes the biggest possible difference to people and communities.

We want to stress that funders have different functions, remits and limitations. Some of us have a role to ensure the voices and experiences of vulnerable people are heard.

We do not operate in a vacuum. We are one of the many actors that contribute to a complicated policy landscape.

 We accept that, despite our best efforts, we might not always manage to influence policy and practice developments. We also realise that though we can **contribute** to policy and practice improvements, we can rarely **attribute** any change wholly to our own work. We recognise that practice and policy should be informed by evidence but there may be other factors that influence decisions.

Please note that this document is NOT about lobbying. However, please make sure you are up to date with Westminster or Scottish Parliament guidance. Obviously, the law takes precedence over this document.



Our logic model for policy and practice influence

A logic model¹ tells the story of a project or programme in a diagram and a few simple words. It shows the underpinning logic and creates a pathway for evaluation.

The next page shows the **assumptions** that underpin our **logic model** and the **external factors** that might get in the way of achieving policy or practice influence. Our **logic model diagram** is on **page 8**.

4.1 The logic model in words (for people who don't like diagrams!)

The **situation** or **need** is that we want our funding to make the biggest difference to people and communities in Scotland, but sometimes we face barriers to doing that because:

- › the projects we (want to) fund are not always designed or delivered in a way that is informed by good evidence; or
- › the context in which we fund - policy-making or practice by others (such as Government or other organisations working in the same field) gets in the way and stops us achieving the best outcomes, or
- › we (funders) do not or are not able to make evidence-informed decisions.

To address this situation we use resources or **inputs** such as the skills and time of our people, people in funded projects and partner organisations; evidence from project reports and other sources, and, of course, money.

Using those inputs we deliver a wide range of **activities** shown in the model.

For simplicity, these activities could be grouped as follows:

- › **'Gathering'** activities to pull together evidence. This includes pulling together evidence from our own funding, commissioning reviews and research; working with funded projects to generate or combine evidence, and picking evidence elsewhere such as from partners and experts. Some of us proactively support beneficiaries to share their experiences.
- › **'Informing'** activities to share the evidence we have gathered with those we want to influence. This includes using various forms of communication; contributions to others' reviews and consultations, and work with funded projects and partners to share evidence.
- › **'Using'** activities to ensure the use of evidence to improve policy and practice. This includes working with funded projects on practice improvement and to test 'what works'; explicitly funding work to improve policy or practice, and making use of evidence ourselves in our funding.

From these activities we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- › **People who make policy** will understand better 'what works'; improve their processes for making or evaluating policy; meet gaps in need, and improve policy implementation (making a better link to practice).
- › **People who deliver practice** (work, activities, services) will be better able to design and deliver evidence-informed activities or services, or 'scale up' or develop or sustain good practice that achieves positive outcomes.
- › **Funders** (ourselves and others) will understand better 'what works' and use that understanding to make better funding decisions.

¹ ESS Support Guide 1.2 - Developing a Logic Model:
www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/127/

The ultimate change we want to make is better outcomes for people but, for the purpose of this influencing logic model, this is longer term. Our logic is that if we improve understanding and behaviours of people who make policy and those who deliver projects and interventions, this should lead to better outcomes for people and communities.

We also recognise that we contribute to outcomes for people and communities but these outcomes are influenced by a wide range of other factors. (We can, of course, achieve more immediate positive outcomes for people and communities through our direct grant funding, but that is not what this resource is about.)

4.2 Assumptions in the logic model

› Positively influencing policy can sometimes lead to improved practice (and vice versa).



› We have the capacity, skills and knowledge to share in the first place.



› We have evidence to share in the first place.

› We want to make decisions about what to fund informed by evidence.

› We are honest and explicit about the role we have to make changes.



› We have a role and reach that others don't have - we add value.

› We have a responsibility to use what we know to influence policy and practice.

4.3 External factors

(things that might affect the achievement of outcomes)

Other funders' rules

Especially the public sector: For example, funding timescales, rules on what money can be spent on, eligibility criteria, reporting requirements, etc.



Other decision-making drivers

For example, political context or decisions by other jurisdictions with different agendas, timing is not right, role of the media, etc.



Relationships

Such as those with projects we fund; people we need to influence not getting on with us or each other.



Constraints on our own action

We cannot change legal or governance requirements.

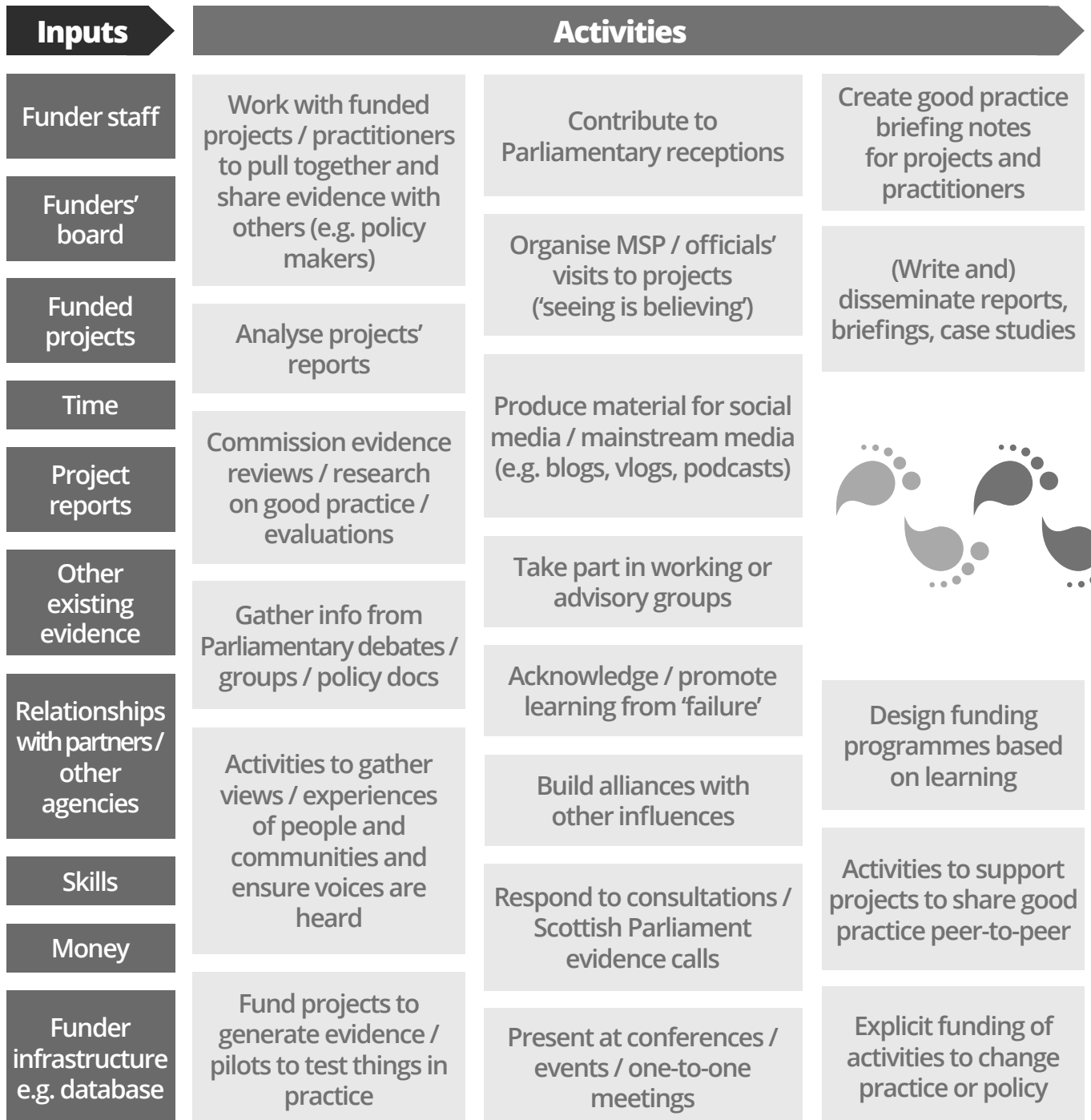


4.3 Logic model for funders' policy and practice influence

Situation / the problem we want to solve (why funders want to influence policy and practice)



Funders want our funding to make the best differences to (vulnerable) people and communities in Scotland. But we are not always able to do that because the projects we (want to) fund are not always designed or delivered in a way that is informed by good evidence. Or because the context in which we fund policy-making or practice by others (such as Government



or other organisations working in the same field) gets in the way and stops us achieving the best outcomes. Or because we ourselves as funders do not/are unable to make decisions informed by evidence.

