

A network diagram background consisting of numerous blue nodes connected by thin blue lines. Some nodes are highlighted in yellow, green, orange, and red. The diagram is most dense on the left side and tapers off towards the right.

Activities and impact report **2014/15**

Supporting and promoting
self-evaluation through
collaboration

es Evaluation
Support
Scotland

Welcome to Evaluation Support Scotland activities and impact report 2014/5.

who we are

ESS works with the third sector and funders so they can measure and report on their impact and use learning to improve practice and influence policy.

what we do

- Workshops
- Tailored support
- Thematic programmes
- Enquiries
- Events
- Resources
- Linking evidence to policy and practice

our outcomes

Better skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence around evaluation

Improved evaluation systems

Better evidence for reporting and learning

Act on learning from evaluation to do things better

Meet needs more effectively/ improve services

who we worked with

521

organisations
in total

443

third sector
organisations

78

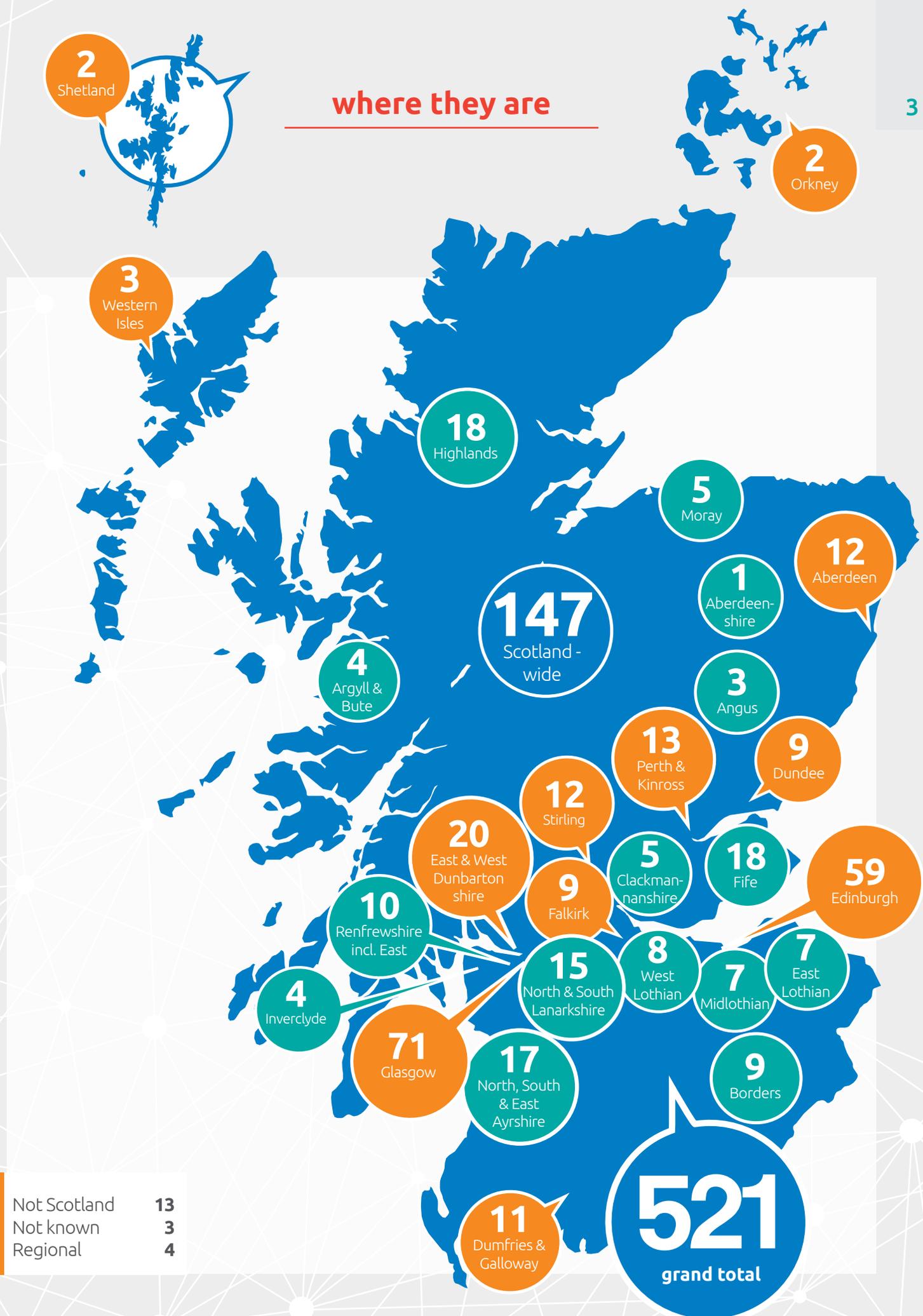
funders and
public sector

32

we worked in all 32
local authority areas
in Scotland

40%
were new to us

where they are



Not Scotland	13
Not known	3
Regional	4

looking back...

