



## Scottish Third Sector Research Forum meeting

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020: 10:30 – 1 pm

Zoom meeting

### Minutes

#### In attendance:

Steven Marwick (ESS), Jane Marryat (ESS), Kat Macapagal (ESS), Amy Calder (YouthLink Scotland), Amy Baker (Cattanach Trust), Jane Cullingworth (VSSN), Steve Grozier (SCVO), Matthew Linning (Volunteer Scotland), Andrew Dey (ACOSVO), Alasdair Rutherford (University of Stirling), Mark Meiklejohn (SG), Elaine Wilson (Corra Foundation)

#### Apologies:

Lucy Mulvagh (ALLIANCE), Amy Woodhouse (Children in Scotland), Allison Mathews (NLCF), Rebecca McGregor (Inclusion Scotland), Louise Meikleham (OSCR), Karen McArdle (University of Aberdeen), Sarah Weakley (Policy Scotland), Shubhanna Hussain-Ahmed (Coalition of Carers), Liz Ravalde (SG), Cathy Bulley (Queen Margaret University), Dinah Aitken (SMC), Chris Harkins (GCPH)

#### Welcome and introductions

1. Steven welcomed everyone to the Zoom meeting.

#### Minutes and matters arising

2. The minutes of the previous meeting (Wednesday 9 September 2020) were approved.

**Action: Kat** to upload minutes on website.

3. Steven reminded members that the TSRF website has been updated in September 2020. Minutes for previous meetings can be accessed through the website.

#### Update about the next TSRF/Policy Scotland event in January 2021

4. Jane M. talked about the TSRF/Policy Scotland's upcoming joint event. The event will be held online on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021, 1-2:30pm. The theme is 'Innovative third sector – online research and services.' Four TSRF members will be presenting their research: Amy Calder (YouthLink Scotland), Jane Cullingworth (University of Glasgow), Ruth McKenna (Waverley Care) and Chris Ross (Children in Scotland). They will be looking at the impact of digitally based youth work, disabled people's experiences in the pandemic, at-home HIV self-test services and research on children's health inequalities.

**Action: Kat** to include event booking information in newsletter.

## **Update about TSRF conference – programme and plan**

5. Jane M. talked through the draft programme for the TSRF conference which will be held via Zoom on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021, 9:30am – 2:30pm. The conference theme will be ethics in third sector research. There will be a morning plenary session with four presenters including DRILL ethics committee members Alison Koslowski (University of Edinburgh) and Peter Scott (University of Southampton), Gayle Munro (National Children's Bureau), Rebecca Sludden (Public Health Scotland) and James Parry (UKRIO). This will be followed by a choice of two interactive workshops (a total of six workshops to choose from) on various topics around ethics. The afternoon plenary session where the focus will be on the TSRF guide to applying ethical principles.

In between the sessions, there will be an option for participants to follow short desk-based Pilates videos. Jane M. is also looking for a presenter from Brightclub for a 10-minute stand-up comedy session, which will be just before the afternoon plenary session.

Jennifer Hood from Third Sector Lab will be in charge of technical support during the conference and is helping with conference planning.

Members suggested that presenters rehearse beforehand and that sessions be interactive (utilising quizzes, polls, etc), which Jane has already been looking into.

**Action: Members** to email **Jane** for 1) suggestions for the conference title and 2) if they would like to volunteer as 'buddy' to workshop presenters during the workshop. A workshop buddy will be in charge of the technical aspects of the workshops (e.g. letting in participants, slides, breakout groups).

## **Ethics subgroup – draft 'TSRF guide to applying ethical research principles' and small group discussions**

6. Members split into breakout groups to discuss the draft of the TSRF guide on applying ethical research principles, and to suggest how the draft might be presented during the conference. The draft was put together by Jane M., Amy Calder, Kathie Nicolson, Ruth McKenna, Fiona McHardy, with input from Rebecca McGregor.
7. In summary the groups fed back following points:
  - Members generally fed back that the guide was very clear and well-written, pitched at the right level and is useful.
  - There are certain points that can be strengthened or made more explicit: how the biography/positionality of the researchers figure into ethics, the power dynamics that run throughout the ethical principles identified, what we mean by ownership of data (e.g. who will use/own the data, how long for).
  - Members also suggested that the principle of accountability include a discussion with research participants to ensure that even if they might

not agree with the research outcomes, they feel that the research has been fair.