Outcomes

People who make POLICY

Understand better 'what works'

Are better able to identify and meet gaps in need

Have improved / more participative policy-making processes

Have improved systems for reviewing / evaluating existing policy

Are better able to implement policy effectively

Design activities or services that are more informed by evidence

Have improved systems for reviewing / evaluating existing practice

Have improved skills that deliver 'what works'

Are better able to 'scale up' or develop 'what works'

Are better able to sustain activities or services that achieve positive results

Everyone better understands and values the voice or experience of people and communities

Services meet needs more effectively

People who deliver PRACTICE

Make better evidence-informed decisions about funding to make a positive difference

Achieve our mission

Funders ourselves

Better understand when to innovate and when to fund existing interventions

Ultimately...better outcomes for people and communities

Short to medium-term outcomes
Long-term outcomes

5

Evaluating our logic model

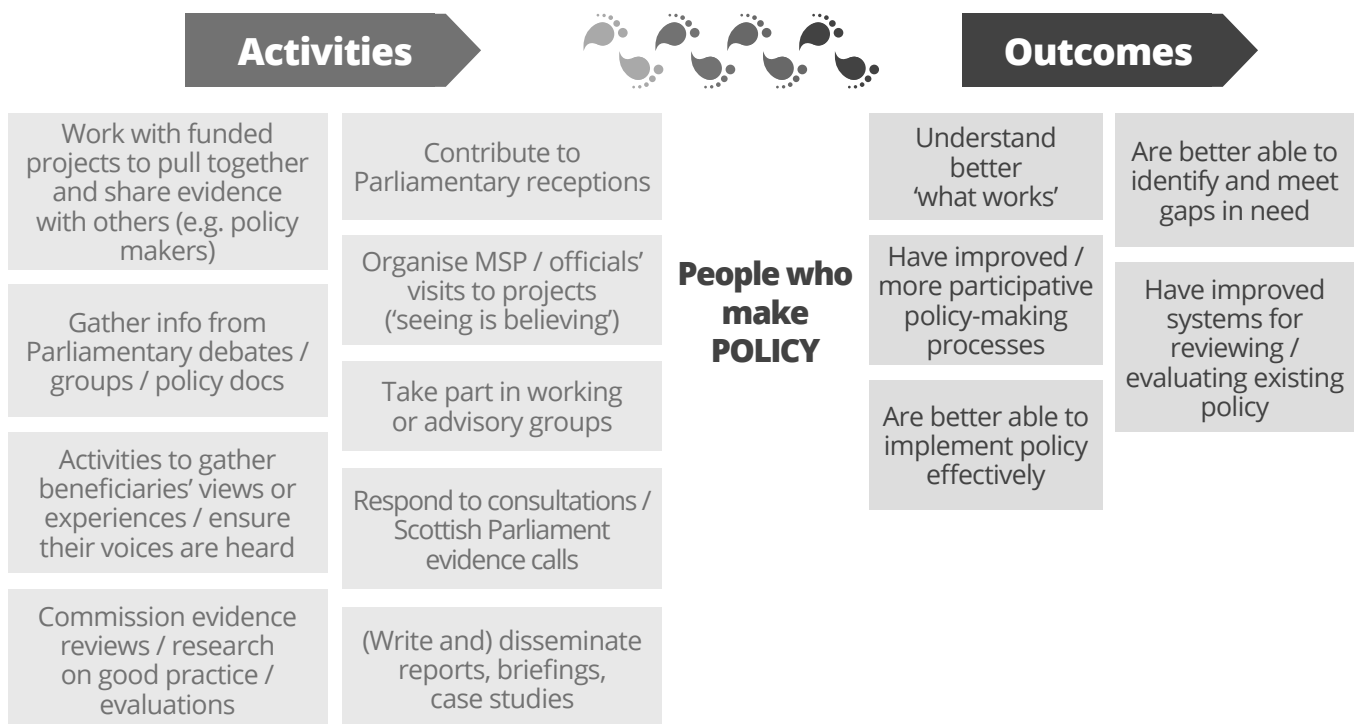
Considering the whole logic model at once might be overwhelming, so this section breaks the logic model into chunks. Each chunk takes a group of outcomes and selects some key activities from the logic model to achieve those outcomes. (There may be other activities that can achieve the same outcomes.)

5.1 Policy influence

To evaluate outcomes you need to:

- › Decide what the outcome looks like if it happens; those are **outcome indicators**. In this section we provide some example indicators from our experience. This is not an exhaustive list; other funders will have others.
- › Collect evidence about the indicators using **evaluation methods**. We give some example methods at the end of this section.

Please see **case studies** in **Section 7** for examples of how to evidence policy and/or practice influence.



Example indicators (what the policy influence outcomes might look like if they happen)

- › Policy-makers quote or make use of evidence from funders (about what works and what doesn't) in policies, strategies or legislation.
- › Policy-makers engage others (communities, organisations, funders) in policy development and/or policy implementation processes.

- › Policy-makers use funders' evidence to evaluate policy.
- › A change in policy or development of a new policy to address a gap in need.
- › An implementation gap is addressed.
- › Policy-makers invest in 'what works'.

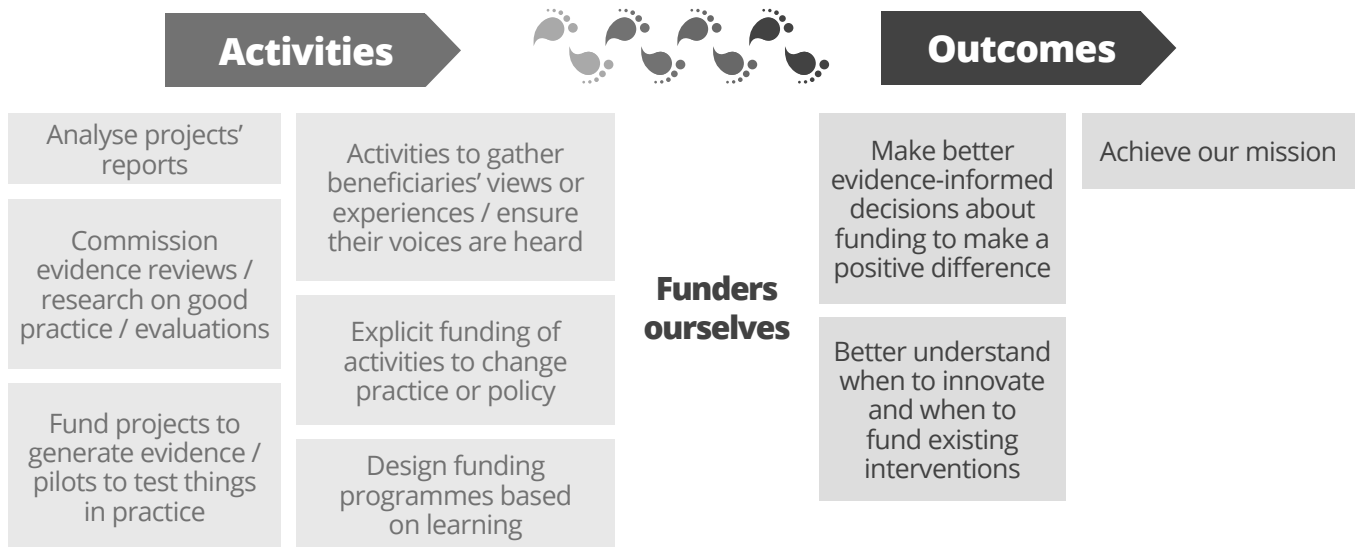
5.2 Practice influence



Example indicators (what the practice influence outcomes might look like if they happen)