We have been busy!
Over the year we delivered:

- **82** Workshops and events
- **118** Tailored support sessions
- **4** Thematic programmes
- **2** Funders masterclasses
- **8** Evaluation support accounts
- Answered **144** enquiries
- Sent **16** newsletters
- Produced **35+** publications
- Launched a Twitter account
 @EvalSupScot
- Made a film about our work
- Researched the long term impact of evaluation support
- Prepared for our **10th birthday** conference

Responses from
our Stakeholder
Survey 2014:

99% agreed
that ESS is
knowledgeable
about
evaluation

92% agreed that
ESS helps people
to be more
confident about
evaluation

79% said that
once ESS support
has finished they
are left with the
skills to keep
doing evaluation



I have attended several ESS workshops in the past and found them particularly useful. I regularly signpost my contacts to your website and resources.

Shona Morris, Cycling Scotland

the difference we made in 2014/15

We increased the evaluation capacity of third sector organisations and funders

They're there to support organisations with the process of evaluation and they do that very well.

Interviewee, ESS research project

I think they are doing everything well and have become a market leader (in my view) of the way they deliver their support and services.

Interviewee

We helped third sector organisations to embed improved evaluation systems

You have helped put us on the right track to developing an evaluation framework that will fit with the work we do and be valuable to us as an organisation.

Valerie Breck, Operational Director, Visibility

Funders received better evidenced reports

I have developed a comprehensive report and an executive summary for my project, both will be useful in conveying our goals and accomplishments to various stakeholders, including funders both current and future.

Jeneva Storme, Garden Angels Project, Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian

We can immediately tell from reports [from funded organisations] whether or not the project has been on ESS training.

Funder

Organisations acted on their learning to do things better

The course helped me to come up with ideas for how to link evaluation to our performances, and we've been successfully doing this ever since.

Beth Hamilton-Cardus, Suit and Pace

Third sector organisations and funders have met needs effectively and improved services

The learning gained will be implemented directly into my project in order to improve the quality of delivery to its participants and funders.

Workshop participant

We have introduced a report template as before grant holders were faced with a blank page and guidance, and we are getting good feedback from users.

Anne Pearson, The Robertson Trust

We work collaboratively with organisations, combining their expertise with ours to generate evaluation approaches they can own, develop and run with.

In the following pages we set out some examples of our collaborative work.

working with third sector organisations to explain, measure and prove their contribution

Our thematic programmes give organisations and funders the opportunity to learn together through self-evaluation about what works well in a specific field. **This year we have worked on four programmes.**

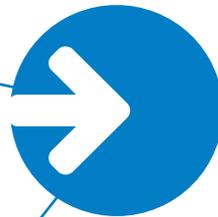


*In 2014/15, the final year of **A Stitch in Time?** supported by the **Scottish Government Third Sector Unit** and the **Joint Improvement Team (JIT)**, we continued to work with third sector practitioners to explain, measure and prove the third sector contribution to reshaping care for older people (RCOP).*



what did we do?

- 10 workshops
- 13 working group meetings for practitioners
- Tailored support to individual organisations
- Support to Change Fund commissioners in 3 local areas
- Undertook or commissioned original research or evidence reviews on 11 related subjects
- We developed 30+ publications
- We disseminated the findings using web and social media, and at final events



what difference did we make?

Our end of programme evaluation told us that:

- We substantially built the evidence base about the value of third sector interventions in health and social care.
- We explained the contribution to RCOP.
- We drew out key messages about the third sector, its role, values and principles underlying the approach.
- We increased the skills of those who took part in the programme.
- We provided tools and materials for others to use.
- People are using evaluation to improve services and influence policy.
- We have built collaboration between the third and statutory sectors.



what did we learn?

- Bringing people together is important. ESS is seen as an equal partner to third sector and commissioners.
- We need to do further work to disseminate our materials and ensure that commissioners use them, in health and social care integration.
- We have learnt about how commissioners use evidence in decision-making, but have more to learn.