- Members suggested that the guide clarify (within the accountability principle) that it may not always be possible for research participants to be fully anonymous, as in some cases the research itself can include identifying markers.
- In terms of talking about the guide itself – members suggested that it should be seen as a checklist or an aide-memoir, rather than an absolute manual that should be followed, but it can help you think about how to do research well.
- Members suggested the guide can be promoted to a broader group of people involved in third sector research (not just those with 'research' in their job titles).
- Members also suggested that more Practice Examples be added – this can be a point of discussion during the conference.
- Two specific topics can be discussed further in the conference: accountability and incentives.
- Members suggested the conference might be an opportunity to create a virtual network of researchers who are dealing with the issue of ethics.
- Members also suggested that we ask for academics' view of the guide during the conference.
- For next steps – members suggested that we look at what impact the guide might have and to ask third sector orgs if the guide is something they have actively been looking for, or if they didn't realise it was something they needed.
- Members further suggested that related ethics documents could be consolidated on a page on the TSRF website.

**Action: Members** to send Jane Practice Examples, if any, that can be included in the guide.

**Jane/Kat** to set up a page on the TSRF website to collect resources on ethics that may be relevant to third sector researchers.

### **Conducting research online – what are the challenges, what are the opportunities – large group discussion**

8. Steven asked members to share their experiences of conducting research online in the past few months.
9. Amy C. shared her experience of doing research with LGBT Youth Scotland about the impact of digital youth work on young people. They used 'transformative evaluation' where they collect stories from young people on how youth work had impacted their lives. This process involved training the researchers to use this methodology in collecting stories from young people. At the start of lockdown they realised that youth work was going to be predominantly done online and they needed to capture what was happening.

They delivered the training to youth workers via Zoom with LGBT Youth Scotland and received positive feedback. It was a good opportunity to bring

people together virtually in an inclusive space with reduced costs. One challenge was training youth workers how to code data using Zoom, which they normally did in person on flipcharts. However, they managed to transpose this process digitally and are planning to integrate this to their future trainings. Another challenge was Zoom fatigue – their training required participants to be online for a long time. Some of the young people also did not have safe spaces to tell their stories online so the youth workers had to find creative methods to create safe ways of enabling young people to share their stories.

10. Amy B. talked about how Cattanach's commissioned research projects showed how online research, rather than being a barrier, is actually really accessible to young people and can be utilised after the pandemic. For example, a project they commissioned with the David Hume Institute is about finding out what young people want to see in the future of Scotland. The research is being conducted through online voting but is designed in a way that looks familiar to young people such as through 'likes' on social media.
11. Alasdair works with large datasets of secondary data which can be done flexibly compared to research that requires fieldwork. The challenge for him has been the data quality as the regulators and other organisations' work have been disrupted, so there had been delays in collecting, updating and releasing data. There's also been delayed responses to queries given reduced capacity from regulators. There was also some disruption earlier in the pandemic to make sure that computers are secure enough to handle sensitive data while working from home, and that legal regulations were updated to enable data sharing.
12. Jane C. talked about her research project with Glasgow University where she interviewed disabled people in Scotland about their experiences during COVID, and her consulting work with the Third Sector Interface with Dumfries and Galloway. She personally found that the online interviews were easy to do, and she also appreciated how the technology helped address issues of accessibility and trust normally in place with in-person interviews, for instance, the issue of safety and trust around going into disabled people's homes. Jane cited an example with an interviewee who initially did not want to turn her video on, but did so later on, saying 'I feel like I can trust you now.' From her work with Dumfries and Galloway, Jane interviewed people who worked with survivors of abuse. The survivors shared that they have found safe spaces of sharing their stories online.
13. Matthew shared that while Volunteer Scotland is not doing primary research as they use secondary datasets, they have found that the technology is enabling volunteers to reach more people, particularly in rural areas.
14. Elaine raised that apart from Zoom fatigue, there is a possibility that researchers are also feeling fatigued by being involved in so much research, which ties back to ethics. Members shared that the issue of need remains important to consider when conducting research, recalling how so much research was being done at speed earlier in the pandemic.

15. Members also shared their own positive experiences in participating in online meetings. Members said while the digital divide still exists, online communication has certainly increased access in some respects, with more people being able to attend online meetings from wherever they are.
16. Steven shared his [Jamboard notes](#) based on the discussion that showed potential themes for opportunities and challenges on researching online.

**Action: Members** to add notes to jamboard if they have other insights on the topic.

**Kat** to include key messages from this discussion in newsletter.

*Elaine leaves meeting*

### **Research updates from members**

#### 17. **Steven (SCVO Strategic Oversight Group)**

The group is continuing to gather evidence about the impact the third sector has made during Covid-19.