- › Organisations' approach (project plans, applications, reports, and staff training) reflects good practice.
- › Organisations have a theory of change (activities and outcomes) that is informed by evidence and good practice.
- › Organisations change their work to reflect (new) learning about 'what works'.
- › Evidence-informed good work is scaled up/ replicated/adapted/developed.
- › People who deliver work/services/activities say they know what good practice looks like or what success looks like.
- › Activities or services reflect what users say matters to them.
- › Examples of good work and good outcomes being sustained.

5.3 Funders ourselves



Indicators (what the funder outcomes might look like if they happen)

- › Funding decisions reflect past promoted practice/models.
- › Evidence-informed good work is scaled up/ replicated/adapted/developed.
- › Examples of changes in funding programmes to respond to mistakes in past.
- › Examples of funders using evidence to design new grant programmes.



How to know whether you have achieved your influence outcomes

This part of the guide gives examples of different methods and approaches to measure policy or practice influence outcomes. It's not an exhaustive list. Remember your method is about looking for evidence of your **outcome indicators** (see earlier sections).

- › **Questionnaires, surveys and interviews (using the outcome indicators)**
- › **Focus groups, informal face-to-face or e-mail feedback**
- › **Testimony from beneficiaries**
- › **Citation of your policy or practice influence in external evaluations**
- › **Scanning for examples of policy influence indicators in:**
 - › Policy documents
 - › Speeches
 - › Press releases
 - › Parliamentary official report / Hansard
 - › Minutes of Government and other official meetings
- › **Scanning for examples of practice influence indicators in:**
 - › Good practice guides produced by others
 - › Organisations' practice documents or reports
 - › Other funders' guidance / reports
- › **Monitoring changes in legislation**
- › **Monitoring statistics (national or local) for signs of increase/decrease after your influencing activity**
- › **A funded organisation wins an award or gets an excellent inspection report after adopting your practice guidance.**

You can also find specific examples of evaluation methods in the **case studies** in **Section 7**.





Good practice for funders on policy or practice influence

This section has tips from our experience about how to do policy or practice influencing activities well to maximise the chance of achieving positive outcomes.

When influencing policy it helps to:

- 1** Package your evidence in ways that link directly to what the policy-makers need (and if you don't know what they need, ask them).
- 2** Offer practical implementation solutions; not just 'what works' but how it works, how much it costs, how long it takes and so on.
- 3** Provide evidence about 'what doesn't work'.
- 4** Support projects or beneficiaries to contribute directly to policy-influencing activities. Direct testimony to Parliament or a policy forum can be effective.
- 5** Be tenacious: Play the long game - you might not get it at first but don't give up. However, don't get stuck doing the same things over and over - be flexible.
- 6** Get to know the people you need to influence (in Government they might change regularly!): Policy influencing activities are often about relationships.
- 7** Give your staff/board clear messages to communicate.

When influencing practice it helps to:

- 1** Give messages to funded organisations of 'we are in it together', 'everyone is trying to improve'. They are more likely to improve practice when funders work with them collaboratively ('with' not 'to'). Use peer sharing if possible.
- 2** Create a 'safe space'. Organisations are in competition for funding so may be reluctant to share practice improvement evidence. We can use our power as funders responsibly to encourage them to share practice improvement evidence, so long as they see the benefits once they start sharing.
- 3** Ensure that any practice improvement activities are practical and meaningful for organisations (not just a talking shop).
- 4** Resource the cost of practice improvement as part of funding applications or by signposting to sources of support. Support funded organisations to self-evaluate, gather evidence and use it to improve practice.
- 5** Use different approaches so your practice influencing is accessible to all.
- 6** Encourage and support funded organisations to involve beneficiaries in development/design/evaluation of project to inform programme.
- 7** Use *Harmonising Reporting*² so your reporting system follows good practice.

² *Harmonising Reporting* (2010), Scotland Funders' Forum – see resources section



This section includes the case studies that each of the seven funders wrote to illustrate different approaches to policy and/or practice influence.

We start each case study with an extract from the logic model to illustrate main influencing activities the funders carried out and outcomes achieved.

To help you navigate through the case studies we grouped them depending on whether they illustrate:

Policy influence

- › Life Changes Trust

Practice influence

- › Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland Partnership Drugs Initiative
- › The Robertson Trust

Policy and practice influence

- › Big Lottery Fund
- › Carnegie UK Trust
- › Inspiring Scotland
- › Voluntary Action Fund

Each case study provides **evaluation evidence** of how we know we achieved our influencing outcomes.

Please note that some of the case studies have a longer version, which can be found on Evaluation Support Scotland's website³. If you have an enquiry about a given case study you can contact the individual funder for more information.

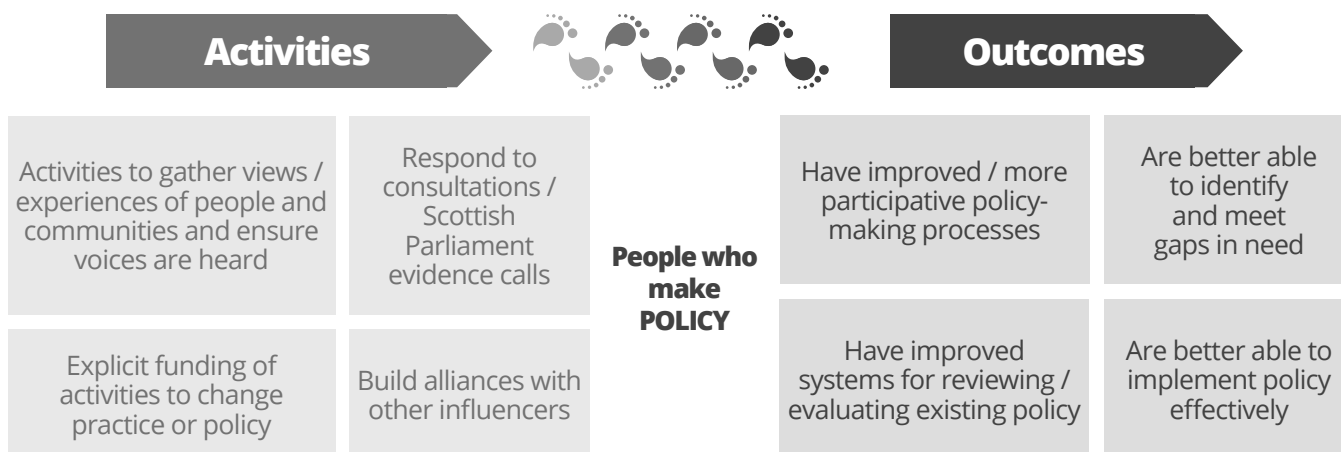


You don't have to read all the case studies at once. They are examples of different influencing activities and outcomes so we advise you to focus on those most relevant to your area of interest.