The story goes on ... we secured funding to continue to use the learning in Threading the Needle.

***Support in the Right Direction** is funded by Scottish Government's **Self-Directed Support Team** to demonstrate the impact of Independent Support for self-directed support (SDS). This was the final year.*

what did we do?

- We worked with a learning set of people from 8 funded projects to publish 2 reports on the difference Independent Support makes, and how to evaluate it.
- We delivered self-evaluation training for funded organisations.
- We supported Scottish Government as a funder and ensured our work continues to be connected to wider developments in SDS.
- We fed the learning into government consultations, at the final event, 'Well begun', and other conferences and meetings.
- We published '*Why bother involving people in evaluation? Beyond feedback*' – an electronic workbook devised by a learning set of 4 organisations with considerable experience of involving people they work with in evaluation.

what difference did we make?

- All trained projects reported increased confidence in self-evaluation.
- Scottish Government said they got better reports about the work of independent support organisations.

what did we learn?

- Having an extended (3 year) timescale for a thematic programme allowed time for ideas to mature and clarify in this complex area of work.
- The development of '*Why bother involving people in evaluation? Beyond feedback*' shows that people who use services can, and want to be involved in evaluation. These materials, developed as part of a thematic programme, can have a wider legacy.
- The quality of the relationship with the funder strengthens the programme.



Very thought provoking.

Good to see this approach developed in such an authentic and comprehensive way.

Helped thinking around cultural change.

Feedback from 'Why bother involving people in evaluation? Beyond feedback'



[The training has supported me in] coming to terms with using a variety of techniques and how to capture vital aspects of information given back as feedback.

Workshop participant



Violence against Women

The Voluntary Action Fund's Violence Against Women and Girls Fund supports organisations to tackle all forms of domestic violence. We have worked with **Voluntary Action Fund** and their funded organisations over 2 years to help them improve their evaluation practice and demonstrate their impact.



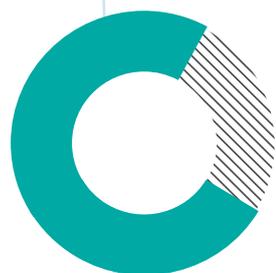
what did we do?

- **In this second year**
the fund's representative working group continued to review fund outcomes and co-designed a new reporting template.
- **We delivered**
3 core workshops for 22 participants and ran 4 'Making sense of your evidence' workshops to 55 participants.
- **We provided**
17 tailored support sessions.



what difference did we make?

Organisations were asked 'Did the new reporting template help you show the difference your service makes?'

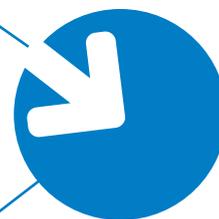


24
answered

20 - Yes
4 - No

what did we learn?

- The new reporting template is making it easier for organisations to report back effectively.
- In this second year there has been a need to revisit some projects' learning and reinforce the skills to embed evaluation into individual organisations.



I found the visit to the office really useful as we were able to discuss our needs and priorities. As a direct result of this meeting we have implemented four new methods of evaluation.

Susie Stein, Manager, Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre



There is an excellent level of flexibility which is so necessary in terms of how different the projects are hence the need for less restrictive reporting templates.

Survey respondent

Measuring Outcomes Citizens Advice, funded by **Citizens Advice Scotland's Development Committee** is a partnership programme between **Parkhead CAB** and other **Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABx)**. It aimed to increase participating organisations' knowledge and skills to evaluate advice work, and to increase understanding of the value of advice work amongst funders and policy makers.



what did we do?

- Ran a learning set of CAB practitioners aiming to explain, measure and prove the outcomes from Citizens Advice.
- Tested our work with a reference group.
- Developed a pack of materials to be used by Citizen Advice Bureaux across Scotland.



what difference did we make?

- Participants increased their skills to set and measure outcomes of advice work.
- The reference group told us that the pack will help support national initiatives on planning for and evaluating outcomes.
- We achieved unexpected outcomes such as a shared recognition to improve collection methods across CABx.



Helped me to think about what CAB actually does and why. I now have a much better understanding of the worth of the service and all it can do. Before I had a jumbled up mess of thoughts on this.

Learning set participant



It builds the logic model and links CAB interventions to National Outcomes. This is both powerful and valuable. It demonstrates that CABx are doing the right things, and can be used in funding applications to convey the difference that can be made from particular interventions.

