



Moving from crisis to recovery - case study

This case study may be of interest to any third sector organisation who is having to adapt and learn as they go in uncertain times.

In 2020 and 2021 Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) supported sixteen projects affected by the COVID-19 crisis to evaluate and learn about their response to the crisis to evaluate and learn about their response to the crisis. The aim of this support was to strengthen their response and their recovery, by improving what they do or guiding future plans and strategies. This work was supported by the National Lottery Community Fund.

During the Covid-19 pandemic the **Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)** identified a marked increase in the queries relating to Human Resources (HR) and employment issues. As many of voluntary sector organisations have limited or no HR support SCVO applied for a grant to set up an accessible HR and Employment Support Service. Since the launch in November 2020 the pilot project has supported 250 organisations. Lindsay, Service Manager, shares her experiences of learning from the pilot project.

Why did we get involved in this peer learning programme?

Unlike many other projects involved in the Crisis to Recovery peer learning programme, this work came about *because* of the pandemic. We were keen to take the opportunity to reflect and learn what impact our project is having in supporting third sector colleagues. We wanted to feed this learning to the wider organisation and future projects, such as longer-term HR service.

We came on board to learn:

- How should we deliver this service in the future?
- What approaches are working well?
- What are the needs of the sector?

What are we learning about our work through this crisis?

1) There is a need for HR support in the longer term

The feedback we have received shows that the HR service would be helpful in the long term.



There is a need for the service as it is being used, with over 250 queries to date. We have also gathered stats from the **number** of hits on the website and the number of attendees at webinars which shows there is an appetite for the support offered.



Our query **satisfaction survey** showed that the service has helped third sector organisations to improve their HR knowledge and practices.

2) We understand what activities make a difference



We know that different sized organisations are using the service for slightly different purposes. Our **inquiry records** show that larger organisations are often looking for someone to review their approach, whereas smaller organisations sometimes need more intensive support. This helps us shape it going forward.

We have and can achieve more through collaboration. Found it is key to delivering the best service for our audience/sector.

- Pilot projects evolve and this is ok – you need to review regularly, learn, and change to ensure you are delivering what is required
- Every step is a learning opportunity – remember that everything you do whether it works or not will give you information and help your service
- Don't be afraid to ask for support – look for partners and people you can collaborate with to help your overall community/users
- Don't overcomplicate things - this has shown me the importance of stripping things back and not collecting evidence we won't use

How is this helpful to our organisation?

Service planning:

We are much clearer about what this service should look like in the long term.

We are clearer about who we need to partner with. We are seeking out organisations who can offer “pro bono” support to third sector organisations.

We are putting together a plan to maintain this service in the long term, given that the need for HR support goes beyond Covid-19 issues.

Contact details

If you would like ESS's support please contact us at info@evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk.

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