Case study

Life Changes Trust - improving the wellbeing and quality of life of care experienced by young people



Background

The Life Changes Trust was established by the Big Lottery Fund in 2013 with a ten year endowment of £50 million to support transformational improvements in the quality of life, wellbeing, empowerment and inclusion of people affected by dementia and young people with experience of being in care.

The Trust is committed to working with care experienced young people, care leavers, practitioners in all sectors, other funders and government in Scotland so that when young people leave care, they have positive life chances and outcomes just like other young people. The voices of our beneficiaries should be central to our work, and we recognise that this approach calls for investment in individuals to enable them to develop a confident voice.

There was a clear role for the Trust to use funding to influence the development of the **Children and Young People Bill** in 2013. The legislative proposals gave the opportunity to address gaps in policy, which resulted in young people leaving care at a very early age, vulnerable and with inadequate support.

Activities

The Trust funded Who Cares? Scotland (WCS) to support a group of care experienced young people to influence directly the parts of the Bill that would affect care leavers and address gaps in existing policy. MSPs heard first-hand the impact of current policy on the lives of young people leaving care. They heard testimony from young people who effectively faced a cliff-edge at the age of 16 or 17, trying to make the transition to living alone. The majority of care experienced young people have no family network to fall back on. Many have to make this transition without the support of even one significant caring relationship in their lives.

Young people were given extensive support by WCS staff both before and after engaging in giving evidence or working with journalists. Many young people involved were talking openly of traumatic experiences. Trained and experienced staff members had to be available to provide flexible support.

The work to influence the legislation took just over a year and included:

- › A closed-door session with care experienced young people and MSPs
- › Evidence sessions in parliament
- › Meetings with civil servants
- › Input to external events – engaging key stakeholders
- › Engagement in related policy developments.

WCS also ran a public-facing campaign to raise awareness of the challenges faced by care experienced young people. This media work brought the issues surrounding care leavers to the attention of the wider public and took them higher up the public policy agenda. WCS would have campaigned without the additional funding, but the Trust's support enabled it to expand and intensify its efforts, particularly in relation to supporting direct engagement of young people.

In addition, it can be hard for organisations to attract funding for intensive support for young people, as it seems only to benefit a small number of people. However, the Trust believed the benefits would cascade. Even if the campaign had not been successful, the public profile created would give other opportunities to tackle some of the disadvantage faced by all care experienced young people.

The Trust encouraged partnership working through our award. WCS allied with Aberlour and Barnardo's Scotland. This showed that other organisations supported the call for improved support for care leavers. It brought additional legislative expertise and research resources to back up the case for change.

Outcomes

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 became law in March 2014. For care experienced young people, the Act creates a much more supportive and enabling policy framework for care experienced young people and confers important new rights (please see longer case study for detail).

Evidence of the impact of the direct involvement of care experienced young people in the campaign to secure these new rights included the following:

- › Parliamentary committee requested a session with young people
- › Significant references made to young people's testimony during parliamentary debates on the Bill
- › Children's Minister referenced messages from the campaign publicly
- › Content of final legislative proposals were influenced by the coalition of WCS, Aberlour and Barnardo's Scotland.

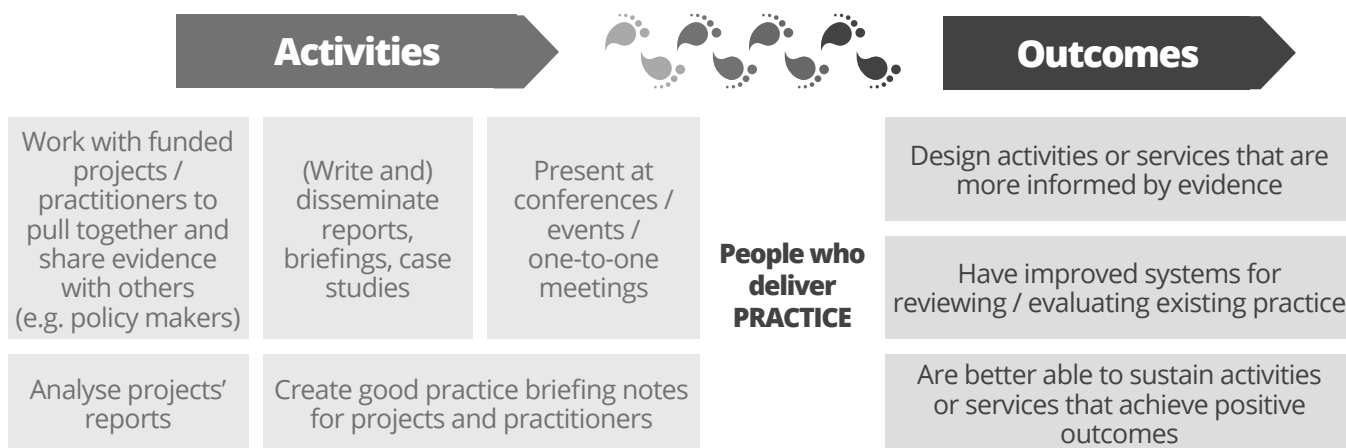
In addition, WCS was asked to facilitate the involvement of young people in follow-up working groups developing the guidance to support implementation.

Learning

- › People are experts in their own lives – policy makers need to hear directly from people whose lives are affected by policy and practice.
- › For this process to be meaningful there has to be investment in individuals and organisations. Funders should recognise the costs in engaging young people and supporting them to develop their own voice.
- › Policy gains can create the conditions for change, but for legislation to positively impact on the day-to-day lives of young people, improvements are needed at practice level (the Trust is also investing at practice level).
- › Campaigns focussed on securing policy change should also include a phase two which looks at implementation.

Case study

Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland Partnership Drugs Initiative - Reversing the Trend



Background

Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland Partnership Drugs Initiative (PDI) has a strong ethos of listening to and learning from supported projects. We gain knowledge through the application process, annual reviews, meetings and networking. This, along with being aware of the policy context, means we can relate to supported projects' aspirations and challenges and we can support them to improve practice and capacity in order to improve outcomes for children and young people affected by drug and alcohol issues.

In 2008, we drew learning from projects' annual reports to produce a short paper 'Report for in-depth analysis of outcomes for projects offering diversionary approaches for young people' (it can be read here⁴). The report recognised the challenges of effectively capturing outcomes of diversionary work. The paper, and conversations with projects, showed we needed to support groups to answer the question: 'how can we improve our measuring of preventative approaches?'

At the same time the Christie Commission had put an emphasis on prevention and the Scottish Government was involving young people on how to address the 'whole population approach to alcohol' through the Youth Commission on Alcohol.

Activities

Reversing the Trend was a project to:

- Help practitioners show the contribution of youth work for at risk young people through robust evaluation.
- Help local planners, policy makers and others understand the contribution of youth work projects to prevention.

PDI commissioned Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) to work with six PDI supported projects (in a learning set and 1-1 sessions) to develop a logic model for preventative youth work approaches with young people, and identify evaluation approaches. ESS also undertook a literature review. The PDI dedicated a member of staff to contribute to the learning set. This provided a sounding board and support for the ESS facilitator. The PDI kept in regular contact with ESS to ensure the project was on track and to address any challenges with resourcing and timing. A reference group gave us valuable feedback and learning.