Alastair Nicolson, CAB board member

what did we learn?



During this project we found that CABx spent a lot of time reporting differently to each funder on reach and activity, leaving them little time to evaluate outcomes. This was raised with stakeholders including Scottish Legal Aid Board and Improvement Service. We are contributing to a conference to share our learning and explore solutions.

working to support self-evaluation through collaboration

Our workshops and tailored support help third sector organisations and funders build their skills and confidence, and better demonstrate the difference they make.

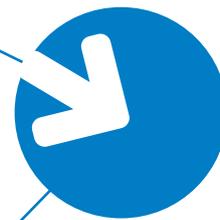
The following three pages show specific examples of our training and tailored support.

train the trainer



what did we do?

- Evaluation Support Scotland has developed an approach to strengthen the evaluation capacity across the third sector. To maximise our support to third sector organisations we trained and supported 14 people from Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) and others, to deliver our four core workshops. This work was funded by the ALLIANCE.



what difference did we make?

- Trained trainers increased their understanding of evaluation and training and have a much greater ability to support others.
- They cascaded their learning to small, local organisations that ESS would not otherwise have reached.



I found the work delivered by ESS to be high quality and the approach was refreshing and thought provoking. I have used the training to deliver 'nuts and bolts' sessions on outcomes, evaluation and logic modelling.

**Bill Clements, Deputy Manager
CVS Inverclyde**



The approach Evaluation Support Scotland adopts is critical to their success.

**Sara Redmond, Partnership and
Practice Development Programme
Manager, The ALLIANCE**

what did we learn?

- We have identified improvements in the recruitment of trainers and support required.



Who Cares? Scotland

*Life Changes Trust (LCT) commissioned ESS to provide a package of support¹ to help **Who Cares? Scotland** better explain and evidence the impact of their participation work. **Who Cares? Scotland** works directly with Scotland's children and young people with experience of care.*



what did we do?

- We delivered 2 Logic Model Development days for senior managers, and Evaluating Outcomes and Telling My Story workshops for front line staff.
- A group of staff were supported for a further two days to develop a Who Cares? Scotland toolkit.



It will be helpful in all my reporting to Life Changes Trust and Scottish Government and other funders.

Workshop participant



I need to practice more! It's been useful to compare with others and understand the needs of the whole group.

Workshop participant

what difference did we make?

- Staff reported increased skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence around evaluation.

what did we learn?

- Staff have the opportunity for protected time to talk and think about evaluation together.
- Training specific Evaluation Champions enhances the cascade of learning and embedding of good evaluation practice in a multi-sited organisation.



¹This is an example of an evaluation support account (ESA), when a funder pays for funded organisations to receive a package of evaluation support.



families affected by imprisonment

ESS is working in partnership with **The Robertson Trust** to support organisations working with families affected by imprisonment.



what did we do?

- Through a learning set and skills development programme seven organisations have been sharing experiences and evaluation approaches.
- Each organisation has had tailored support attended by team members and volunteers to help build evaluation into their everyday practice.



Members of the working group

Families Outside reported gaining additional local authority funding and felt that their confidence around articulating outcomes, and being able to link them to the local agenda, had a direct bearing. They also shared their new approach and methods with the rest of the group that demonstrated fantastic commitment, creativity and learning.

families
outside

Families Outside is the only national charity in Scotland that works solely to support the

families of people affected by imprisonment.

what difference did we make?

- *"It's been really powerful to have my team come together and create our logic model so they can see how their individual projects feed into our strategic outcomes as we develop our service."*

Umar Ansar, Chief Executive, Youth Community Support Agency

- *"Life's been so much simpler since ESS came out to work with us. We now empty our outcomes boxes every Friday and talk about the evidence we're getting."*

Elaine Waugh, Manager, Crossreach, Perth Prison

what did we learn?

- Having other team members and volunteers involved massively helps with embedding evaluation into practice.
- Keeping simple methods of evidence gathering on the agenda encourages staff to collect data 'little and often'.



We have tweaked our Family Support database so that it is easier to record outcomes as the team write up their case notes. Also, we are going to build in evidence gathering into our group and one-to-one supervision sessions.

Sarah Roberts, Child and Family Support Manager, Families Outside

working in partnership with funders

*We work in collaboration with funders to support them to evaluate the way they work and to improve their support to funded organisations. We continued to support organisations by delivering **8 Evaluation Support Accounts**.*



what did we do?