**Action: Members** to contact Steven if they have evidence to share.

#### 18. **Steve (SCVO)**

SCVO is planning to write case studies and conduct further interviews based on data from the Emergency Funds application and monitoring forms, subject to clarification of some issues around the data.

The SCVO Strategic Oversight Group is currently developing an invitation to tender document for longitudinal research into the impact of Covid-19 on the sector which should be out before the end of the year.

As for internal research, SCVO is currently doing learning reviews of the training courses they have offered in the past. They are also looking to do further research next year on what kind of courses organisations would like to see from SCVO.

#### 19. **Andy (ACOSVO)**

Andy will send AVOSVO research update via email.

**Action: Kat** to include in newsletter, if any.

#### 20. **Amy (YouthLink Scotland)**

YouthLink Scotland has published a report on the impact of universal youth work on the voluntary sector in Edinburgh. The LGBT Youth Scotland study about the impact of digital youth work on young people will be published next week. Amy will send Kat the link to this work once it is published.

These two reports are being promoted on the YouthLink Twitter account with accompanying videos.

Phase 2 of the Lockdown Lowdown survey which looks at the impact of COVID-19 on young people will be launched next week – there were more than 6,000 responses from young people (compared to 2,000 from Phase 1).

Amy is also supporting five youth groups across Scotland to look at the environmental impact on coastal communities. The project is called 'On our Wavelength.' They have been working with an environmental storyteller to help with creative dissemination of the research through videos produced by the young people involved in the project. These videos are on the @onourwavelength video. The project has been extended until the end of March.

**Action: Kat** to include links to above reports in newsletter.

#### 21. **Jane C. (University of Glasgow/VSSN)**

Through her role in the University of Glasgow, Jane's research on the experience of disabled people during COVID-19 still underway, with initial research showing the central role that the third sector has played in providing practical and social support. For instance, Enable Scotland has been providing important routes to discuss and understand government guidelines. Glasgow Disability Alliance provided practical support such as providing shopping and ipads.

VSSN will be holding an online forum for new researchers on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 3-4pm. The event is open to all researchers in the field of voluntary studies and voluntary action. [More information here.](#)

#### 22. **Amy B. (Cattanach)**

The interim report for the project Cattanach commissioned along with Carnegie UK Trust, which focuses on children's wellbeing in the first 1001 days within the Scottish budget, will be published next week. The final report will be published in March 2021.

Cattanach is also organising a conference with the Royal Society of Edinburgh that focuses on celebrating childhood and the rights of children. Ahead of that conference, Cattanach has commissioned Children in Scotland to hold children's research events to understand 0-7 year-olds' insights and what matters to them. Cattanach also have scoping papers in place about the cost of childcare in Scotland.

Cattanach has commissioned the Parent Infant Foundation to carry out research on COVID-19, looking at how it has affected statutory services for parents.

Finally, Cattanach is working with the David Hume Institute on a large project – the Action Project – which entails a lot of engagement research to produce a set of concrete actions to make Scotland a better place. Cattanach is part of the children and young people stream and has commissioned Scottish Youth Parliament and Children’s Parliament to carry out research that will come out in animated form.

**Action: Kat** to include in interim report on children’s wellbeing in newsletter

23. **Matthew (Volunteer Scotland)**

Volunteer Scotland and Stirling University are doing a UK-wide large-scale research project on the mobilisation of voluntary action during Covid-19: ‘Learning from today, prepared for tomorrow.’ It’s a year-long project involving six universities and volunteer lead bodies across the UK. The project generally aims to look at what lessons can be learned from the pandemic.

Volunteer Scotland’s [Covid-19 landing page](#) is constantly being updated with themed research and links to events that they have recently joined, such as the Befriending Networks conference and a Social Enterprise Network Scotland seminar.

Volunteer Scotland has also done research on the impact of Covid-19 on the voluntary sector in Scotland based on data collected through OSCR’s survey. Phase 2 of OSCR’s survey will be released in December, and Volunteer Scotland will be doing their own research on this data later as well.

24. **Alasdair (University of Stirling)**

Alasdair is currently involved in two UK-wide research projects funded by UKRI. The first one is: ‘Assessing financial vulnerability and risk in the UK’s charities during and beyond the Covid-19 crisis.’ This looks particularly at impact on funding and financial risks for voluntary organisations brought about by the pandemic, which could be useful to policymakers and funders. The second is: ‘Mobilising Voluntary Action in the four UK jurisdictions: Learning from today, prepared for tomorrow’ (already mentioned in Volunteer Scotland research update). One aspect that Alasdair is looking at is data on volunteer matching services across the UK.