The *Reversing the Trend* report can be read here⁵. It includes a literature review, problem tree, a logic model for preventive youth work (and individual logic models for the six projects) and evaluation case studies.

Before publication, we took a short consultation. As well as this, a number of presentations were made to networking and practitioner forums.

Outcomes

Overall the intended outcomes of the project were achieved. Those involved felt that they had benefited enormously. Practitioners and local planners recognised the merits of the model. Since publication, the PDI has seen improvements in reporting from the projects involved. They are better able to produce strong evidence of outcomes achieved through a youth work approach.

December 2012 to October 2015, the *Reversing the Trend* website has been visited over 1,400 times. The report has been referred to by NHS Health Scotland and The Scottish Government. A pod cast has been produced for the Alliance for Useful evidence. The PDI continues to regularly share *Reversing the Trend* learning and ensure it is accessible, and easy to access and use.

Learning

Active practitioner involvement brings a range of diverse views. It was crucial to capture and reflect on all the themes from these rich conversations and recognise the value of this source of evidence.

It was always the intention that we would **involve young people** in the development of the resource through the six projects. But this was not as effective as we would have liked.

Reversing the Trend is one document with sub-sections and a short summary. Had we known then what we know now, we may have produced a range of resources suitable for the different

audience needs. Different audiences were looking for **tailored messages**. For example the practitioners in *Reversing the Trend* were clear that GIRFEC principles were embedded as a matter of course in their work and the resource. But others needed this to be more explicit. Points like this have been rectified.

Although we did not prepare a long-term **dissemination strategy**, promotion of the report has been built into the PDI communication plan. This has ensured the report continues to be referenced and learning shared.

We did not fully appreciate – and so allow resources to measure - the potential **long-term impact**. We have now looked at ways of capturing ongoing impact.

The PDI has improved how we support and resource practitioner involvement in project design and delivery, and improved engagement with young people.

Key messages for other funders

- › Be clear you are not duplicating what is there already. We spent time at the start reviewing our own evidence, mapping the external environment and speaking with groups to ensure we had identified a genuine gap.
- › You will almost certainly underestimate how much resource is required, including time, particularly for dissemination.
- › Practitioners have different perspectives. Provide space for proper dialogue to explore values, language and so on.

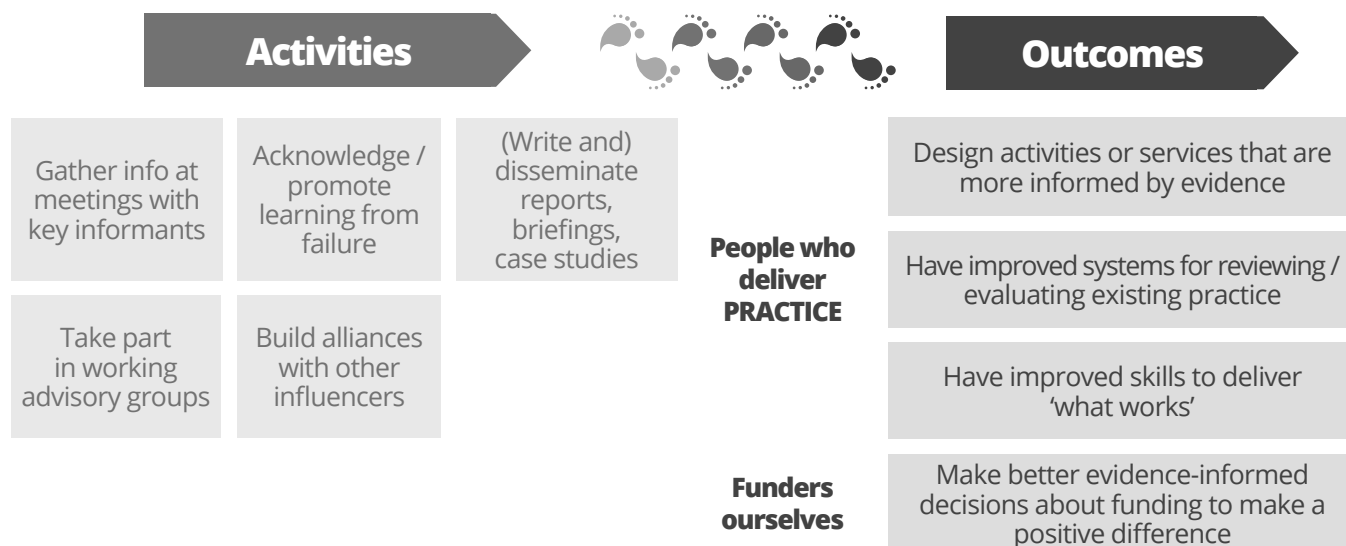
⁴ www.ltsbfoundationforscotland.org.uk/documents/In-depth%20Review%20Diversiionary%20Projects.pdf

⁵ www.ltsbfoundationforscotland.org.uk/documents/Reversing%20the%20trend%20web%20tool.pdf

⁶ **Please see:** irissfm.iriss.org.uk/social-care/alcohol-misuse.

Case study

The Robertson Trust - Criminal Justice Evidence Partnership



Background

The Criminal Justice Evidence Partnership came together as an informal group in 2013 to influence practice by promoting better use of evidence in design, evaluation and commissioning of criminal justice services in Scotland.

It was made up of motivated individuals who wanted to make a difference from the Scottish Government, The Robertson Trust, Big Lottery Fund Scotland, Evaluation Support Scotland, the Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum, the Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice, and Glasgow Community Justice Authority.

Through conversations with stakeholders and our own experience, we recognised a number of issues around consistent gathering and use of evidence:

- Evaluation not being embedded into everyday practice
- Poor quality evaluations being commissioned
- Service design and commissioning often not being evidence-informed
- Inappropriate indicators used to measure the success of interventions.

To address these, we, the Partnership promoted a common approach to designing and evaluating services and we developed links with relevant organisations to share good practice and lessons learned.

Activities

We held seven meetings between September 2013 and April 2015. We set priorities, agreed actions and monitored progress. We held events and workshops to engage with the wider sector. These included two sold-out conferences on gathering and using evidence, presentations to stakeholders on the importance of an evidence-informed approach, and Train the Trainer events on Logic Modelling. At each event we raised awareness of the '5-Step Approach to Designing, Evaluating and Commissioning Interventions.'

All partners promoted the approach to service providers, funders, policy-makers and auditors engaged with the criminal justice system. We embedded the approaches in our own work and so led by example.

Within the partnership, The Robertson Trust took the role of facilitator. This is because, as a funder, it had capacity which others did not have.

Outcomes

The partnership has been successful and positive changes include:

- › The Justice Analytical Services produced the 5 step approach as an e-book and a summary document⁷. These have been downloaded 450 times. From feedback we know it is seen as an accessible tool and that it is used.
- › Feedback shows funders, providers and policy-makers feel better equipped to take a logic model approach to designing and evaluating interventions.
- › The Robertson Trust adopted the approach across all of its Development Portfolios and shared it at a training event for UK funders in London.
- › The Partnership Pack for third sector organisations working in Scottish prisons was updated to reflect the logic model approach.
- › The logic model approach featured in the Scottish Government Justice Division's performance framework.

Learning

Despite our successes we encountered a number of challenges:

- › **Tendency to revert to the status quo** – as the approach is not yet embedded into general practice there is still a tendency to revert to old ways. This is true of both funders and providers.
- › **Meaningless measurement** – some funders still request meaningless data. Some providers still report on data they have rather than data they need. This is an identified area for improvement for funders and providers.
- › **Knowing when enough is enough** – in trying to influence practice it can be difficult to know when you have achieved enough in influencing practice and can take a less proactive role.