New for this year we established a funder learning programme comprising master classes and seminars with the support from **The Robertson Trust**.

- We ran 2 master classes: *'Small and Simple'* which was attended by 9 funders from 8 different organisations and *'Does capacity building make a difference'* attended by 8 funders from 5 organisations.
- And we began a learning set for funders on understanding and evaluating their work to influence policy and practice.



Supported by The ALLIANCE IMPACT Fund we:

- Ran a learning set on how to build mutually beneficial relationships between funders and funded organisations.
- We wrote 3 documents to share what we learnt:

[For IMPACT Fund Applicants](#)
reassuring advice specifically for IMPACT Fund applicants

[In Funded Organisations' Words](#)
projects' thoughts on how funders can facilitate positive relationships

[For Funded Organisations](#)
how organisations can make the most of their relationships with funders



what difference did we make?

We build funders' own evaluation skills. Feedback from this master class was very positive.

what did we learn?

- Funders strongly value the opportunity to learn together but it is challenging to get the timing right for events.
- The learning that comes out of the master classes and seminars makes a useful resource to share with other funders.



Funders told us that they learned...

We are not the only funder struggling with this!!

We need a form!

We need a way to capture qualitative information.

Simplicity is key.

Be proportionate in collecting information.

Make more use of qualitative information.

We are on the right track but we need to reflect diversity of project types in our methods.



working collaboratively to promote evaluation and use of third sector evidence

ESS facilitates networks to share evidence, improve practice, and to make the links between theory and practice.



what did we do?

- We worked in partnership with Scottish Government's **Third Sector Unit**.
- We contributed to the development by Scottish Government of a generic **5-step approach** to evaluating behaviour change interventions.
- We delivered '**Meet the academics**' - the first Scottish Third Sector Research Forum's event on good practice in joint work between the third sector and academics.
- We led **Inspiring Impact**² in Scotland. We delivered 3 workshops and an Impact Champions event to guide participants in the use of the Measuring Up! tool.
- We have published '**How funders measure their impact**' in consultation with funders in Scotland.

²Inspiring Impact is a UK initiative that aims to change the way the UK voluntary sector thinks about impact.

we take opportunities to:

Feed learning about evaluation into government consultations

- The health and social care outcomes and indicators
- The Public Service Reform board's review of performance management
- OSCR's revision of their reporting arrangements and Big Lottery Fund's strategic thinking on prevention

Feed evaluation expertise into influential groups

- Third Sector Prevention Roundtable
- Chair of What Works Scotland Funders group
- Evaluation Reference Group for Early Years Collaborative

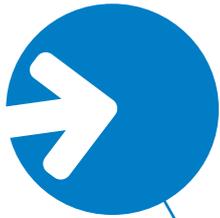


Knowledge Translation Network

We led the Knowledge Translation Network (KTN), made up of 7 partners from third sector, public sector and academia. The KTN aims to:

- Share learning about effective knowledge translations and
- Promote the use of evidence in decision-making.

The KTN produced its first publication, the '**Evidence for Success**' guide. The guide was launched at an event hosted by **Big Lottery Fund**. ESS delivered 2 workshops on the guide on behalf of the KTN.



what difference did we make?

Quotes about Evidence for Success



As you go through the guide you will see lots of quotes and helpful tips from people who have successfully used evidence to influence policy and practice.

The Robertson Trust

Good for visually challenged.

The course and working examples went a long way to my understanding of putting it into practice.

Workshop participant



ESS is particularly good at helping third sector organisations translate the work they are doing on the ground and the community level outcomes into 'policy speak' and higher level national outcomes ... furthermore [ESS] helps challenge organisations to see what they should be collecting evidence for.

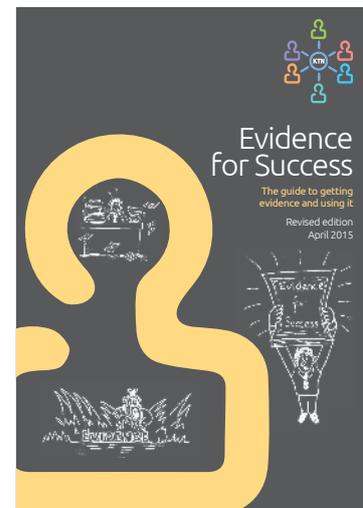
Stakeholder survey

Excellent relationship with policy-makers is bringing third sector work up the agenda.