25. **Jane (ESS)**

Jane shared some resources that the forum members may find interesting:

- London School of Economics blog: [How do we know that our research is ‘inclusive’](#)

- Webinar recording: [Interviewing at a distance: navigating practical, emotional, and methodological challenges](#)
- Matter of Focus's [Research Impact School will be starting in March 2021](#)
- The Scottish Human Rights has put out an [Invitation to Quote: Research into paying people for their participation](#) – the deadline is on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

The [TSRF website](#) has been updated in September 2020, and in line with this we would like to include some information about the members on the members page.

**Action: Members** to get in touch with Jane with their short profiles focussed on their organisation's research

## 26. **The ALLIANCE (via email)**

The ALLIANCE and partners Self Directed Support Scotland (SDSS) have published reports from their national mixed-methods research project about people's experiences of Self-directed Support/social care. 'My Support My Choice' heard about the pre-pandemic experiences of 637 people across Scotland, and at the time of publication it is the most recent and comprehensive reflection of people's experiences of SDS/social care in Scotland prior to COVID-19. The project asked people a range of questions about how they got information about SDS/social care; how much choice and control people had over their social care; whether people had enough support to meet their requirements; their communication and relationships with social work professionals; their experiences of care staff recruitment, training and quality; and their access to independent advocacy, advice and support. The research has helped fill a data gap and complements the work of other independent evaluations. Based on the findings and their analysis, the ALLIANCE and SDSS have made a series of recommendations for national and local decision makers, aimed at strategic planning and delivery to improve people's experiences of social care. For more information about the project, and to read the research reports, visit: <https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/health-and-social-care-integration/self-directed-support/msmc/>.

**Action: Kat** to include in newsletter

## 27. **Inclusion Scotland (via email)**

- In October Inclusion Scotland published a report on our survey on the impact of the pandemic on disabled people – 'Rights at Risk - Covid-19, disabled people and emergency planning in Scotland – a baseline report from Inclusion Scotland' available here (including a summary version and an Easy Read summary) - <https://inclusionScotland.org/rights-at-risk-covid-19-disabled-people-and-emergency-planning-in-scotland-a-baseline-report-from-inclusion-scotland/>

- On Tuesday 29th September Inclusion Scotland held a webinar to mark the end of the DRILL research programme - 'Celebrating Disability Research on Independent Living and Learning (DRILL) in Scotland'. Over 70 people joined us to hear presentations from 4 of the projects from Scotland on the topics of housing, autism, accessible toilets and self-directed support. You can watch a recording of the webinar here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2kpHQpynOw>

**Action: Kat** to include in newsletter

#### 28. **OSCR (via email)**

- In November OSCR contacted all charities to get an up to date picture of how COVID-19 and the restrictions are affecting the sector. The survey asked charities out their experience of operating during the pandemic, their outlook for the future and whether their support needs have changed. Just over 2,500 charities shared their views. Early findings are expected in December. This builds on the findings of our May survey which showed an unequal impact of the pandemic across Scottish charities. Background on the November wave can be found in this news item.
- OSCR released an Interactive Scottish Charity Constituency map which shows Scottish charities by their Scottish Parliament constituency regions and areas. It links data from the Scottish Charity Register (taken in September 2020) to constituency postcodes. Figures for the number of charities and total income are automatically adjusted depending on the areas selected. The map is one of the ways that OSCR plan to use the rich and comprehensive data we hold on Scottish charities to improve knowledge and understanding of the Scottish charity sector.

**Action: Kat** to include in newsletter

#### 29. **Waverley Care (via email)**

In October, Waverley Care and Scottish Trans Alliance launched a new research report on the experiences of trans people accessing sexual health services in Scotland: *There needs to be care throughout: Exploring the access of non-binary people, trans men and trans women to sexual health services in Scotland*. Globally, trans people are disproportionately affected by HIV, with trans women 49 times more likely to be living with HIV than the general population. This research is the first major study of trans people's engagement with sexual health services in Scotland, and will contribute to ensuring services are more inclusive and accessible to all. You can access the report [here](#) and a summary briefing [here](#). You can also catch up on the research launch webinar, with guest speakers Juno Roche, Michelle Ross and Meg John Barker, [here](#).

**Action: Kat** to include in newsletter

#### 30. **Scottish Government (via email)**

We published a couple of reports analysing the distribution of the Third Sector Resilience Fund, and the Wellbeing Fund, on 24th November. The links are here if forum members are interested:

- [Third Sector Resilience Fund \(TSRF\): analysis of applications and awards](#)
- [Wellbeing Fund: analysis of awards](#)

31. **AOCB**

None.

**Next meeting:** 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021 via Zoom, 10.30 to 1pm