Nonetheless a number of positive learning points emerged:

- › **Having a collective voice** - working in partnership meant that there was a collective voice giving consistent messages around the importance of, and approaches to, design and evaluation of services.
- › **Consistency between funders and providers** - by encouraging and supporting funders and providers to adopt a consistent approach we anticipate that the changes made will be more sustainable.
- › **Producing outputs that are accessible** – we consulted on the 5 step guide and revised it to make it less technical and more accessible to organisations, regardless of size or focus. We used providers with experience of 'doing it' as champions at events.

Key messages for other funders

- › Make sure partners have a **shared vision and commitment**.
- › **Lead by example** and don't be afraid to change your own practice.
- › Build and keep **momentum** by focusing on action points.
- › You may find that there is resistance to change from the wider sector: find a way around this and **don't take 'no' for an answer**.
- › You don't need a formally established group to effect change. **A group of relevant, motivated individuals can achieve great things.**

⁷A copy of this approach is available as an e-book through the Scottish Government's website:
www.gov.scot/Resource/0047/00472843.pdf

Case study

Big Lottery Fund - Scottish Guardianship Service



Background

In 2006 the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC) commissioned research into the needs and experiences of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Scotland to assess how well existing services were responding to their needs. The research recommended that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Scotland should be given assistance from an independent guardian or adviser.

In 2008 SRC secured funding to advocate for guardianship, amongst other advocacy goals. As a direct result of this advocacy the Scottish Government directed civil servants to consider the development of a pilot in Scotland and subsequently approached SRC for assistance in developing the pilot.

Activities

The Scottish Guardianship Service was funded by the Big Lottery Fund Scotland, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Scottish Government, and was delivered in partnership by SRC and Aberlour. It was launched in June 2010 and operated as a pilot project until the end of March 2013.

A Project Advisory Group (PAG) was created to bring together stakeholders in the project. It included representatives from the UK Border Agency (now Home Office), social services,

Scottish Government, the pilot's funders, the pilot's evaluators, SRC and Aberlour. During the first year of the project there were some tense relationships with stakeholders as the role of the Guardian evolved. An independent Chair for the PAG was appointed (former Children's Commissioner Kathleen Marshall) and her input served to improve the relationships between partners.

From the very beginning, the SRC's aim was for a Guardianship Service to become a statutory requirement funded by the Scottish Government, which would **change both policy and practice**. The case for a Guardianship Service was made on an ongoing basis prior to the pilot, and the pilot and associated evaluation supported this primary aim.

As part of the pilot an independent evaluation explored the value of establishing an independent Guardianship Service, the role of Guardians in protecting the rights and interests of separated asylum seeking children and young people, and how they could best operate in the context of interagency working.

The first evaluation report was launched at a Learning Event in February 2012.

The event **shared the learning** from the first half of the pilot and highlighted the work of relevant agencies in Scotland and the UK. It also provided an opportunity for an **exchange of experience, views and ideas**.

The final report was published in April 2013 and concluded that the Scottish Guardianship Service contained a **wealth of evidence** about the benefits of the service for young people who are seeking asylum or have been trafficked.

Outcomes

In February 2013, as the evaluation report was being finalised, the Scottish Government announced it would provide £200,000 a year to SRC and Aberlour to deliver a core service from April 2013 for three years after the successful completion of the pilot.

Along with the final evaluation, in April 2013 SRC and Aberlour published a **practice framework**, which provides a practice-led record of the work of the Scottish Guardianship Service to support ongoing and future work.

In June 2013 the Scottish Guardianship Service, run in partnership by SRC and Aberlour, won the Charity Partnership of the Year Award at the Scottish Charity Awards, and in November 2013 it won the Herald Society Award for Young People's Project of the Year.

In May 2015 the Scottish Government committed to including support for trafficked young people into **legislation** and in October 2015 the Human Trafficking (Scotland) Bill (1 October 2015) placed a duty on Scottish Ministers to provide Guardianship to children and young people who are survivors or potential survivors of trafficking. The Bill did not originally include proposals for a Guardianship duty – the Scottish Government was encouraged to add this to the legislation at stage 2 of the process because the pilot and the evaluation had made the case on an ongoing basis.

Funding the initial pilot of the Scottish Guardianship Service contributed towards the Big Lottery Fund's **mission** of helping communities and people most in need.

Learning

- › The Scottish Government was supportive from the beginning, not least because of its approach to refugees and asylum seekers and its commitment to children's rights. However, it was still necessary **to 'prove' the concept** via the pilot and the independent evaluation.
- › **A well-resourced evaluation** to demonstrate the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the pilot was **key and critical to eventual success**. Crucially, the Scottish Government was involved in the recruitment of the evaluators.
- › The **evidence** from the pilot and the evaluation was used to inform, amend and confirm the benefits of the Guardianship Service on an ongoing basis.
- › Partnership working was key. Although the **funders** were not managing the project, they **were actively involved** throughout and when issues/challenges occurred they played an important supportive role, e.g. suggesting the appointment of Independent Chair of the PAG. The PAG was used to help manage early tensions and to influence policy and practice.



Key messages for other funders

- › In addition to the learning points above, perhaps the overall key message is **do not give up**.
- › Sometimes things can take time!
- › Keep a continual **eye on the prize**.

Case study

Carnegie UK Trust - Neighbourhood News project



Background

The local news industry faces newspaper closures/mergers, job losses, circulation decline and loss of advertising revenue. For citizens, this can mean the loss of important democratic scrutiny of local institutions and power brokers, and the loss of a vital source of connection to the place where they live.

The news sector was aware of the situation but had no clear solution. However, the emergence of independent, grass roots, community media (hyperlocal) appeared a potential solution with many benefits – they are highly local, digital, nimble, community driven, focused on both democracy and connection to place. The challenges for this new sector include growing to scale to provide a sufficient level of service; and being sustainable. There was a need for initiatives and evidence to test how to achieve this and show how policy makers, funders and practitioners can help.

Activities

Research by the Carnegie UK Trust on the future of journalism identified local news as a key area for action. Evidence was gathered through a literature review and a key stakeholder roundtable. Follow up discussions with key stakeholders firmed up plans on supporting hyperlocals. The Carnegie UK Trust then undertook more in-depth discussions with others who were already committing resources to this area (e.g. NESTA).

The Trust devised the 'Neighbourhood News' competition. After an open application process we made five funding awards of £10k each to hyperlocal news providers across the UK, to find new and innovative ways of developing their initiatives, showcase their work and learning to funders, policymakers and other practitioners. An Expert Advisory Group of journalists, academics, other funders, news industry representatives provided guidance.

The Trust commissioned an independent evaluation of the five projects⁸. This involved regular project monitoring one-to-one interviews, interim and final evaluation reports and recommendations. The Trust spent approximately 30% of the overall budget on evaluation. The external evaluators had a strong policy background and many contacts. They played a key role supporting the sharing of results.

Outcomes and Learning

- › All five funded projects provided a range of valuable lessons – many positive, some negative.
- › Challenges included recruiting individuals with skills to supplement core journalism skills such as advertising sales and IT expertise; and competing demands on volunteers' time. This was valuable learning that helped identify areas where policy makers could provide better support.
- › Advocacy work was undertaken throughout the project life cycle – e.g. conference presentations / meetings with Government ministers and civil servants / blog posts / newspaper comments – to highlight activities and share emerging findings.
- › Final project outputs were widely circulated to policy makers and practitioners and supported by communications strategy.