Stakeholder survey

Learning from the Evidence for success:

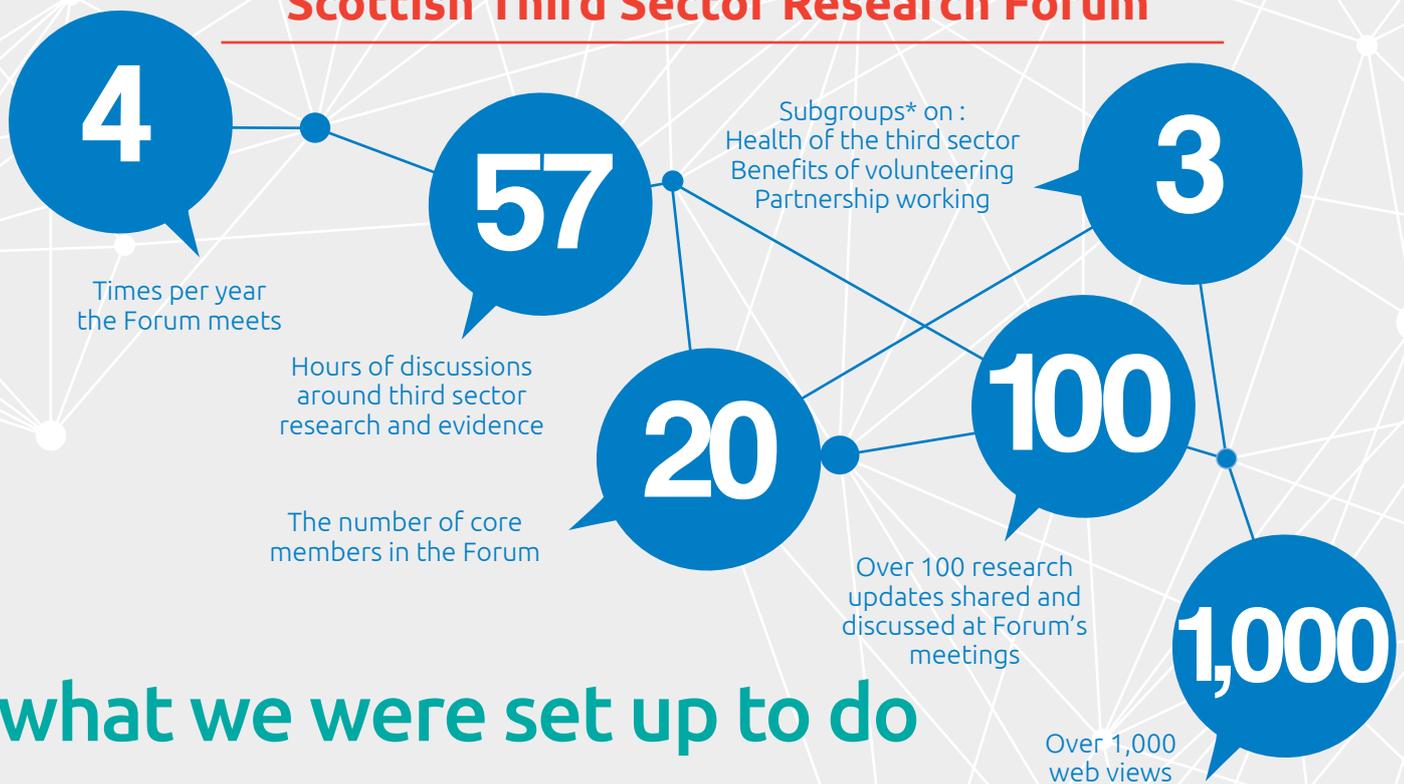
- There was demand for both a guide on how to use evidence and workshops to show people how to use the guide.
- Third sector organisations find this a complicated area of work and wanted to know more about influencing policy and practice.



what did we learn?

- We have learning to share about third sector evaluation, for example on evaluating prevention. But we need to ensure third sector can speak for itself. Our role is not to represent the third sector.
- There is increasing demand for support on evaluating policy influence. So that's something we will work on in 2015/16.

Scottish Third Sector Research Forum



what we were set up to do

- Promote/ share research about/ from the third sector
- Work collaboratively to identify research questions and meet evidence gaps
- Promote the use of research to improve policy and practice

what did we do?