The Trust used its internal impact monitoring policy to capture evidence of our results:

- › A new BBC charter for its work with hyperlocals, joint training involving hyperlocals, and external linking to hyperlocal news content on BBC websites. Each of these address specific issues identified through our work, particularly the need to improve visibility of hyperlocal sites and the need for skill development amongst hyperlocal publishers.
- › New funding opportunities created by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) – another point identified through our evidence.
- › DCLG opened up a pilot to trial new ways of advertising statutory notices, including for hyperlocals, in line with our recommendations.
- › Ofcom is looking at how to better include hyperlocals in their media plurality assessment. This type of regulatory change was identified by the project.

- › The Centre for Community Journalism listed the Neighbourhood News outputs on the reading list for their Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) on Community Journalism to facilitate peer-to-peer learning, in line with our recommendations.
- › The Liberal Democrat manifesto included specific commitments to support hyperlocal media, including redirecting money from local television and extending the community radio fund to hyperlocal websites.
- › The Trust coordinated a joint letter with NESTA, Talk About Local, Cardiff University, Birmingham University, Westminster University, University of the West of Scotland, Media Trust and Media Standards Trust to new Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport, setting out priorities for hyperlocals during UK parliament session 2015-2020.



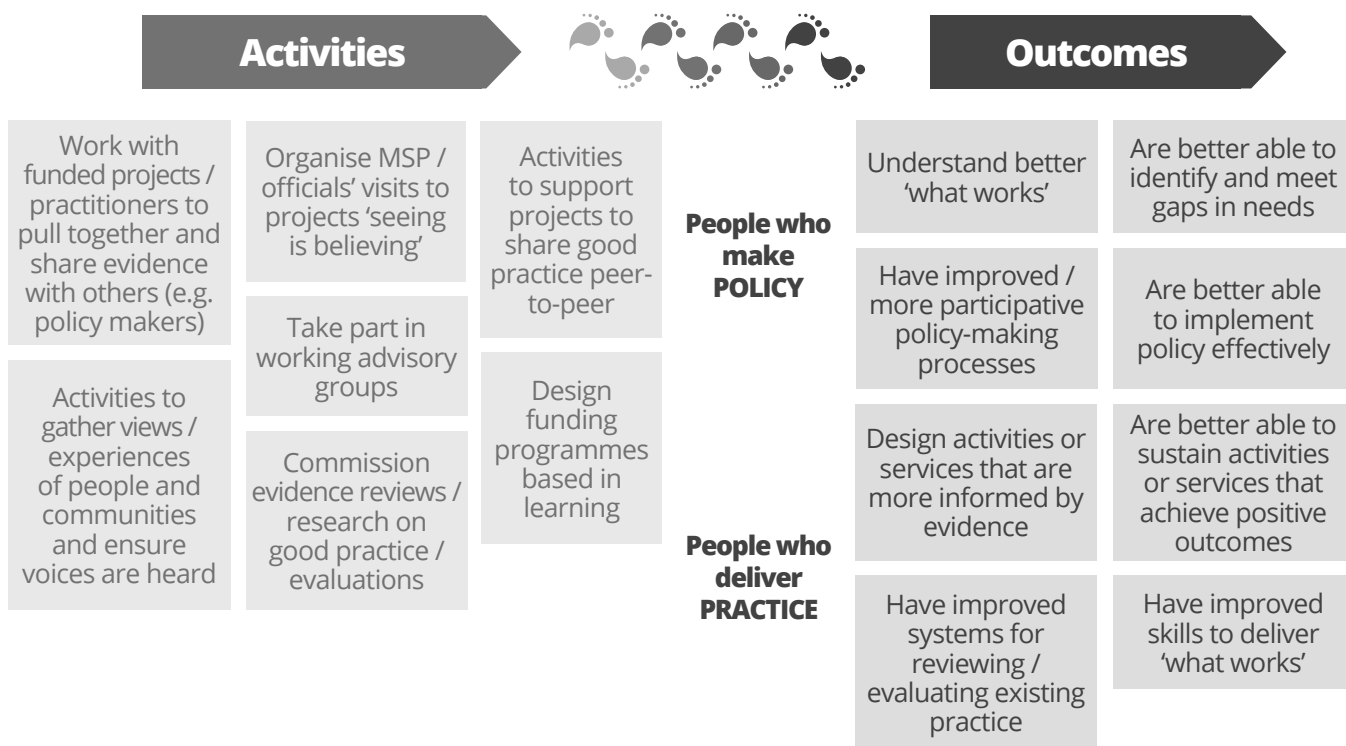
Key messages for other funders

Prioritise resources and commitment to evaluation and evidence gathering, and have a clear plan for using this evidence.

⁸ **Please see:** talkaboutlocal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/carnegie-evaluation-framework-for-small-indie-local-websites.pdf

Case study

Inspiring Scotland investing in play



Background

Over the last five years Inspiring Scotland has worked in partnership with the Scottish Government to develop free play⁹ opportunities for children in disadvantaged communities across Scotland. The partnership came from a joint recognition that children's freedom to play – especially outdoors – was declining and that this was a particular challenge for children in disadvantaged areas. There was a view that the play sector was not investment ready but could be supported to develop further evidence of the benefits of play.

Through two programmes, *GoPlay* and *Go2Play*, Inspiring Scotland has invested money and bespoke development support for Scottish charities to expand free play opportunities, understand how free play contributed to wider policy outcomes, embed robust evaluation practice and improve sector capacity. This work has both influenced practice on the ground, and informed national policy.

Activities

To understand the case for investing in free play, Inspiring Scotland commissioned a baseline report from New Philanthropy Capital¹⁰. The report outlined why investment was needed and where it could be best directed.

Using our venture philanthropy model of bespoke capacity building, performance management and evaluation support, *GoPlay* funded charities were helped to articulate what they did and demonstrate the impact they achieved. Our portfolio days created opportunities for collaboration and sharing learning.

Inspiring Scotland worked with Evaluation Support Scotland to develop an **Outcome and Evaluation Framework**¹¹ for free play. This described, for the first time, the impact of the free play sector in Scotland and why it is important.

By working collaboratively with the sector, Inspiring Scotland helped to create the case for the role of play and the need for continued

investment. Evidence from the initial two years investment informed the next *Go2Play* Fund which provided focused investment in one particularly successful model – Play Rangers, as well as funding innovation pilots.

Outcomes and learning

An **independent evaluation** found Inspiring Scotland was successful in innovating and testing diverse approaches and materials for play, evidencing the impact of play and improving evaluation methods. It found we influenced strategic direction, articulating the profile of play and its relevance to a wider range of local and national policy priorities. We developed a new generation of play sector leaders and promoted collaboration in the play sector. We addressed inequalities by targeting deprived communities and vulnerable children.

“The pro bono experts Inspiring Scotland get you know their stuff. They give good advice and have saved us having to buy in expensive professional support.” (Charity feedback)

In 2013 the Scottish Government launched the first ever **national play strategy**. Inspiring Scotland and *Go2Play* charities were on the strategy working group, and charities consulted with children and young people to inform the strategy. A programme of Ministerial and official visits to charities meant charities were able to input practical experience into strategic considerations.

“Inspiring Scotland’s people are its real strength. Their willingness to go above and beyond is second to none and has been a critical component across all of our play policy activity over the past 12 months.” (Play Strategy Group Partner)

Play is now recognised within Government as having the potential to deliver significant positive benefits for Early Years work and is an indicator of progress towards health and well-being outcomes in *Active Scotland Framework*.

Go2Play funding supports the delivery of the national play strategy. Inspiring Scotland has presented *Go2Play* and Play Rangers at the national Early Years Collaborative.

Using the learning from the eight initially funded Play Ranger charities we have developed a **Play Ranger Toolkit** and shared it through national roadshows.

Other Funders refer to the *Go Play Outcome and Evaluation Framework* when assessing funding applications for play focused activity. “The quality of the capacity building work certainly shows in applications – especially in understanding the measurement of impact.” (Other Funder)



Key messages for other funders

- › A close relationship with Scottish Government has been vital.
- › Funding can be used to support effective collaboration.
- › Partnering with others like Evaluation Support Scotland and University of Strathclyde has strengthened what has been delivered.
- › Report on the progress regularly. Share learning and findings openly and often. Don't wait until the end of the programme to do this.

⁹ The definition of free play widely used across play work was written by Bob Hughes of PlayEducation in 1982. It describes play as behaviour which is 'freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated, i.e performed for no external goal or reward'. The Inspiring Scotland programmes have focussed on free play as opposed to more structured activities such as organised clubs or training.

¹⁰ New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) 2008: *GoPlay Baseline Report*

¹¹ www.inspiringScotland.org.uk/media/6933/GoPlayOEF.pdf

Case study

Voluntary Action Fund – British Sign Language Bill



Background

The Scottish Government Equality Unit funded five of the six Deaf organisations to take forward the preparatory work on the British Sign Language (Scotland) Bill with the Scottish Government, listed public authorities and Deaf/Deafblind British Sign Language (BSL) users in Scotland.

The work was focused on:

1. Engaging with the Deaf/Deafblind BSL communities (including Deafblind people who use tactile BSL) so they can contribute to the development of BSL plans required by the Act; and
2. Supporting public bodies to better understand/ meet the needs of Deaf and Deafblind BSL users.

The Deaf Sector Partnership (DSP) is made up of six delivery partners and two support partners. The delivery partners are British Deaf Association Scotland, Deaf Action, Deaf Connections, Deafblind Scotland, National Deaf Children's Society Scotland and Scottish Council on Deafness. The Scottish Government directs the DSP, and the Voluntary Action Fund (VAF) provides support and monitoring.

Activities

In 2013/14, VAF's Equality Fund ran 'Connectivity – the story so far' events - themed learning and sharing workshops. Funded organisations were particularly interested in connecting and networking with projects doing similar work. We developed a roadmap of support by collating all the funded project outcomes into a framework to help us understand the Fund's collective impact.

Themed clusters emerged from the framework. The idea was then to bring together representatives from the different clusters to share with other stakeholders and ideally influence policy. Each cluster was supported by VAF to evolve in a way that suited its own needs.

Within the 2015-16 Equality Fund DSP had a specific remit to work jointly with other funded partnership projects to support the implementation of the BSL (Scotland) Act. Whilst each organisation is funded separately they have a joint work programme with key actions assigned to different organisations, based on the strengths and expertise of each organisation. A memorandum of understanding details the specific area(s) of responsibility on which they lead.

VAF responsibility in the partnership involves:

- › facilitating the development of work programme and communication protocol.
- › providing tailored development support and training to organisations.
- › coordinating and chairing of meetings.
- › monitoring and grant administration (providing feedback on projects' progress reports and making quarterly payments to each organisation).
- › facilitating partnership organisations to connect and share good /reflective practice and linkages to other equality funded organisations.
- › providing briefings and updates to Scottish Government - advice on the best way forward to address challenges and issues that individual organisations face and to add ideas towards how the Act could best be implemented.

Outcomes and learning

Following a Parliamentary debate and passage of the BSL (Scotland) Bill on 17 September 2015 the bill became the **British Sign Language (BSL) (Scotland) Act 2015** and Royal Assent was received on 22 October 2015. The Act aims to promote the use and understanding of British Sign Language of (BSL), principally by means of BSL plans.

The DSP organisations have overcome pre-existing barriers to joint working and, with the support of VAF worked successfully together to help ensure the passage of the BSL (Scotland) Bill.

Now that the BSL (Scotland) Bill is an Act, the next major focus for the DSP is to work with the Scottish Government to write the BSL National Plan to promote BSL and its implementation in specific areas.

Initially, all DSP meetings were attended by both project staff and managers of the member organisations. A concern emerging from this was around decision making processes. Partners agreed there should be strategic meetings for the senior management and operational meetings for project staff.

There is also a learning point that everything the Partnership takes on needs time built in for consultation and agreement with each organisation's members. This lengthens the time required to progress their work.



Key messages for other funders

There are benefits of working through a cluster of interconnected organisations implementing projects that contribute towards common outcomes:

- › Organisations have taken advantage of their collective voice to inform policy. While maintaining their independence, the DSP organisations have worked together to influence policy in a common area of interest.
- › Investment in the partnership – a key factor of the DSP's success has been the commitment of each organisation to deliver the desired outcome, drawing on synergy, peer learning and collaborative working.
- › A challenge for the DSP has been ensuring that individual organisational interests and priorities have not superseded those of the Partnership. More partnership work is required on the messages that are being produced to reflect the collective voice of the members instead of their own messages.
- › Partnership also increases the sharing of knowledge and good practice.
- › Consideration needs to be given about the additional time required to work with the Deaf/Deafblind BSL users.



Annexes

8.1 Types of evidence

- › The voices of beneficiaries in feedback, evidence, testimony, personal stories – sometimes called ‘experiential evidence’
- › Case studies
- › Performance information
- › Project self-evaluation reports
- › Funder self-evaluation reports
- › External evaluation reports
- › Observational evidence
- › Survey results
- › Quantitative numbers about funding
- › Organisational health checks
- › Academic research
- › Randomised Control Trial generated evidence

Remember:

- › No stories without numbers and vice versa
- › Different people are influenced by different types of evidence



8.2 Other resources

The following list of resources is not in any way exhaustive. Individual funders will have their own resources and tools.

› Logic model guide and template (interactive)

If you want to create your own logic model see ESS's website for a guide on Developing a Logic Model. There is also an interactive logic model with spaces for you to fill in to create your own logic model.

www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/252/

› Evidence for Success: the guide to getting evidence and using it

This guide offers step-by-step guidance and resources to support organisations to use evidence to influence policy and practice.

› Realising Ambition programme insights on 'evidence' and 'replication'

Realising Ambition is a UK-wide £25m Big Lottery Fund programme replicating 25 services aimed at preventing children and young people from entering the criminal justice system. The programme is producing learning resources about replication and evaluation:

www.catch-22.org.uk/programmes-services/realising-ambition/publications-2/

› Harmonising Reporting, Scotland Funders' Forum

Harmonising Reporting sets out tips, good practice guidance and templates for use by funders to make reporting less burdensome and more useful for funders and funded organisations. There are tips for funded organisations on what makes a good report:

www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/175/

› Understanding what makes a good project, Partnership Drugs Initiative

This Briefing Paper provides an overview on 'understanding what makes a good project' to support and offer advice relevant to funders, policy makers, service commissioners and managers.

www.ltsbfoundationforscotland.org.uk/documents/PDI%20Briefing%20Paper%2001%20-%20What%20makes%20a%20good%20project.pdf

› Scottish Government 5-step approach to designing and evaluating behaviour change interventions

Download this toolkit in pdf and e-book formats from:

www.scotgov.publishingthefuture.info/publication/designing-and-evaluating-behaviour-change-interventions (full report)

www.scotgov.publishingthefuture.info/publication/designing-and-evaluating-behaviour-change-interventions-summary (summary document)

More evaluation resources are on Evaluation Support Scotland's website:
www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk

Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) works with third sector organisations and funders so that they can measure and report on their impact



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