- *Published two evidence papers (2011, 2012):*
 - ✓ *Why Involve the Third Sector in Health and Social Care Delivery*
 - ✓ *Why Involve the Third Sector in Reducing Reoffending*
- *Set up three working groups* to explore specific issues*
- *Hosted "Bringing the third sector and academic research together" event (2014)*
- *Communicated learning from the Forum's work through webpages and newsletters*
- *Sent out three calls for evidence and fed responses into our work*

what difference did we make?

- *Public sector and third sector have increased understanding of the role of the third sector in delivering services*
- *Academics and third sector organisations have:*
 - ✓ *better understanding of the benefits of research collaboration*
 - ✓ *opportunities to learn from/ share examples of positive collaborations*
 - ✓ *better understanding of the process of setting up research collaborations*



The perfect place to test out early research conclusions with colleagues – and to hone up on who's researching in and about the third sector.

Carolyn Sawers, Big Lottery Fund Scotland



Good to have an opportunity to meet academics working in a range of areas and to hear about their experiences of collaborating with the third sector.

Laura Mulcahy, Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum

looking back... our longer term impact

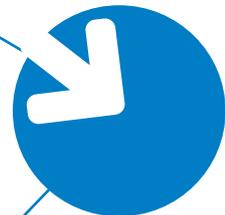


what did we do?

- We conducted our biennial Stakeholder Survey and 10 qualitative interviews to research the longer term impact of evaluation support.

what difference did we make?

- Whilst all organisations interviewed had embedded evaluation to an extent, we found that organisations who had received more training and support from ESS were more likely to have embedded their evaluation practice throughout the organisation.



what did we learn?

- Embedding evaluation is complex.
- Supporting organisations to get the internal environment right helps successful embedding of evaluation practice.
- We learnt more about the key levers for embedding evaluation in the organisations we work with. This understanding will help us to ensure that we make a lasting impact with organisations in the future.



looking forward to future years...

Our new [Strategic plan](#) is on our website which includes our work and also reflects our [three specific priority activities](#) for the next 4 years:

- Promote user involvement in evaluation.
- 'Reach the reachers': build capacity of intermediaries and funders as a way of supporting organisations we can't reach directly.
- Promote what we have learned from our work with the third sector. But we are not a third sector intermediary and do not have a representative role.

Getting ready for our birthday conference

In this 10th year we planned our birthday conference for May 2015. As part of the preparations we worked with Screen Education Edinburgh to make a film highlighting the work we do and the difference we make with contributions from third sector and funders. 'Making the Difference' is embedded into our [homepage](#). We set up a Twitter account and tweeted at events over the year. We saw a 33% increase use in our website.



What did we learn?

Using audio-visual media and social media is a creative approach to reach more organisations and share learning in new ways.

Trustees

Kirsten Hogg, Convenor
Lindsay Robertson, Treasurer
Emma Crawshaw
Lynne Irons
Dr Anita Morrison
Janet Morton
Professor Stephen Platt
Linda Rodgers

Stephanie Rose
Jennifer Wallace
Diana Wilkinson
Derek Young

Stood down:

Professor Gill Hogg
Keith Wimble



Front row from left to right:

Jane Marryat (Research and Communications Officer), Patty Lozano-Casal (Evidence into Policy and Practice Manager), Steven Marwick, (Director), Diane Kennedy (Depute Director), Martha Lester-Cribb (Evaluation Support Manager).

Back row:

Emma Liddell (Evaluation Support Manager), Ruth Johnston (Workshops and Events Administrator), Tom Scott (Training Officer) and Lydia Morrow (Finance and Administration Manager).



Friendly and approachable staff, which helps make it easier for people to engage with evaluation

Stakeholder survey

Our income was

£384,912

And we spent

£398,153

This includes £14,621 spent from reserves on ESS's evaluation project and a new database.

We received a grant from Scottish Government. The rest of our income comes from contracts and fees.

[Our full Annual Report and Financial Statement for 2014/15 is on our website.](#)



We now have clear outcomes and an evaluation plan that is streamlined to our service.

Shirley Finlayson, Disabled Persons Housing Service Aberdeen

For further information about our activities and support please see our website
www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk

September 2015

es Evaluation
Support
Scotland

Thorn House, 5 Rose Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2PR
T. 0131 243 2770 | E. info@evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk
www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk



@EvalSupScot

follow ESS on LinkedIn

Registered Company: SC284843
Scottish Charity: SC036529
VAT number: 923 2102 72

Funded by:

